



Meeting GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date Wednesday 28 February 2024 (commencing at 10.30am)

membership

COUNCILLORS

Philip Owen (Chairman)
Johno Lee (Vice-Chairman)

Chris Barnfather
Samantha Deakin
Errol Henry JP
Andy Meakin
Michael Payne - **Apologies**

Sue Saddington
Helen-Ann Smith - **Apologies**
Nigel Turner
Roger Upton

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Kate Foale (substitute for Councillor Michael Payne)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Robert Briggs - Children and Families
Dr. Órlaith Green
Peter McConnochie

Sara Allmond - Chief Executives
Glen Bicknell
Richard Elston
Simon Lacey
Jo Toomey
Marjorie Toward
Nigel Stevenson

Zak Francis - Grant Thornton
Andrew Smith

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 January 2024, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Helen-Ann Smith (Medical/Illness)
- Councillor Michael Payne (other reasons)

MEMBERSHIP CHANGE

It was reported that Councillor Chris Barnfather had been appointed in place of Councillor Richard Butler.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Philip Owen declared he had an Other Registerable Interest in item 10 – Broxtowe Community Governance Review as he was the Chairman of Nuthall Parish Council, which was part of the review, and he was also a Councillor on Broxtowe Borough Council.

Councillor Kate Foale declared she had an Other Registerable Interest in item 10 – Broxtowe Community Governance Review as she was a Councillor on Broxtowe Borough Council.

Having declared Other Registerable Interests, Councillors Owen and Foale left the Chamber during consideration of item 10.

4. UPDATE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN DECISIONS (DECEMBER 2023 TO JANUARY 29024)

The report set out information about one complaint against the Council where fault was found by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of officers and seek assurance about actions put in place regarding the complaint.

RESOLVED: 2024/08

That the findings of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman be noted and the lessons learned and actions taken in response to the findings be welcomed.

5. RESPONSE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN DECISIONS 2024

The report provided an update on the improvements made to increase the Council's Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) performance.

Members welcomed the improvements made so far in light of the significant increase in the number of applications received, but raised concerns that the number of applications processed within the deadline was still significantly below the national average. Members were advised that children could access holistic support through schools and an Education and Health Care Plan was not required to access that support.

RESOLVED 2024/09

- 1) That the significant increase in the number of Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments being requested and the measures taken to increase the Local Authority's Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment performance be noted.

- 2) That it be noted that timeliness and performance continue to be reported to each Children and Families Select Committee meeting and is also subject to oversight of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Improvement Board monthly.
- 3) That the Governance and Ethics Committee agrees to receive a further report in 12 months' time to review the progress and the impact of the measures introduced.

6. EXTERNAL AUDIT – AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT 2022/23

The report set out the External Auditors' audit findings report for 2022/23 which set out the audit findings for both the Council and Pension Fund. Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of the External Auditors and seek assurance about the information provided within the report.

RESOLVED: 2024/10

That the external auditors' Audit Findings Report 2022/23 be noted.

7. EXTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT 2022/23

The report provided the External Auditors' Annual Audit Report for 2022/23 which largely related to Value for Money work.

RESOLVED: 2024/11

That the External Auditors' Annual Audit Report 2022/23 be accepted.

8. LOCAL AUDIT DELAYS

RESOLVED: 2024/12

- 1) That the issues surrounding the proposals to clear the local audit backlog and embed timely audit be noted.
- 2) That approval be given to delegate responsibility to the Section 151 Officer, in conjunction with the Chairman of this Committee, to respond to the Local Audit Backlog consultation and circulate to Members of the Committee post submission.

9. INTERNAL AUDIT TERM 2 2023-24 PROGRESS AND TERM 1 2024-25 PLAN

RESOLVED: 2024/12

That the outcome of the Internal Audit work carried out in Term 2 of 2023/24, and the planned coverage of Internal Audit's work in Term 1 of 2024/25 to be progressed to help deliver assurance to the Committee in priority areas be noted.

Having declared Other Disclosable Interests Councillor Philip Owen and Councillor Kate Foale left the Chamber for the following item:

10. BROXTOWE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

RESOLVED: 2024/13

That the Chief Executive be authorised to submit the letter at **Appendix A** to the report as a courtesy response to the consultation on Broxtowe Borough Council's draft proposals, reserving its position for any formal response until phase 2 of the consultation.

11. WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: 2024/14

That the work programme be approved with the following amendment:

Review of Arms Lengths Organisations would now be brought to committee in Autumn 2024

The meeting closed at 11.24am

CHAIRMAN