



Meeting GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date Wednesday 31 March 2021 (commencing at 10.31 am)

membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Bruce Laughton (Chairman)
Andy Sissons (Vice-Chairman)

Nicki Brooks	Rachel Madden A
Steve Carr	Phil Rostance
Kate Foale	Keith Walker
John Handley A	Martin Wright
Errol Henry JP	

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Richard Butler for Councillor John Handley

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Sara Allmond	}	Chief Executive's Department
Glen Bicknell		
Heather Dickinson		
Rob Disney		
Emma Hunter		
Jo Kirkby		
Jo Toomey		
Nigel Stevenson		
Marjorie Toward		

Ainsley Macdonnell Adult Social Care and Health Department

EXTERNAL ATTENDEES

John Gregory Grant Thornton

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 1 February 2021, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None

AGENDA ORDER

The Chairman agreed to take agenda item 10 – Local Authority Financial Reporting and External Audit Government Response to the Independent Review as the first item at the request of Nigel Stevenson, Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement and Section 151 Officer.

10. LOCAL AUTHORITY FINANCIAL REPORTING AND EXTERNAL AUDIT GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW

Nigel Stevenson, Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement and Section 151 Officer and John Gregory, Grant Thornton introduced the report which provided an update following the publication of the Government response to the recommendations arising from the Independent Review into the Oversight of Local Audit and the Transparency of Local Authority Financial Reporting.

RESOLVED: 2021/012

That no actions were in required in relation to the issues contained within the report.

4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGSCO) DECISIONS – JANUARY TO FEBRUARY 2021

Jo Kirkby, Team Manager, Complaints and Information introduced the report which informed Members of the latest complaint decisions by the LGSCO. Ainsley Macdonnell, Service Director, Community Services – Living Well responded to questions on the decisions.

RESOLVED: 2021/013

That no actions were required in relation to the issues contained within the report.

5. COUNCILLOR INDUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 2021 TO 2025

Jo Toomey, Advanced Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which proposed an indicative Councillor induction and development plan for implementation following the election on 6 May 2021.

RESOLVED: 2021/014

- 1) That the indicative Councillor Induction and Development Programme 2021 to 2025 be approved for implementation.

- 2) That the Monitoring Officer be given authority to make any additions to the plan as she considers necessary to ensure the delivery of good governance.

6. WHISTLEBLOWING UPDATE

Emma Hunter, Solicitor introduced the report which provided an update on whistleblowing activity during 2019 and 2020 and an update on the review of the Whistleblowing Policy.

RESOLVED: 2021/015

That the Committee supports the full review of the current policy in line with the criteria set out in paragraphs 9 to 12 of the report.

7. INTERNAL AUDIT 2020-21 TERM 2 REPORT & 2021-22 TERM 1 PLAN

Rob Disney, Group Manager – Assurance introduced the report which informed Members of the Head of Internal Audit's report on the work carried out by Internal Audit in Term 2 of 2020/21 and consulted Members on the Internal Audit Plan for Term 1 of 2021/22.

RESOLVED: 2021/016

- 1) That there were no actions arising or follow-up reports required to be brought to a future meeting.
- 2) That the planned coverage of Internal Audit's work in Term 1 of 2021/22 will deliver assurance to the Committee in priority areas.

8. FOLLOW-UP OF INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Rob Disney, Group Manager – Assurance introduced the report which provided an update on progress with the implementation of agreed management actions to address Internal Audit recommendations.

RESOLVED: 2021/017

That there were no actions arising from the report.

9. EXTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2019/20

John Gregory, Grant Thornton introduced the report which set out the External Auditors' Annual Audit Letter 2019/20.

RESOLVED: 2021/018

That there were no actions arising from the report.

11. WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: 2021/019

That the work programme be agreed.

The meeting closed at 11.58 am.

CHAIRMAN