
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2019

Present: Councillors Keogh (Chair), Kataria, Harwood, White, G Galton, Professor Margetts and Spicer

16. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED: that the minutes for the Committee meeting on 29th July 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

17. **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2018/19**

The Committee considered the report of the Section 151 Officer detailing the Financial Statements 2018/19. The Committee particularly noted that there were a number of adjustments to the Financial Statements arising from the findings of the external audit, none of which changed the overall bottom line position for the Council for 2018/19.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the changes to the Financial Statements 2018/19 as a result of the annual audit as detailed in paragraphs 5-7 and appendix 1 of the report be noted: and
- (ii) That the audited Financial Statements 2018/19 be approved.

18. **EXTERNAL AUDIT 2018/19 AUDIT RESULTS**

The Committee considered the report of the External Auditor detailing the 2018/19 Audit Results which included messages arising from the audit of the Council's financial statements and the results of the work undertaken to assess the Council's arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources.

The Committee also noted that an unqualified opinion had been received on the Statement of Accounts for 2018/19 as the External Auditors were satisfied with the progress that had been made relating to value for money and procurement processes.

The External Auditor placed on record their thanks to staff in supporting the audit which had been delayed due to resourcing issues within Ernest Young external auditors.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the external auditor's Audit Results Report as detailed in the appendix of the report; and
- (ii) That the letter of representation be approved.

19. **ANNUAL REPORT ON MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Committee received and noted the report of the Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer detailing the Annual Report on the Members' Code of Conduct 2018/19.

20. **INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2019-20**

The Committee received and noted the report of the Chief Internal Auditor detailing the Internal Audit Progress Report for the period 1st April to 16th September 2019. The Committee particularly noted that on page 80 of the report the reference to the two schools being removed from the audit plan was incorrect and should have indicated they were being added to the plan.

21. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE CONTRACTS MANAGED BY THE ICU**

The Committee received and noted the report of the Director of Quality and Integration detailing the Annual Review of Health and Social Care Contracts managed by the Integrated Commissioning Unit and ensuring contracts with external agencies were properly managed and provide good quality and best value for money.

The Committee particularly noted that the Integrated Commissioning Unit had recently had an internal audit which had provided an “assurance” opinion.

22. **TRANSACTIONS AND UNIVERSAL SERVICES - SICKNESS STATISTICS**

The Committee received a presentation from the Service Director for Transactions and Universal Services detailing measures and processes that had been put in place to deal with sickness within the service area.

It was noted that the service area had approximately 540 members of staff, 340 of which were front line in areas such as waste and parks who worked in all weathers throughout the year with no flexible working options such as working from home with the highest rate of sickness being related to muscular/back pain. A restructure had taken place to provide for more supervisors to be on site and monitoring crews to ensure that health and safety requirements were met and maintained, training was delivered around manual handling and tool box talks.

Management meetings took place every two weeks with Service Leads and HR business partners to monitor rates of sickness, return to work interviews took place, HR policies were adhered too in supportive ways within reasonable timescales. Proactive health surveillance initiatives took place, non-compliance with health and safety issues were pulled up and progressed to disciplinary if necessary and long term sickness was also dealt with and progressed to dismissal if other alternative could not be reached such as redeployment.

The Committee acknowledged the improvements in statistics which was indicating a positive downward trend with particular reference to the average days lost due to sickness across the Council as 12 with Transactions and Universal Services sitting at 14 and made the following suggestions as potential ways to progress improvement further:-

- Benchmarking data was sought from comparable authorities;
- A peer review of the service area was undertaken;
- That site based comparisons were undertaken; and
- Target setting was important moving forward.