
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 APRIL 2013

Present: Councillors Furnell (Chair), Kaur (except minute numbers 36-40) (Vice-Chair), Daunt, Inglis, Keogh and Parnell

Independent Members Mr Geoff Wilkinson

Apologies: Councillors Chaloner and Mr David Blake

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

RESOLVED that the minutes for the Committee meetings held on 5th February 2013 and 19th March 2013 be approved and signed as a correct record. (Copy of the minutes circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

It was noted that a report regarding usage and provision of mobile phones within the Authority would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

33. **CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The Committee considered the report of Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services regarding changes to the Council's Code of Corporate Governance. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED that the updated Code of Corporate Governance (CCG) set out in the report as Appendix 1, be noted and approved.

34. **ANNUAL CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services, seeking approval for recommendation to Council of changes to the Council's Constitution. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the changes to the Council's Constitution as set out in the report be recommended to Full Council;
- (ii) that the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services be authorised to finalise the arrangements as approved by Full Council and make any further consequential or minor changes arising from the decision(s) of Full Council; and
- (iii) that the Council's Constitution as amended, including the Officer Scheme of Delegation for the municipal year 2013/14, be recommended to Full Council.

35. **UPDATE TO COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Communities, Change and Partnerships regarding proposals to revise the corporate complaints policy and to establish a single complaints unit for the Council. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the proposed amendment to the Council's complaints procedure, comprising the removal of the current Stage 2 of the corporate procedure and amendments to the remaining two stages, be agreed;
- (ii) that the draft Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy updating the current complaints policy to reflect recommended industry practice and proposed process changes, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be agreed; and
- (iii) that the proposals to establish a single complaints unit for the Council be noted.

36. **RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013-14 AND ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Finance and IT regarding the Annual review of the Council's Risk Management Strategy and the annual Risk Management Action Plan summarising the intended activity/actions in the forthcoming period to further develop and embed risk management. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Risk Management Strategy 2013-14 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be noted and approved;
- (ii) that the status of the Risk Management Action Plan for 2012-13 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be noted; and
- (iii) that the Risk Management Action Plan for 2013-14 as set out in Appendix 3 of the report, be noted and approved.

37. **EXTERNAL AUDIT: ANNUAL AUDIT LETTERS 2012/13 AND 2013/14**

The Committee noted the report of the Chief Internal Auditor regarding the reports of the external audit. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

38. **INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2013/14**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Internal Auditor regarding the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2013/14. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Plan for 2013/14 be approved.

39. **PUBLIC SECTOR INTERNAL AUDIT STANDARDS - INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Internal Auditor / Head of Partnership, Southern Internal Audit Partnership regarding the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards which all public sector bodies will be required to adopt with effect from 1 April 2013. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the implications and actions necessary to meet compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards be noted; and
- (ii) that the Internal Audit Charter be approved.

40. **TAXPAYER-FUNDED PENSIONS FOR COUNCILLORS AND OTHER ELECTED LOCAL OFFICE HOLDERS**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services regarding the Government proposals to remove access by Councillors to the tax-funded Local Government Pension Scheme in England from April 2014, and the issues raised in the Government's consultation proposal. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

Following discussion, the Committee were in agreement with Option 3 of the Government's options, that access to the taxpayer-funded Local Government Pension Scheme should remain for all councillors and elected local office holders on the same basis as at present.

RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services, after consultation with the Chair of the Governance Committee, to send a response to the Government Proposal on behalf of the Council setting out the Committee's comments.