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**GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2020**

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

**Apologies:** Councillors Spicer

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

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes for the Committee meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

34. **HR REPORT ABSENCE DATA**

The Committee considered the report of the Service Director HR and OD detailing Quarter 3 2019/20 HR statistics. In particular it was noted that overall sickness levels for the Council showed an average 11.29 days per employee with the sector average being 8.5 days, key issues for absence being muscular skeletal for front line staff and mental wellbeing for other staff albeit that may not be work related. A number of wellbeing initiatives had been introduced together with improved reporting and service areas business plans/absence monitoring being scrutinised by the S151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive.

The Committee noted that organisational structures were changing and there was a need for valid comparison of overall figures going forward together with a better understanding of movement and trends. The Committee requested that trend graphs now be incorporated into the quarterly report.

Given the time constraints of the meeting and a number of further questions that Councillor Professor Margetts had it was agreed that these would be tabled and responded too outside of the meeting copying in all Members of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That Quarter 3 2019/20 statistics be noted;
- (ii) That Children and Families be requested to attend the April meeting to discuss absence levels; and
- (iii) That trend graphs and valid comparisons be incorporated in future quarterly reports.

35. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL LIMITS 2020/21 TO 2023/24**

The Committee considered the report of the Service Director Finance (S151 Officer) detailing the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Limits 2020/21 to 2023/24. The Committee particularly noted paragraph 10 of the report which detailed the core elements of the strategy. In addition the Committee requested information regarding ethical frameworks for investment and pension funds which was outside the remit of Treasury Management but would be circulated to all Members outside of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the Council's Treasury Management (TM) Strategy and Indicators for 2020/21 to 2023/24, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report be approved.
- (ii) That at the time of writing this report it was noted that it had been assumed that the budget proposals within the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Budget and Capital Programme 2020/21 to 2022/23 report, to be submitted to Council on the 26 February 2020, would be approved. Should the recommendations change and have any impact on the Prudential Indicators this would be reported to Council on 26 February 2020.
- (iii) That authority continue to be delegated to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to approve any changes to the Prudential Indicators or borrowing limits that will aid good treasury management. The CFO would report any amendments and in year revisions to the TM Strategy as part of quarterly financial and performance monitoring.
- (iv) That the proposal to continue to explore an alternative Treasury Strategy to generate additional income that could support local services, whilst maintaining a prudent approach be endorsed.

**36. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019-20**

The Committee considered the report of the Service Director Finance detailing the Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 and in particular noted paragraphs 6 and 7 of the report which detailed key elements of the assurance gathering process.

The Committee also recognised the restructuring that was taking place in the authority and that there would be a number of new senior members of staff and recommended that an all Member Briefing was provided in order to share the detail and effect of the restructure.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the assurance gathering process to support the developments of the 2019 -20 Annual Governance Statement as detailed in appendix 1 of the report be approved; and
- (ii) That an all Member Briefing be recommended to share the detail of the restructuring that was taking place in the authority.

**37. 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 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020. The Committee noted that there were no new areas of significant concern in the period and that all audits would be completed by the end of April as scheduled. The Committee requested that feedback be provided to the Chair regarding the HMO Licensing and the backlog referred to in report outside of the meeting.

**38. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2020**

The Committee received and noted the report of the External Auditor providing details of the External Audit Plan year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The Committee particularly noted the audit risks, new account procedures and value for money. The Committee also sought re-assurance that there would not be the delays in reporting this year that

arose in the previous year and noted that there was reasonable confidence that the arrangements that had been put in place would avoid this.