

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2011

Councillors Present: Jeff Beck (Chairman), Adrian Edwards (Substitute) (In place of Paul Bryant), David Holtby, Tony Linden, Julian Swift-Hook (Vice-Chairman) (arrived at 6:27pm), Tony Vickers and Quentin Webb

Also Present: Steve Broughton (Head of Property and Public Protection), Andy Day (Head of Policy and Communication) and Ian Priestley (Chief Internal Auditor), Moira Fraser (Democratic Services Manager)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Paul Bryant

PART I

31. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2010 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Quentin Webb declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 34, but reported that, as his interest was not personal and prejudicial, he would remain in the meeting and take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

33. Internal Audit Interim Report for 2010/11 (GAC 2114)

Ian Priestley updated the Committee on the outcomes of the work performed by Internal Audit during 2010-11.

The Internal Audit found that the Council's main financial systems were very sound and well controlled. Ian Priestley also informed Members that audits on other systems were all assessed as satisfactory or better. The one area of concern related to two follow up audits in Property Services where the absence of a working asset management database hampered implementation of the agreed recommendations.

Steve Broughton (Head of Property, Trading Standards and Waste) reported that he had undertaken a review of the Property Service in 2009 and had arrived at similar findings to that of the Audit Review. Steve Broughton reported that work commenced in September 2010 on a project to implement ISO 9000 which would introduce formal processes and procedures to the service. It was hoped to complete this project in June/July of this year.

In relation to the Asset Database, the Committee was informed that the it was hoped to use an Asset Database module within Agresso. The service was currently awaiting for this to be delivered and it was hoped to start to implement this in May or June of this year.

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RESOLVED that Members note the contents of the report and support the work being undertaken by the Head of Property, Trading Standards and Waste in relation to the introduction of ISO 9000 and an Asset Database within Agresso.

34. Council Governance (C2199)

Andy Day updated the Committee on amendments proposed to the Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee and Governance and Audit Committee which were in line with the recommendations of an Internal Audit of the management of the Council's Constitution.

It was proposed that the Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee be extended to include any recommendations for improvements to the relevant sections of the Constitution covering Councillor conduct and ethical standards. It was also proposed that Part 7 of the Council's Constitution relating to the Standards Committee and Governance and Audit Committee be amended and that any corresponding references to both Committees be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to amend.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee be extended as set out in paragraph 2.1 and Appendix B to the report.
- (2) Part 7 of the Council's Constitution be amended as set out in paragraph 1.6 and 1.7 of this report.
- (3) Any further corresponding changes to references in the Constitution to Governance and Audit Committee and the Standards Committee be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to amend (e.g. Part 1 Summary and Explanation).

(Note: Councillor Tony Vickers arrived at the meeting at 6.27pm)

35. Amendments to the Constitution - Changes to the Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee and Governance and Audit Committee (C2195)

Andy Day updated the Committee on the proposed changes in the Council's current scrutiny structures with effect from 01 April 2011.

Andy Day proposed that the Council's current scrutiny structure be amended from one Overview and Scrutiny Commission and five Select Committees to one Overview and Scrutiny Commission with effect from the 01 April 2011.

Subject to the above proposed changes being agreed, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission would need to assume responsibility for the scrutiny of health in accordance with Section 7 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and crime and disorder issues in accordance with Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

The previously approved timetable of meetings would also need to be amended if the proposed changes to the scrutiny structures are approved.

Andy Day also updated the Council in relation to the Localism Bill in relation to the timetable for the introduction of any new governance structures (eg Committee System). The Localism Bill currently suggests that no change of governance structures would be

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possible until after the next local elections following the passing of the Bill. On the basis that the Localism Bill was not likely to be enacted until after this year's elections, the earliest that any new governance structures (eg Committee system) could be implemented is 2015. Andy Day suggested that no further work be undertaken on this matter until nearer to the 2015 local elections.

The Committee, whilst acknowledging the way the current legislation was drafted, suggested that Council be asked to write to the Local Government Association, requesting them to lobby the Government in relation to amending the Localism Bill to enable Local Authorities to introduce new forms of governance (eg Committee system) without the restrictions of having to wait until after the next local elections following the passing of the Localism Bill.

RESOLVED that

- (1) That the Council's current scrutiny governance structures be amended from one Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission and five Select Committees to one Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission with effect from 1 April 2011.
- (2) That the previously approved timetable of meetings for 2011/12 be amended to reflect the changes to the Council's scrutiny structures.
- (3) That the Council notes the position in relation to the timetable for the introduction of any new governance structures (eg Committee system).
- (4) That Council be asked to write to the Local Government Association requesting them to lobby the Government in relation to amending the current Localism Bill to enable Local Authorities to introduce new governance structures (eg Committee system) without the need to wait until after the next local elections following the passing of the Localism Bill.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.19 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature