
Response to the Audit Review of the Governance and Ethics Committee

Committee considering report:	Governance and Ethics Committee on 16 November 2020
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Jo Stewart
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	28 October 2020
Report Author:	Julie Gillhespey (Audit Manager)
Forward Plan Ref:	GE3954

1 Purpose of the Report

To provide members of Governance and Ethics (G&E) Committee with a formal set of proposals which have been drawn up to meet the recommendations made in the Internal Audit report covering the review of the Effectiveness of the G&E Committee.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the G&E Committee agrees to the proposals stated in the attached Action Plan.
- 2.2 If the Committee agrees with the revised content of the revised Terms of Reference (Appendix B), a recommendation needs to be made for this document to be approved by Full Council.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	Not Applicable
Human Resource:	Not Applicable
Legal:	Not Applicable
Risk Management:	Not Applicable
Property:	Not Applicable

Response to the Audit Review of the Governance and Ethics Committee

Policy:	Not Applicable			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Environmental Impact:		X		
Health Impact:		X		
ICT Impact:		X		
Digital Services Impact:		X		
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		
Core Business:		X		
Data Impact:		X		

Consultation and Engagement:	Members of the officer group - Finance and Governance Group (FAGG)
-------------------------------------	--

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 A review of the effectiveness of the G&E committee was undertaken in 2019 after it had been suggested in the report covering the external assessment of Internal Audit.
- 4.2 The report covering the findings of the review was presented to G&E in April 2020, where there was agreement to implement the recommendations. It was agreed at the committee meeting that further work was required to draw up some proposed actions to meet the requirements of the recommendations. This work was allocated to the officer group, Finance and Governance Group (FAGG).
- 4.3 This report provides the draft Action Plan and supporting documents that have been prepared/agreed by FAGG.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

This report is to provide members of G&E Committee with formal proposals for actions to meet the recommendations made in the report by Internal Audit's covering the review of the Effectiveness of the committee.

Background

- (a) During 2018 an external assessment was carried out of the effectiveness of the Council's Internal Audit Service, the resulting report included a suggestion that Internal Audit should consider undertaking a review of the remit and effectiveness of the Council's Governance and Ethics (G&E) Committee. The suggestion to carry out the review was agreed by G&E in November 2018.
- (b) The review was undertaken in 2019, using the checklist from the CIPFA "Audit Committees Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police" (2018).
- (c) When the resulting report was presented at Corporate Board, there was discussion around ownership of the report and that although this sat with the G&E Committee, the recommendations and how to progress them should be discussed at the Finance and Governance Group (FAGG).
- (d) A draft report of the findings was presented to G&E in April 2020, at which time there was agreement to all of the recommendations included in the report, and that FAGG would draft an Action Plan to be presented to G&E at a later date.
- (e) The Action Plan (Appendix A) lists each of the report recommendations, proposals to meet the recommendation, officer responsible and progress to date. The other appendices to this report are supporting documents linked to specific recommendations in the Action Plan.

Proposals

- That the Governance and Ethics Committee agrees to the proposals stated in the Action Plan (Appendix A).
- If the Committee agrees with the revised content of the Terms of Reference (Appendix B), a recommendation needs to be made for this document to be approved by Full Council.

6 Other options considered

Not Applicable.

7 Conclusion

Agreement of the proposed Action Plan is required in order for progress the implementation of the recommendations made in the report covering the Review of the Effectiveness of the G&E Committee.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Action Plan Covering Recommendations made in G&E Effectiveness Report.
- 8.2 Appendix B – Recommendation 1 G&E Committee Terms of Reference.
- 8.3 Appendix C – Recommendation 2 G&E Committee Members Skills Matrix.
- 8.4 Appendix D – Recommendation 3 Draft Training Schedule for G&E Members.