

MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES

held on 17 July 2024 at 6.15pm

Present:

Councillors H. Clark, N. Dudley, K. Franks, I. Fuller, M. Sismey, A. Sosin, J. Sosin, N. Walsh, R. Whitehead, and S. Young.

Also in attendance –
Councillor D. Eley

Parish Councillors K. Golla
Independent Persons Mr Groves, Ms Hoeckx, Mr Jeremiah, and Mr Lamb

1. Election of Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor N Walsh be elected as Chair of the joint meeting. At this point Councillor Walsh took the Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Bugbee, Dudley, and Rajesh. There were also apologies from Parish Councillors Bentley and Jackson, as well as from Independent Persons Mrs Gosling and Mrs Mills.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Declaration of Interests

All Members were reminded to declare any interests where appropriate in any items of business on the meeting's agenda. None were made.

5. Public Question Time

No questions were asked or statements made.

6. Announcements

No announcements were made.

7. Review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance and Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

The Joint Committee Members considered a report on the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance (Code) and the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

(Statement), which the Council's procedures required be approved at a joint meeting of the Audit and Risk and Governance Committees. The Code, which formed part of the Council's ethical framework, showed how it complied with the seven core principles for managing its governance arrangements set out in the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy)/SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) guidance.

The Code set out the criteria on which the Statement was based. The Statement in turn examined the measures in place to ensure that the Council had effective governance, risk management and internal control processes and was used to identify any shortcomings in those areas. The Statement highlighted those areas of governance regarded as important in 2023/24, how they were addressed, and the progress made. Members were also advised on the review of actions from the last Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 and areas for improvement or monitoring for 2024/25 including the delivery of actions in the Counter Fraud Strategy Action Plan.

The Committee was informed of some ongoing concerns which included the delays in completing Local Government audits. They were informed that this was a national problem across local authorities.

RESOLVED that

1. the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance 2023-24 and the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2023-24 be approved and;
2. The Draft Annual Governance Statement be published with the statement of accounts.

(6.17pm to 6.21pm)

8. Urgent Business

There were no matters of urgent business brought before the Committee.

The meeting closed at 6.21pm.

Chair