

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 25 June 2020

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: P Hogarth MBE (Chairman), R Holt (Vice-Chairman), K Allsopp, A Adeyemo, S Caudwell, D Cole, Mrs D Holl-Allen MBE, Mrs K Wild and M Wilson

Officers: Deborah Merry, Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Andrew Kinsey, Legal Services Manager and Solicitor to the Council
Julie Cooper, Head Of Financial Operations
Gemma Farrington, Senior Accountant (R&T)
Anna Leggett, Senior Accountant (R&T)
Adam Paterson, Finance Manager
John Robinson, Treasury and Corporate Accountant
Helen Flinter, HR Policy Development and Business Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Adeyemo declared an interest in respect of The Employee Journey – Resolution Policy in that his daughter is an employee of the Council.

3. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

There were no questions or deputations.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2020 were presented for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2020 be approved as a correct record.

5. DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20

Members of the Committee were reminded that the Committee's role was to review the draft 2019/20 Accounting Statement, taking into account any comments made by the Audit Committee and suggest any amendments to the draft Statement before it was signed off by the Chairman of the Governance Committee.

The Finance Manager advised that the Audit Committee had considered the draft Accounting Statement in detail on 22nd June 2020, and had not suggested any amendments or significant issues when referring it to the Governance Committee.

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Members of the Committee asked for further information on what the Council was doing to address exam attainment levels between the north and south of the Borough and also asked for the narrative report to be expanded to include the numerous mitigations that were included within the Full Cabinet report relating to Covid-19, in addition to what had already been included.

Members of the Governance Committee noted that there would be an opportunity to review the final Accounting Statement in September 2020 following scrutiny by the Council's external auditor.

The Committee noted that due to the Covid19 pandemic the deadline for completion of the draft accounts had been extended, and expressed appreciation that despite the challenges the Finance Team had completed this work within the original timescale.

RESOLVED:

That draft Statement of Accounts 2019/20 be approved.

6. THE EMPLOYEE JOURNEY – RESOLUTION POLICY

The Human Resources Policy Development and Business Manager presented a draft new Resolution Policy to replace the existing Dignity at Work and Grievance policies.

She advised that the new Resolution Policy would provide a simplified framework that would encourage early resolution and a collaborative approach to dispute resolution.

A key aim was to drive ownership and autonomy for resolution at a local level wherever possible whilst not losing the impact and importance of dealing with bullying and harassment. It would bring to the forefront the principles of informal resolution through constructive conversation and structured mediation to ensure that any dispute, conflict or complaint is dealt with quickly, fairly and constructively with support.

RESOLVED:

That the new Resolution Policy be approved.

The meeting closed at 6.50pm