

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held in the The Guildhall on 16 April 2019 commencing at 2.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Giles McNeill (Chairman)

Councillor Mrs Sheila Bibb
Councillor John McNeill
Councillor Mrs Angela White
Alison Adams
Andrew Morriss

In Attendance:

Ian Knowles	Executive Director of Resources and S151 Officer
Alan Robinson	Strategic Lead Governance and People/Monitoring Officer
James O'Shaughnessy	Corporate Policy Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Katie Coughlan	Senior Democratic & Civic Officer
John Sketchley	Internal Audit
Matthew Waller	Internal Audit
James Welbourn	Democratic and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway
Councillor David Bond

63 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD

There was no public participation.

64 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2019 were approved as a correct record.

65 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Andrew Morriss declared a personal interest as a named director of Market Street Renewal Limited (MSRL), which was referred to in the Annual Constitution Review.

Councillor John McNeill declared a personal interest as he was a member of the Member Development group, which was referred to in the Annual Constitution Review.

66 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

The benchmarking of consultancy costs would be discussed at the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) away days in June.

The remaining matters arising were noted.

67 INTERNAL AUDIT QUARTER 4 MONITORING 18/19

Members considered an update on progress, carried out by Assurance Lincolnshire against the 2018/19 annual programmes.

This was the final internal audit report for 2018/19; there were seven final assurance reports that took place during the period. Two of these achieved high assurance, and the remaining five achieved substantial assurance.

The internal audit plan was being delivered, and there were no overdue actions.

Following this introduction, further comment was provided by Members and officers:

- There were much fewer outstanding items when compared to previous years. 26 actions were being worked on across a range of audits;
- There was a level of oversight to make sure that actions arising from audits were progressed; in addition realistic timescales had been put in place. A cultural and behavioural change had taken place at West Lindsey;
- The targets set for the audit were no less robust than in previous years, but the systems of control had improved.

RESOLVED to note the report.

68 ANNUAL CONSTITUTION REVIEW

Members considered the Annual Constitution Review along with the Monitoring Officer report. Also covered were the nature of complaints under the code of conduct.

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report and highlighted the significant changes made to Challenge and Improvement committee as a result of the review commissioned by Governance and Audit committee. Also highlighted were new sections of the report raising awareness of all governance matters.

Following this introduction. Members and officers provided comment on the report:

- It was concerning that there was a proposal to remove Ward Councillors from the street naming consultation process. Members present were keen to retain this function;
- On occasions where County Councillors wished to speak at a Planning Committee but were unable to for personal reasons (such as holiday absence, or illness for example), another County Councillor could be nominated to speak on their behalf. This would be at the discretion of the Planning Committee Chairman;
- It was proposed that in Part V of the Constitution it be made explicit that only those

present at annual council could elect a Chairman;

- Attendance rates of Councillors at committee were recorded and published on the West Lindsey District Council website. Attendance rates at training was recorded internally and held by Democratic Services;
- The portfolio gross yield was 7.27% across all of the properties in the investment portfolio;
- There would be specific training, or ‘masterclasses’ for the new Member devices that were being issued, in time for the new electoral cycle;
- It was also beneficial for West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) to achieve high attendance levels at training; the cost per head for training was much higher if only a low number of Members attended;
- The standard of inductions thus far has been high;
- Councillors being prevented from abstaining during voting was a proposal that wasn’t being taken forward. It was requested that the explanation for this should outline that the risk would be for the authority as well as Councillors;
- The suggested changes to the Constitution from the Governance and Audit committee were as follows:

Section of Constitution	Change required
Part IV – Responsibility of Functions Executive Director of Resources	Take out proposal to ‘amend’ delegation 12 – wording to stay as it is currently written in the Constitution. Therefore Ward Councillors will be consulted on new street names and numbering.
Part I – Introduction	The up to date vision be written in lower case, with the exception of ‘West Lindsey’. Sentence to read: <i>“West Lindsey is a great place to be where people, businesses and communities thrive and can reach their potential.”</i>
Part IV – Responsibility for Functions Executive Director of Resources	Abbreviations to be quoted in full.
References to DPL	To be expanded throughout the Constitution.

Following the conclusion of discussion on this item, the Chairman moved an amendment to recommendations (b) and (e) from the Chair.

The wording "...and the Governance and Audit committee" was to be added to recommendation (b).

For recommendation (e), the wording "which was to include a review of the functions of both policy committees" was to be added.

These amendments were seconded, and the recommendations were taken 'en bloc'. Following a vote, it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) Members note the outcome of the annual review;
- (b) The amendments detailed at Section 2 of the report and the Governance and Audit committee be recommended to Council for immediate adoption and implementation;
- (c) The proposed amendments, raised through the review process, but which are not being progressed, detailed at Section 2.8 be agreed and recommended to Council for non-inclusion;
- (d) Members approve the amendment made to the Contract and Procurement Procedure Rules detailed at Section 3.2 of the report (the full set of Procedure rules are attached at Appendix 2 for completeness) and these be noted by Council as part of the Annual Review;
- (e) Members note the progress made with regards to those areas of work agreed for further development in the 2018/19 review (Section 4) and the further planned work for 2019/20 detailed at Section 5 of the report, which was to include a review of both policy committees;
- (f) Members agree the governance outlined in this report, in respect of managing Commercial and Economic Growth, provides assurance that the council is taking appropriate mitigating measures against the risks identified in its commercial approach and note the updated position provided at Section 6 of the report;
- (g) Members note the statistical data provided within the report in respect of the number, nature and outcome of the Code of Conduct Complaints at Section 7 of the report;
- (h) Members note the appointment information contained in Section 8 of the report, which will be subject to separate reports being ratified by Annual Council in May 2019.

69 WORK PLAN

The workplan for the next 12 months was noted.

As this was the last Governance and Audit committee during this electoral cycle, the Chairman wished to place on record his gratitude to the Vice Chairman and elected representatives of the committee, along with thanks to officers and independent members.

The meeting concluded at 2.52 pm.

Chairman