

FERRYHILL TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Ferryhill on **TUESDAY, 3rd September 2024 at 6.30pm.**

PRESENT: Councillor: P Atkinson (Chair)

Councillors: K Conroy, D Farry, L Fellows, B Lamb, J Makepeace

Officials: L Owens, Town Clerk
G. Fletcher, Internal Auditor

C.G 01.24-25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

C.G 02.24-25 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Councillor P Atkinson was proposed, seconded and agreed as Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee for the current municipal year.

C.G 03.24-25 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Councillor L Fellows was proposed, seconded and agreed as Vice-Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee for the current municipal year.

C.G 04.24-25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

C.G 05.24-25 MEMBERS DISPENSATION

There were no members' dispensations in relation to any item of business on the agenda.

C.G 06.24-25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present

C.G 07.24-25 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members considered the terms of reference for the Corporate Governance Committee which had previously been circulated.

Councillor D Farry asked if the risk register that is covered under the terms of reference for Corporate Governance can be brought to Council before it is approved in February. Mr. Fletcher, who was present at the meeting advised that when the risk register is reviewed any actions that are highlighted can be looked at then.

RESOLVED

That the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Governance Committee be accepted.

C.G 08.24-25

REPORT FROM INTERNAL AUDITOR

Members considered a report from the Internal Auditor along with the terms of reference for proposed audits which had been previously circulated.

Mr Fletcher was in attendance and welcomed any comments from Councillors on his report. Mr Fletcher discussed his terms of reference and explained that these include five audits which are to be completed between September 2024 – December 2024.

RESOLVED that:

- a) Accounts Receivable – the report be accepted.
- b) Cemeteries – the report be accepted. One comment was received from Councillor D Farry in relation to the fact that no staff member lives on site now and asked if this needs to be incorporated in the terms of reference for cemeteries. Mr. Fletcher advised that he would add in security arrangements for Swann House going forward, for this report. The Town Clerk also reassured Members that the house is very secure, and a member of staff is on site each day. Additionally, the cemetery gates are locked each day at 8pm during the summer months and 4pm during the winter months.
- c) Payroll – the report be accepted.
- d) Members and Officers expenses – the report be accepted. Mr. Fletcher explained to Members if there is very little to check in terms of Members and Officers expenses, advising that expenses claimed tend to be minimal, then he may include information on Members and Officers Expenses with the Accounts Payable report.
- e) Income collection and banking – the report be accepted. One comment was received from Councillor D Farry in relation to the Town Council accepting cash payments from members of the public who come into the Town Hall to purchase items. Councillor D Farry asked if the cash is checked. The Town

Clerk advised Members that when the Service Review was completed one recommendation from the consultant was for the Town Council to look at cashless transactions going forward, however Members agreed that as a Town Council we could not fully move to cashless transactions as some members of the public still use cash and we need to be inclusive for everyone accessing our services, therefore cash is still accepted. The Town Clerk advised that the cash register is balanced at the end of each day and then at the end of the week either the Town Clerk or the Administration and Finance Manager reconcile the cash register for the full week before the cash is banked. This is kept on file for Mr. Fletcher as the Town Councils Internal Auditor to check when he conducts his audits.

Members thanked Mr. Fletcher for his work.

C.G 09.24-25

POLICIES DUE FOR RENEWAL

Members considered the flexible working policy which was due for renewal and had been previously circulated.

A Query was raised about the Town Hall closing between 12noon and 1pm daily during the lunch period, and it was suggested that this be staggered. The Town Clerk agreed to look at this. A discussion also took place in relation to the number of staff present on site and a question was asked if it was a legal requirement for two members of staff to be on site at all times. The Town Clerk advised that a minimum of two staff members must be on site for health and safety reasons.

Following discussions it was **Moved by** Councillor K Conroy, **Seconded by** Councillor D Farry that the Flexible Working Policy be adopted.

RESOLVED

That the Flexible Working Policy be adopted by the Town Council.

C.G 10.24-25

MOTIONS POLICY

Members considered the motions policy which was previously circulated.

Moved by Councillor K Conroy, **Seconded by** Councillor B Lamb that the Motions policy be discarded.

Councillor D Farry was not in support of this and also raised issues with the Motions section in Standing Orders not being clear. Councillor D Farry advised that the seven days clear notice within the policy is not clear and does not state if the seven clear days' notice includes weekends. Councillor D Farry also advised that in Standing Orders under the Motions section, section 9 H needs extending to include after rejection "and brought to the next full council meeting together with the explanation for rejection. It was pointed out to Councillor D Farry that any amendments to Standing Orders can only be considered at a meeting of full Council.

A named vote was requested.

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
K Conroy	D Farry		
L Fellows	J Makepeace		
P Atkinson			
B Lamb			
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RESOLVED that:

- 1) The motions policy be discarded as Motions are covered within the Town Council's Standing Orders Policy.
- 2) The Town Clerk look into the queries raised by Councillor D Farry and if necessary, bring the Standing Orders Policy to a meeting of full Council for consideration.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 7:10pm.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR.....

DATE.....