

FERRYHILL TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Ferryhill on **TUESDAY, 15th July 2025 at 6pm.**

PRESENT: Councillor: C Atkinson (Chair)

Councillors: C Bihari, A Ferguson, J Lathan, Paul Mountford

Officials: L Owens, Town Clerk

C.G 01.25-26 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

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

C.G 02.25-26 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

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

C.G 03.25-26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

C.G 04.25-26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

C.G 05.25-26 MEMBERS DISPENSATION

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

C.G 06.25-26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

C.G 07.25-26 TERMS OF REFERENCE

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

The Town Clerk explained that the only amendment she has made to the Terms of Reference is highlighted in item 7 and explained that item 7 should now read:

To monitor the effectiveness of all of the Council's policies with the exception of Standing Orders – Proceedings and Business of the

Council, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders – Contracts and Procurement which are reviewed yearly at the Annual Council Meeting. When reviewing policies the committee must pay particular reference to those policies considered to be within the definition of Corporate Governance and including whistle-blowing, anti-fraud & corruption and complaints.

Following a discussion, it was

RESOLVED

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

C.G 08-25-26

POLICIES DUE FOR RENEWAL

Members considered two policies that the Town Clerk presented to them which are due for renewal. The Town Clerk presented each of the policies to Members and it was

RESOLVED that:

a. Grievance Policy - The Town Clerk advised Members that due to the previous Grievance Policy being so out of date and in light of a recent issue in relation to the policy that has required an investigation, the Town Clerk has received a recommendation from the investigation that a new Grievance Policy should be implemented as soon as possible.

The Town Clerk asked Members of the committee if they had any comments on the policy. Councillor A Ferguson asked if the Human Resources (HR) Team from Durham County Council were happy with the new policy. The Town Clerk confirmed that they were satisfied with the new policy. Councillor A Ferguson also asked the Town Clerk if the policy was in line with the guidance from NALC to which the Town Clerk replied that the policy is in line with NALC's guidance.

Councillor P Mountford asked for clarification on the date the last Grievance Policy was created, and it was confirmed that the previous Grievance Policy had not been updated since 2010.

Following the questions raised all members of the Committee were happy with the new Grievance Policy and agreed that this should be adopted by the Town Council.

b. Awards, Gifts and Competitions Policy – The Town Clerk advised members of the Committee that she had made changes to the Awards, Gifts and Competitions Policy to include a new section on competitions which all staff and Members are to be reminded of.

Discussions took place in relation to the Awards, Gifts and Competitions Policy and Councillor C Bihari highlighted section 2 of the policy which refers to the value quoted to be given to staff as a leaving or retirement gift if they have served more than 20 years' service. Councillor C Bihari advised that in his opinion this needs to be reviewed, however after discussions no firm decision was made on this.

Councillor C Bihari also queried section 4 of the policy which relates to the Honorary Burgess and feels that the sentence that reads 'Nominations must be made by a serving Town Councillor but the honour is open to anyone who has served the Town and who meets the following nomination criteria' needs changing to 'Nominations must be made by a serving Councillor but the honour is open to anyone who has served the Town and who meets the following nomination criteria' as there are members who have served on the Town Council but also for other Councils for example Durham County Council and the Borough but have represented Ferryhill and therefore the Councillors contributions to Ferryhill need to be considered.

It was also noted that the criteria set out for the title of 'Honorary Burgess' needs to be changed to reflect the criteria set out in item 3 in the Procedure for the appointment of Honorary Burgess of Ferryhill.

Following the discussions and points raised, Members agreed to the changes discussed and agreed to adopt the amended Awards, Gifts and Competitions Policy.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 6.25pm.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

