

FERRYHILL TOWN COUNCIL

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the **Corporate Governance Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Ferryhill, at 6pm on **TUESDAY, 12th FEBRUARY 2019**.

PRESENT: Councillors: J. Cansella, D. Farry, N. Jones, Z. Roddam and C Woods

Other Councillors: K Conroy

Officials: D. Shingleton, Accountant; G. Fletcher, Internal Auditor

C14.18-19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K. Graham.

C15.18-19 MEMBERS DISPENSATION

No requests for dispensations were received.

C16.18-19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Woods declared an interest in Item 9.

C17.18-19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councillor Conroy asked if this was the right meeting to discuss Item 9 (Partnership Working Agreements and Contracts). The Chair pointed out that the Committee needed to be sure that properly prepared and signed contracts/agreements were in place, from a governance and internal control point of view.

In relation to Item 12, Councillor Conroy pointed out that the Gifts and Hospitality policy was last reviewed around December 2017.

C18.18-19 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 JUNE 2018

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2018 be agreed as a correct record, and that Mr Shingleton check the Council's website to ensure agendas and minutes of this Committee are included.

C19.18-19 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members considered the revised Terms of Reference of the Committee. The Chair asked whether it would be appropriate to further amend them to

include reviewing the progress of decisions made by the Council and its Committees and Sub-Committees. The Internal Auditor will consider this and advise at a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Terms of Reference be agreed, subject to further consideration of whether to include reference to implementing decisions made by the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees.

C20.18-19 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS OF WORK

a) Members considered reports from the Internal Auditor on nine completed audits this year to date. These were:

Audit Report 1 – Accounts Payable – **Full Assurance**

Audit Report 2 – Accounts Receivable – **Full Assurance**

Audit Report 3 – Allotments – **Substantial Assurance**

The Auditor included an Action Plan which identified the need to recover two outstanding rents and ensure all tenancy agreements are on file; ensure recommendations from the April 2018 Council meeting are communicated to staff and ensure completed tenancy agreements for Storehouse allotments are on file.

Audit Report 4 – Cemeteries – **Full Assurance** (and not Substantial Assurance as stated in the Report).

Audit Report 5 – Officers' & Members' Allowances & Expenses - **Full Assurance**

The Chair asked whether Members Expenses could be published based on the Municipal Year rather than the Financial Year. Mr Shingleton would look into this.

Audit Report 6 – Payroll – **Full Assurance**

Audit Report 7 – Risk Management – **Substantial Assurance**

The Auditor included an Action Plan which referred to the need to ensure meetings of this Committee were again held regularly following the disruption caused by circumstances in the last six months. Mr Shingleton stated that the annual review of Internal Control would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee and to full council at its meeting in March.

Audit Report 8 – Income and Banking - **Full Assurance**

Audit Report 9 – Main Accounting – **Full Assurance**

b) Members considered the proposed Terms of Reference for the audit of Corporate Governance arrangements.

RESOLVED:

That Members:

- a) **Note the conclusions in the nine audit reports completed by Mr Fletcher, and the recommendations in the two Action Plans;**
- b) **Notify Mr Fletcher by email as soon as possible of any proposed changes to the terms of reference for the Corporate Governance audit.**
- c) **Thank Mr Fletcher for his work.**

C21.18-19 BUDGET GROWTH ITEMS

Members considered the list of bids for growth items not included in the Budget for 2019/2020. Mr Shingleton informed Members that the fire risk assessments were carried out in early summer 2017.

RESOLVED:

That no progress be made on any of the growth items listed until the procedure for letting contracts is changed to require three sealed bids.

C22.18-19 PARTNERSHIP WORKING AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACTS

Members considered the list of partnership working agreements and contracts.

RESOLVED:

That steps are taken to ensure that all agreements and contracts are properly prepared and signed, including the agreements for shutter door maintenance, fire alarm maintenance and playground inspections.

C23.18-19 STANDING ORDERS

In accordance with the decision made at the Council meeting held on 23 January 2019 (minute number 164.18-19) Members considered Standing Orders 26 to 36. The Chair stated that these were not included in the NALC Model. It would be more appropriate to include some in the introduction to Standing Orders, some in the Constitution of the Council, some as policies and others were not required..

It was considered that:

Standing Orders 26, 27, 28 and 29 – be shown in the introduction to Standing Orders.

Standing Order 30 – to be deleted as not appropriate.

Standing Order 31 – to be deleted as not appropriate, and be included in a separate policy document.

Standing Order 32 – to be deleted as not appropriate, and be included in complaints policy/procedure.

Standing Order 33 – to be deleted as not appropriate.

Standing Orders 34 and 35 – to be deleted as not appropriate

Standing Order 36 – to be deleted as not appropriate, and be included in the Constitution (Delegated Powers).

It was proposed and seconded that Standing Order 36i be amended to read “make any day to day purchases for the Council to exercise its functions, duties and powers up to £1,000 per item”. A named vote was requested.

For the motion: Councillors Cansella, Farry and Jones.

Against the motion: Councillors Roddam and Woods

It was then:

RESOLVED:

That:

- a) Standing Orders 26, 27, 28 and 29 be added to the introduction to Standing Orders;
- b) Standing Orders 30 to 36 be deleted, with Standing Orders 31 and 32 being included elsewhere in policy documents and Standing Order 36 being added to the Constitution, subject to
- c) Standing Order 36i being amended so that the figure of £5,000 is replaced by the figure of £1,000.
- d) The amended document be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee.

C24.18-19 GRANTS AND DONATIONS POLICY

Members considered an amended Grants and Donations Policy

RESOLVED:

That the Policy be approved, subject to paragraph 13 being amended to replace the word “investigation” with a more appropriate word.

C25.18-19 POLICY REVIEW

Members considered a list of Policies previously provided by the Chair.

RESOLVED

That the Chair provides Mr Shingleton with an updated list for consideration at the next meeting.

C26.18-19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

- a) That the date of the next meeting be Tuesday, 5th March 2019 at 6.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 7.30pm

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR.....

DATE.....