

ETHICAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK MONITORING

Report of the County Solicitor

Recommendation: that the Report be noted.

1. The Standards Committee agreed previously that co-opted members of the Committee should attend meetings of the Council, the Cabinet and Committees on an ad-hoc basis to observe and monitor compliance with the Council's ethical governance framework, in line with agreed protocols.
2. Members have, since the report to the previous meeting, attended the following meetings and their views/feedback are summarised below.

Meeting		Co-opted Member/Observer
Personnel Partnership	15 October 2015	Mr Sullivan
Development Management Committee	21 October 2015	Mrs Saltmarsh
Exeter HATOC	9 November 2015	Mr Hodgins
Appeals	9 November 2015	Mr Hodgins
Heath & Wellbeing Board	12 November 2015	Mrs Mayes
Public Rights of Way	26 November 2015	Mr Hodgins
Appointments & Remuneration	18 January 2016	Mrs Saltmarsh/Mr Hodgins
Corporate Services Scrutiny	22 January 2016	Mr Sullivan
Procedures	9 February 2016	Mrs Saltmarsh
Investment & Pension Fund	26 February 2016	Mr Hodgins
Devon Audit Partnership	2 March 2016	Sir Simon Day

3. The following table summarises feedback received from Members on general issues common to all meetings

Observations:	1 = Very Poor and 5 = Very Good				
	1	2	3	4	5
Punctuality and Attendance of Members		✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Appearance and presentation				✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
Speeches: clear, relevant, understandable, audio levels, use of microphones etc.,			✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
Use of appropriate language				✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
Members' Conduct & Behaviour				✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Clear identification and declaration of interests (<i>where so declared</i>)					✓✓✓✓✓✓

Effective Chairmanship/conduct of meeting				✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
Adherence to Agenda				✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
Listening and responding to advice (from Officers)				✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓

4. While there were a number of other observations or issues raised by co-opted members, as set out below, there were no reports of any specific actions or behaviours that might be felt to have resulted in a potential breach of the Code or warranted further action
5. Specific observations by co- opted members were that:
 - there was generally a clear introduction and explanation of issues by Officers;
 - meetings benefitted from firm and effective Chairmanship - and there was evidence of good debate management especially where different views obtained;
 - the need for nameplates to be used ... at all meetings ... for the benefit of those attending, any public present and those who may be viewing via the webcast (where appropriate);
 - in a similar vein, members who arrived late did not always offer any explanation or apology for so doing or then used nameplates provided and/or failed to introduce themselves when speaking;
 - where there was firm exchange of views this was done in a controlled manner and did not descend into acrimony or divert the meeting from the question at hand;
 - Members should refrain from having 'separate conversations' during debates: this is not only discourteous to speakers but may prevent others present hearing what is being said in the debate and may reflect poorly on the conduct of the meeting, particularly when meetings are webcast;
 - where membership of a body may vary (through use of substitutes) it might be helpful for Members to introduce themselves;
 - persons leaving the meeting room should attempt to do so as quietly as possible to avoid disturbing those remaining and participating in/listening to the debates;
 - Officers should be wary of the use of acronyms in Reports: a glossary in such cases is useful for all those attending.
6. Democratic Services staff will also be reminded of the need for Members to use nameplates at all times .. and ensure they do so!
7. This Report has no specific equality, sustainability, legal or public health implications that have not already been assessed and appropriate safeguards and/or actions taken or included within the detailed policies or practices or requirements relating to the conduct of meetings, to safeguard the Council's position.

JAN SHADBOLT

[Electoral Divisions: All]

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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<u>Background Paper</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>File Reference</u>
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Nil