

ETHICAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK MONITORING

Report of the County Solicitor

Recommendation: that the report be noted.

1. The Standards Committee agreed previously that the independent, 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 the agreed protocol.
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
Health & Wellbeing Board	8 March	Mrs Saltmarsh
Children's Scrutiny	20 March	Mr Hodgins
Development Management	21 March	Mr Hipkin
South Hams Highways HATOC	20 April	Mrs Mayes
Farms	15 May	Sir Simon Day
Cabinet	16 May	Mr Hipkin
County Council	24 May	Mr Hodgins
Health & Adult Care Scrutiny	7 June	Mrs Saltmarsh
Devon Audit Partnership	20 June	Mr Hipkin
Cabinet @ 10.30am	11 July	Mrs Mayes
East Devon Highways (HATOC)	12 July	Mr Hodgins
Procedures	10 September	Mr Hipkin
Development Management	19 September	Mr Hipkin
Health & Adult Care Scrutiny	20 September	Mr Hodgins
Corporate, Infrastructure & Regulatory Services Scrutiny	25 September	Mrs Mayes
County Council	4 October	Mrs Mayes
Member Development Steering group	17 October	Mrs Saltmarsh
Mid Devon Highways (HATOC)	29 October	Mr Hodgins

3. The following table summarises feedback received from Members on a number of 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 issues raised by co-opted members in their observations, as set out below, there were no reports of any specific actions or behaviors that might be felt to have resulted in a potential breach of the Code or warranted further action

5. Specific observations by the independent co- opted members were:
- That the slides of the meeting agenda were useful and photographs/maps particularly appropriate in the context of the issues being discussed at the meeting;
 - The documentation issued prior to the meeting was most comprehensive;
 - The meeting was very well chaired;
 - Officers talking at the rear of the room made it hard to hear proceedings;
 - A fairly small meeting attended by several members of the public who were adversely affected by two items on the agenda. They were given ample opportunity to speak and contribute which they did in a very helpful way. It was just the right approach to adopt and they left as happy as could be expected;

- the meeting was professionally conducted;
- there were a number of pertinent questions relating to a variety of topics, indicating engagement by members of the committee;
- the presentation on the Counter Fraud Service appeared to be well received;
- meeting appeared to be well attended;
- Public Health Annual Report.... was a lengthy item, taking a considerable amount of time, but contributions were responded to in a structured way;
- Chair reminded people to be concise and to be careful of their language;
- For the most part contributions were relevant and succinct;
- The number of members speaking meant that the meeting became very long (not that this is a criticism)
- Initial problems with the camera delayed the start;
- With windows open and the flight path for the airport, meeting was noisy at times;
- One Member's phone rang;
- One statement from a non-Cabinet Member overran quite considerably;
- A Member left the meeting to speak to the press;
- The meeting was very well chaired. The subtle, appropriate humour enhances a meeting of this nature;
- Extraneous noise coming in through doors (open doors as very warm). But dealt with appropriately;
- Meeting was well chaired. Members had ample opportunity to seek clarification on issues raised;
- The meeting, which could potentially have raised some contested issues, was very well chaired;
- While the slides were useful and informative, not all were easily visible or legible because of the lighting in the room (or the projector);
- Several of those who went in and out were a bit noisy closing the door;
- The mics were extremely troublesome, only about half appeared to be working and it looked inefficient;
- It was quite cold in Daw;
- Seemed to be a lot of statements rather than questions. Several amendments were put, not sure it was always clear exactly what the final wording was;
- A mobile rang quite loudly during the meeting and that Councillor left the room for some time;
- Some use of forenames by Chair early in the meeting, but used surnames from then on;
- No introduction of the Standards Member attending;
- Room was very cold (Members went out to get coats);
- Some clapping on political points;
- One phone call in meeting and text message notifications coming through;
- Were some moves to circumvent procedures;
- All the microphones worked!;
- Poor attendance, but dates had been changed;
- Good presentation on the rollout of Office 365; including using screens for good visuals;
- Helpful paperwork;
- As the meeting operated quite informally, Members were able to ask questions and examine many issues;
- Contributions by the Officers at the meeting were helpful; and
- Forenames used frequently in the meeting (HATOC).

6. 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