

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 virtually and their views/feedback are summarised below.

Meeting	Date	Co-opted Member/Observer
Public Rights of Way	11/03/2021	Mrs Mayes
Health & Adult Care Scrutiny	18/03/2021	Mrs Saltmarsh
Devon Pension Board	26/04/2021	Mr Hipkin

3. The table below summarises feedback received from Members on a number of general issues common to all meetings.

Observations:	<i>1 = Very Poor and 5 = Very Good</i>				
	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.

- All very clear and helpful guidance as to which page of the pack attendees should be consulting.
- Clear speeches and explanations from the Officers, helpful display of various maps.
- All those speaking should be visible as they do so.
- A controversial item and large number of public speakers with many opposed to the proposals. The majority abided by the timescales set for public speaking and their contributions were easy to hear and they had all just about mastered the technology.
- It was good that minutes of such meetings were put on the website very shortly after the event so that members of the public can be kept informed.
- Whilst the item was causing concern and anxiety, it was good to see the public taking part, even though meetings were being run virtually.
- The meeting overran but it was hard to see how it could have been kept to the timetable, so there is a question of whether meetings should be scheduled more frequently or for a longer time.
- Being virtual it is possible for attendees to dip in and out and no one would know (unfortunate when someone fails to exit properly and their absence is clear for all to see).
- Meeting was very well chaired (Pension Board) – a wide range of questions asked, some quite technical and officers were well prepared.
- Gratifying to see that Members had prepared thoroughly for the meeting.

5. 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