

ETHICAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK MONITORING

Report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services

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 in March 2023, attended the following meetings both virtually and in person and their views/feedback are summarised below.

Meeting	Date	Co-opted Member/Observer
Health and Wellbeing Board	13 April 2023	Anne Mayes
Devon Pension Board	18 April 2023	Ian Hipkin
Procedures	25 April 2023	Ian Hipkin
Children's Scrutiny Committee	6 June 2023	Ruth Saltmarsh
Investment and Pension Fund Committee	16 June 2023	Ray Hodgins
Cabinet	12 July 2023	Anne Mayes
Council	7 September 2023	Ray Hodgins
Farms Estate	11 September 2023	Ian Hipkin
Audit	25 September	Ian Hipkin
Devon Authorities Strategic Waste Committee	17 October 2023	Anne Mayes
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	15 November 2023	Ray Hodgins
Devon Education Forum	22 November 2023	Ruth Saltmarsh
Public Rights of Way	23 November 2023	Ruth Saltmarsh
Cabinet	13 December 2023	Ray Hodgins
Procedures	1 February 2024	Ray Hodgins
Audit	28 February 2024	Ruth Saltmarsh

3. The table below 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 (where so declared)					N/A ✓✓ N/A N/A ✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓ N/A N/A ✓✓
Effective Chairing/conduct of meeting			✓		✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
Adherence to Agenda				✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
Listening and responding to advice (from Officers)			✓	✓	N/A ✓✓✓ N/A ✓✓ ✓ N/A ✓✓✓✓

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. Among the comments made were as follows:
- It was difficult to ascertain whether everyone was in the meeting.
 - The Chair had asked everyone present to introduce themselves, which was helpful.
 - A suggestion that those attending remotely should be encouraged to turn their camera off when not speaking (disconcerting to have a third of the screen taken up by one person looking directly at you and every now and again drinking from a flask).
 - Good, informed discussion.
 - There was lively discussion which the Chair and others handled well.
 - The new Chair for the meeting and their introduction was clear and helpful. The meeting started at 10.30 and was closed about 2 ½ hours later. It was questioned whether enough time was being allocated to give the appropriate level of consideration, by so many people, to critical issues?
 - Well chaired.
 - For the early part of the meeting, the sound was generally poor and at times inaudible, but it was rectified later in the meeting.

- A substantial agenda with a vast number of pages. The meeting was well chaired with plenty of time for questions.
 - Could not see who was speaking and did not know their name every time. It was helpful when those presenting shared their screens, but not all did.
 - There were several issues in this meeting which caused it to be a turbulent affair. This was not the first Education Forum attended where members had been vocal over certain issues and consequently it became a difficult meeting for the Chair. The details of the meeting have been discussed with the appropriate Officer and the concerns raised. (N.B Appropriate remedial actions have been taken to try to reduce future issues and improvements have been made).
 - Business was conducted in an orderly way. The paperwork which was sent to members about each of the applications was detailed and informative. It gave historical and up to date information and maps which were both relevant and helpful for Members making decisions.
 - Members listened to advice from officers.
 - The meeting was well chaired and efficiently and effectively run.
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.

MARIA PRICE

[Electoral Divisions: All]

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for Enquiries: J Jones

Tel No: 01392 380547 Room: G31

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