

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
Children's Scrutiny	10 November 2020	Mrs Saltmarsh
Cabinet	11 November 2020	Mrs Mayes
Health and Wellbeing Board	21 January 2021	Mrs Mayes
East Devon HATOC	8 February 2021	Mr Hodgins
Heart of the SW LEP Scrutiny	11 February 2021	Mr Hipkin

3. The table overleaf 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>)					✓✓ as far as known
Effective Chairmanship/conduct of meeting					✓✓✓✓✓
Adherence to Agenda					✓✓✓✓✓
Listening and responding to advice (from Officers)					✓✓✓ 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.
- attendees should be asked to turn the camera off when they aren't speaking and / or have no intention of so doing.
 - intrigued by the backdrops some Members choose.
 - would be helpful if the length of time that people speak is displayed, it's can be awkward when the fact that they've overrun is mentioned.
 - appeared all Members were able to join the meeting and the meeting started on time. The meeting progressed in a very orderly fashion with Members indicating when they wanted to speak and muting when they had finished.
 - Internet connection issues experienced but managed to rejoin having missed a substantial part of item 7. Whilst the sound was fine, vision was lost. It was hoped that Members didn't experience the same issues with poor broadband.

- In relation item 8 (Post Ofsted improvements to Children's Services), the speeches were clear, relevant and understandable. The paperwork was also helpful. Questions were asked to try and understand why the 'Inadequate' grading had come about and Members expressed concern that questions previously asked to which reassuring answers had been given had masked reality. Questions were asked about how relationships and challenge could be improved as well as communication between staff and senior management.
 - It was pleasing to see that Members were far from complacent about what had happened and they expressed their wish and willingness to scrutinise, challenge and improve services for children.
 - what I saw and heard was very good. The meeting was effectively chaired and it appeared that everybody had the chance to express their opinion.
 - a 5 minute break here and there would have been welcomed.
 - The meeting was well chaired, and all members were afforded the time to make their points.
 - Very well run meeting (Exeter HATOC).
 - Some shared documents were in very small print and impossible to read.
 - problems encountered with Teams, it demanded an update but then wouldn't do it and I had to sign using an alternative email and password.
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