

Staff Governance Committee Annual Effectiveness Report



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 I am pleased to present the second annual effectiveness report for the Staff Governance Committee. As Members will be aware, as part of their interim assessment of the Council's governance arrangements in 2016, CIPFA recommended that Committees review the extent to which they had operated within their Terms of Reference, through an annual report. This year, the Council was the first in Scotland to be awarded the CIPFA Mark of Excellence in Governance, and the annual effectiveness report was again highlighted by CIPFA as one of the examples of good governance implemented by the Council. The annual effectiveness report also informs the annual review of the Council's Scheme of Governance and enables officers to identify if any changes are required, for example, to the Committee Terms of Reference.
- 1.2 As part of the 2020 review, changes were made to the Staff Governance Committee Terms of Reference to provide greater clarity and those will be monitored throughout the year and taken into consideration during next year's review and the preparation of the third annual committee effectiveness report.
- 1.3 The annual report is a good mechanism for the Committee to support the Council's improvement journey by demonstrating the ways that the business of the Committee contributes to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. It provides Members with the opportunity to reflect on the business over the past year and to look to the Committee's focus for the year ahead.
- 1.4 As we are all aware this has been a very difficult time for all. The Committee as such has not been meeting since the original lockdown which was put in place for the COVID-19 virus. However this has meant that it has been a very busy time for both staff and the trade unions. They have been working well together to keep each other informed and up to date with the actions the Council has been taking to see us through the situation we find ourselves. I give my sincere thanks to all who have been working so hard to keep our staff and citizens safe at this very trying time.



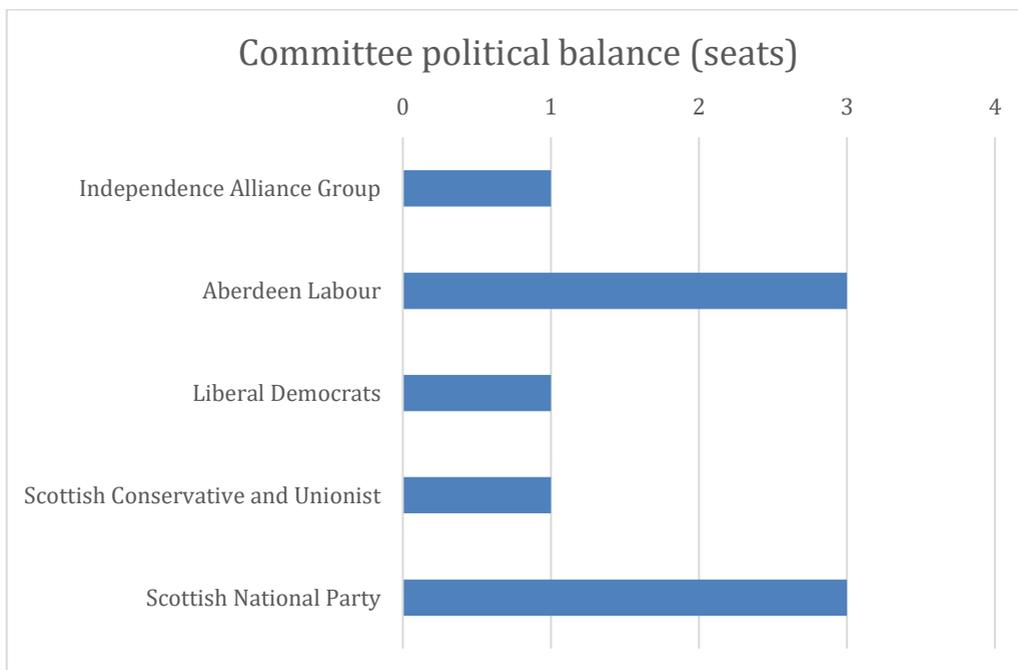
Councillor Yvonne Allan
Convener, Staff Governance Committee

2. THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The Staff Governance Committee was established to incorporate the roles of the Joint Consultative Committee, the Corporate Health and Safety Committee and the Appeals Committee. The role of the Committee is to build on the cultural aim previously established to secure equal attention on staff; to integrate all matters affecting staff within a single committee; to include local trade union representatives as advisers, with provision for substitutes, to enable joint working; to approve staff policies; and to provide a forum to develop the existing partnership between the Council and all Trade Unions to support the Council becoming an employer of choice.
- 2.2 The previous Terms of Reference for the Committee as approved by Council in March 2019 are appended to the report.

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE DURING 2019/2020

- 3.1 The Staff Governance Committee has nine members and the composition is presented below. The Committee also has Trade Union Advisers – two from each recognised Trade Union, who sit on the Committee but are not voting members.



4. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 4.1 There were no changes to the Committee membership throughout the reporting period.

5. MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Member	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances	Substituted
Councillor Allan	4	4	
Councillor Cameron	4	4	
Councillor Copland	4	4	
Councillor Delaney	4	3	1
Councillor Graham	4	3	1
Councillor Houghton	4	3	1
Councillor Hutchison	4	4	
Councillor Macdonald	4	4	
Councillor Reynolds	4	2	2

6. MEETING CONTENT

6.1 During the 2019/2020 reporting period (29 April 2019 to 30 April 2020), the Committee had 4 meetings and considered a total of 16 reports. The March 2020 meeting of the Committee was cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the decision of Council to cancel all committee meetings until August 2020 with business critical reports being considered by the Urgent Business Committee. As a result, the amendments to the Special Leave Policy and the appointment of members to the Appeals Sub Committee reports were considered at the Urgent Business Committee.

6.2 Terms of Reference

Of the 16 reports received the following table details how the reports aligned to the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

Terms of Reference	Count of Terms of Reference
General Delegations To Committees 7.4	1
General Delegations To Committees 7.5	1
Purpose of Committee 4	3
Purpose of Committee 5	1
Purpose of Committee 8	2
Remit of Committee 1.3	1
Remit of Committee 2.1	3
Remit of Committee 3.1	2
Remit of Committee 4.1	4
Remit of Committee 4.2	4
Remit of Committee 4.3	4
Remit of Committee 4.4	2
Remit of Committee 4.5	3
Remit of Committee 4.6	1

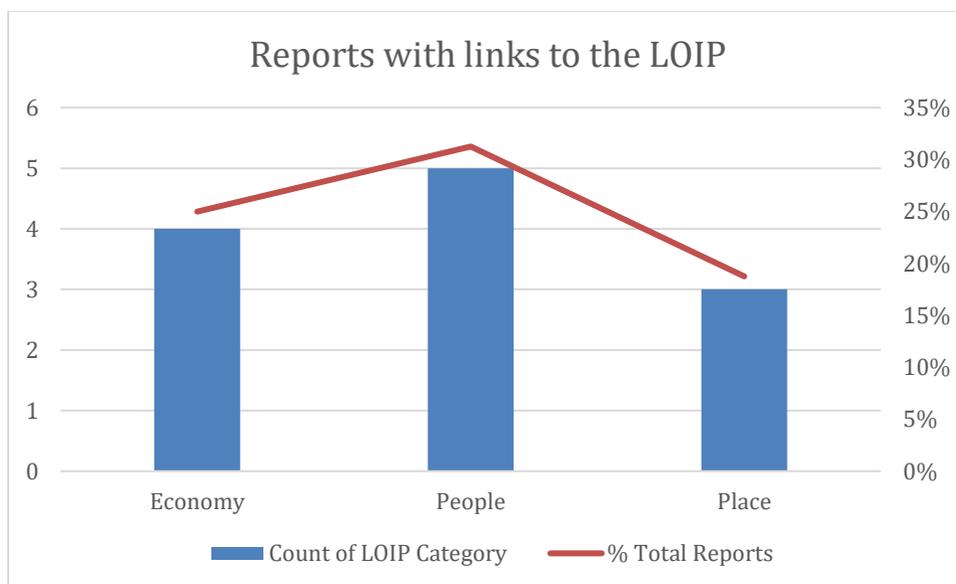
6.3 During the course of 2019/2020 the Staff Governance Committee received reports under the majority of its Terms of Reference. This would indicate that the Committee has discharged its role throughout the course of the reporting period.

6.4 There have been no reports under Remit 1.1 and 1.2 specifically (develop the partnership approach between the Council and Trade Unions / provide a forum, where appropriate, for discussion on and resolution of matters of common interest and/or concern) however the operation of this Committee enables all reports to be considered via a partnership approach and allows for the resolution of matters of common interest through debate and discussion at meetings. Therefore while those Terms of Reference have not specifically been listed on reports, most reports to the Staff Governance Committee could be said to fall into the categories.

6.5 There was also no report under Remit 6.1 as there was no requirement to review the Appeals Sub Committee Procedure during this year.

6.6 Local Outcome Improvement Plan

The following table details of the 16 reports how many had a link to the themes of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.



6.7 Reports and Committee Decisions

The following table details the outcome of the Committee’s consideration of the 16 reports presented to it throughout the year.

	Total	% Total Reports
Confidential	0	0%
Exempt	0	0%

Number of reports where the Committee has amended officer recommendations	0	0%
Number and percentage of reports approved unanimously	16	100%
Number of reports or service updates requested by members during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in forward planner	1	6%
Service update requested	1	6%
Number of decisions delayed for further information	0	0%
Number of times the Convener has had to remind Members about acceptable behaviour and the ethical values of Public Life	0	0%
Number of late reports received by the Committee (i.e. reports not available for inspection by members of the public at least three clear days before a meeting)	0	0%
Number of referrals to Council, or other Committees in terms of Standing Order 33.1	0	0%

6.8 Notices of Motion, Suspension of Standing Orders, Interface with the Public

Number of notices of motion	0
Number of times Standing Orders were suspended and the specific Standing Orders suspended	0
Standing order number (ref)	N/A
Number of deputations or other indicators of interface with the public, i.e. engagement and social media.	0
Number of petitions considered	0
Number of Members attending meetings of the committee as observers	2
Number of Meetings held by the Convener with other Conveners, relevant parties, to discuss joint working and key issues being raised at other Committee meetings	Fortnightly meetings held

7. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- 7.1 No training was identified as being required in the 2019/20 reporting period. This will however be monitored throughout 2020/21 and developed if requested by Members and Trade Union Advisers.

8. CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 8.1 No declarations of interest were made by Councillors during the reporting period. Information in respect of declarations of interest is measured to evidence awareness of the requirements to adhere to the Councillors' Code of Conduct and the responsibility to ensure fair decision-making.

9. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- 9.1 Due to the nature of the Staff Governance Committee business, there are fewer opportunities for civic engagement, however if appropriate, elements of civic engagement would be introduced.

10. OFFICER SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE

Officer	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances	Substitute Attendances
Director of Resources	4	3	1
Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development	4	4	
Team Leader - Governance	4	4	

11. EXECUTIVE LEAD'S COMMENTS

- 11.1 The Committee continues to work effectively and collaboratively, and I am pleased to note that all business was approved or noted unanimously. This is in line with the aim that there be consensus in relation to the Committee's business, and much effort has been undertaken to ensure that there is proper consultation with Trade Unions and consideration given to their views prior to items being discussed at the Committee.

- 11.2 Although the business of the Committee was somewhat curtailed by the cancellation of meetings due to COVID-19, prior to that Members had received reports on some important areas of Council business including the workforce development plan and capability framework; the revised Performance Review and Development scheme, Continuous Review and Development; and the new initiative in respect of the internal movement and recruitment of staff. Members considered reports on the successful efforts to improve the situation in respect of LGV Driver retention and recruitment, and continue to receive reports on policies which have been reviewed and updated to bring them into line with the Council's Guiding Principles. The Committee also receives regular reports on health and safety statistics to allow Members to discharge their role in relation to keeping under review the measures taken to ensure the health and safety at work of employees.

11.3 In order to maintain transparency and openness, particularly as the Committee business often relates to matters which may be relevant and of interest to employees, there is a focus on ensuring that the number of exempt reports is kept to a minimum and all business this year was considered in public session.

11.4 The Trade Union Advisers were again asked for feedback this year on how they felt the Committee had operated:-

EIS comments - I think the Committee has been run very effectively and chaired very efficiently by Councillor Allan. Very happy with the contribution that the Trade Unions have on the Committee as I think that it is important that they have a voice on the issues that have been raised. I think that this is fairly reflected in how the Convener chairs the Committee meetings. A very positive experience.

12. NEXT YEAR'S FOCUS

12.1 New Terms of Reference for the Staff Governance Committee were approved at Council in March 2020 as part of the annual Scheme of Governance review. There will be a further review of the Scheme in March 2021. Throughout the next reporting year, we will review the Terms of Reference in line with the business submitted to the Committee and reflect on whether any areas require further refinement moving forward to ensure the efficient operation of the Committee.

12.2 Areas of focus from the Business Planner – The Committee will continue to receive any policies which are due for update or which require to be refreshed to bring them into line with the Guiding Principles, including a future report on the revised Corporate Health & Safety Policy.

**Previous Staff Governance Committee Terms of Reference
Approved by Council on 4 March 2019**

PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE

1. To further develop the existing partnership approach between the Council and all trade unions in order to support the Council becoming an employer of choice.
2. To approve and monitor the Framework Agreement for Industrial Relations (“the FAIR agreement”).
3. To act as a consultative body between management, elected members and trade unions, and act as a forum for discussion, on matters affecting conditions of service. This will be one of the ways in which the Council meets consultation requirements.
4. To approve and monitor workforce strategies which ensure the Council has a workforce fit for the capabilities required to be a 21st century council.
5. To approve all staff policies.
6. To provide a channel of communication, co-operation and involvement between the Council and trade union representatives on all relevant health and safety matters.
7. To act as a safety committee within section 2(7) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and to keep under review measures taken to ensure the health and safety at work of employees.
8. To monitor the Council’s compliance with its policies and procedures and ensure that it takes such action to ensure it complies with all health and safety legislation.
9. To take the lead in establishing and promoting a positive culture, ways of working and values for the organisation and its staff which will reflect public expectation about the conduct and behaviour of public officials.

REMIT OF COMMITTEE

1. Partnership approach arrangements

The Committee will:

- 1.1 develop the partnership approach between the Council and trade unions; and
- 1.2 provide a forum, where appropriate, for discussion on and resolution of matters of common interest and/or concern, including but not restricted to:-
 - 1.2.1 conditions of service, or reorganisation/restructure affecting conditions of service (except teachers); and
 - 1.2.2 arrangements for the strategic training and welfare of all staff; and
- 1.3 consider reports by the Chief Officer – Organisational Development on matters following a request by a trade union advisor provided always that the Chief Officer – Organisational Development is satisfied that the matter is appropriate and relevant to the remit of the Committee and that it raises no question of individual employee issues.

2. Workforce Strategies

The Committee will:

- 2.1 determine and monitor the compliance with workforce related strategies which reflect the requirements of a 21st century Council in terms of staff and skills and attributes; and
- 2.2 approve an annual strategic training and development plan for the whole organisation.

3. Council Policies Affecting Staff

The Committee will:

- 3.1 develop, approve and monitor the implementation of all staff policies; and

- 3.2 monitor equality in employment and ensure that the Council, as an employer, complies with its statutory equal pay and other equality responsibilities.

4. Health, Safety & Wellbeing of Staff

The Committee will:

- 4.1 actively reinforce health, safety and wellbeing roles and responsibilities amongst staff;
- 4.2 receive appropriate levels of assurance to monitor compliance with health and safety legislation;
- 4.3 scrutinise and review health, safety and wellbeing policy, performance, trends and improvements;
- 4.4 approve and keep under review the Corporate Health and Safety Annual Audit Plan;
- 4.5 consider reports on health, safety and wellbeing from all services of the Council to help ensure that services are complying with relevant policies; and
- 4.6 monitor compliance with health and safety recommendations.

5. Establishing and Promoting Values for the Organisation

The Committee will:

- 5.1 approve and promote a Behavioural Framework for the Council.

6. Employment Appeals and Disputes

The Committee will:

- 6.1 be responsible for approving and keeping under review the procedure for the Appeals Sub Committee.

JOINT WORKING WITH OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

The Committee will maintain an awareness of key issues arising through the work of other committees of the Council, through lead officers, conveners and vice conveners working together and attending other committees as observers. This will help to ensure that relevant information is shared to aid understanding of workforce performance matters. A key relationship will be required with committees in order to be assured that staff are being properly engaged and consulted with on specific transformation proposals.

JOINT WORKING WITH NON COUNCIL BODIES

The Committee, through its lead officers, will work jointly with external bodies such as the Health and Safety Executive to ensure that Council benefits from external review and assurance.

