

GOVERNANCE REFERENCE GROUP

MINUTE OF MEETING OF 27 APRIL 2023

In attendance: Councillors McLellan, Malik (as substitute for Councillor Crockett), Massey (as substitute for Councillor Houghton), Nicoll, Radley and Yuill.

Apologies: Councillor Mrs Stewart.

Officers in attendance: Vikki Cuthbert, Steven Inglis, Gogo Okafor, Martyn Orchard, Michele Pittendreigh and Helen Sherrit.

No.	Agenda Item	Notes of Discussion/Decisions	Action	By Whom
1.	Appointment of Chairperson	<p>The Group was requested to appoint a Chairperson.</p> <p><u>The Group resolved:-</u> to appoint Councillor Radley as Chairperson.</p>		
2.	Minute of Previous Meeting of 20 January 2022	<p>The Group had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 20 January 2022.</p> <p><u>The Group resolved:-</u> to approve the minute.</p>		
3.	Scheme of Governance Review	<p>The Group received a verbal update from Vikki Cuthbert, Interim Chief Officer - Governance (Assurance), on progress with the Scheme of Governance review. Vikki advised that colleagues had been keeping a log of issues and had created a document setting out proposals to form the basis of the review, which was currently subject to consultation with Chief Officers and other colleagues.</p> <p>The Group then received a presentation from Vikki, Martyn Orchard, Steven Inglis, Michele Pittendreigh and Helen Sherrit which (a) detailed the timeline for the Scheme of Governance review, culminating in a report being submitted to Council on 14 June 2023; and (b) contained a short summary of proposed changes being contemplated in relation to the Committee Terms of Reference,</p>		

No.	Agenda Item	Notes of Discussion/Decisions	Action	By Whom
		<p>Standing Orders, Powers Delegated to Officers, Procurement Regulations, Member-Officer Relations Protocol and Financial Regulations.</p> <p>With regard to the possible change to Standing Orders to insert a deadline for submission of draft motions/amendments for review by officers (on a should rather than must basis), there was support from some members of the Group, and Councillors Malik and Massey were requested to raise the matter with their Group Leaders for their feedback. It was noted that there could be a limited number of working days between publication of the agenda and any new deadline for submission of motions/amendments, however officers emphasised that this was just for draft proposals to allow officers the opportunity to review - they did not need to be fully developed or finalised.</p> <p>In terms of the matter raised at the Council meeting the previous day about wording of Notices of Motion not being listed in the agenda front sheet but instead attached as documents within the agenda, officers explained that this was simply a formatting issue due to the length of Notices of Motion and how they were processed by the committee management system, however they would look into the matter.</p> <p>Councillor Yuill highlighted that Councillors were increasingly raising Points of Order at meetings and quoting Standing Order 27; however Standing Order 27 only allowed them to raise a Point of Order and they were required to state which Standing Order, law or section of the Councillors' Code of Conduct had been breached. Officers responded that they were currently looking to develop a guide with regard to meeting protocol and etiquette and it would cover such matters.</p> <p>With regard to the proposal within the Procurement Regulations to increase the remit of officers to approve social care business cases to 'light touch threshold', Councillor Nicoll sought assurance that sufficient checks and balances would be in place. Officers responded that they would run the proposal past auditors and other proposals more generally.</p>		

No.	Agenda Item	Notes of Discussion/Decisions	Action	By Whom
		<p>It was highlighted that the agenda contained a feedback form which members were encouraged to complete and return if they had any specific feedback on the Scheme of Governance. It was noted that the next meeting of the Group was scheduled for 9 May and more detailed proposals would be circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><u>The Group resolved:-</u> to note the update and that proposals would be circulated in due course.</p>		