



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2023

10.15 AM (OR AT THE CONCLUSION OF CABINET, WHICHEVER IS THE LATER) COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

MEMBERSHIP - Councillor Keith Glazier (Chair)
Councillors Nick Bennett, Bob Bowdler, Chris Collier, Johnny Denis and David Tutt

A G E N D A

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September (*Pages 3 - 6*)
2. Apologies for absence
3. Disclosures of interests
Disclosures by all members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
4. Urgent items
Notification of items which the Chair considers to be urgent and proposes to take at the appropriate part of the agenda. Any members who wish to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chair before the start of the meeting. In so doing, they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgent.
5. Scrutiny Chairs (*Pages 7 - 8*)
Report by the Assistant Chief Executive.
6. Member Training and Development Programme (*Pages 9 - 18*)
Report by the Assistant Chief Executive.
7. Outside Body Appointment - Joint Parking Board (*Pages 19 - 22*)
Report of the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.
8. Employee loans for Visa fees (*Pages 23 - 24*)
Report of the Chief Operating Officer.
9. Any other items previously notified under agenda item 4

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent
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30 October 2023

Contact Georgina Seligmann, Governance and Democracy Manager
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GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Governance Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes on 28 September 2023.

PRESENT Councillors Keith Glazier (Chair), Nick Bennett, Bob Bowdler, Chris Collier and David Tutt

ALSO PRESENT Councillors Godfrey Daniel, Johnny Denis, Claire Dowling, Julia Hilton, Wendy Maples, Stephen Shing, Bob Standley, Trevor Webb

19. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2023

19.1 RESOLVED – that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 18 July 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

20. REPORTS

20.1 Copies of the reports referred to below are included in the minute book.

21. ALLOCATION OF PLACES FOR COMMITTEES

21.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive regarding the allocation of places on committees, sub-committees and panels as a result of the by-elections in July and August 2023.

21.2 The Committee RESOLVED:

i) to recommend the County Council to:

- 1) Increase the Membership of the Governance Committee to 6 members; and
- 2) Agree the allocations to political and independent groups the places on, and membership of, the main committees in Appendix 1 of the report and other committees and panels listed in Appendix 2 of the report; and
- 3) Agree to appoint:
 - 4) a) Councillor Johnny Denis to the Governance Committee;
 - b) Councillor Anne Cross to the Regulatory Committee;
 - c) Councillor Charles Clark to the People Scrutiny Committee;
 - d) Councillor Colin Swansborough to the People Scrutiny Committee;
 - e) Councillor Brett Wright to the Place Scrutiny Committee.

ii) That a report on the allocation of Places to Chairs and Vice Chairs be brought to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration.

22. ALLOCATION OF PLACES FOR OUTSIDE BODIES

22.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive regarding the appointments of members to outside bodies on which the County Council is represented following the by-elections in July and August 2023.

22.2 The Committee RESOLVED to:

1. to recommend the County Council to:

- a) Agree the allocation to political and independent groups of places on the East Sussex Fire Authority and to appoint Councillor Stephen Shing.
- b) Allocate to political and independent groups places on the Conservators of Ashdown Forest.

2. The Committed RESOLVED to agree (i) the appointment of Councillor Julia Hilton as a second representative on the Police and Crime Panel for a one year period subject to an invitation being received from the Police and Crime Panel for the Council to appoint a Green second Councillor; and (ii) that Councillor John Ungar be shown to have replaced Councillor David Tutt on the East Sussex Fire Authority.

23. MOTIONS TO FULL COUNCIL

23.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive regarding the review of the County Council's procedure for considering Notices of Motion.

23.2 The Committee RESOLVED:

i) to recommend the County Council to agree:

- 1) The revised process for considering motions at Full Council (as set out in paragraph 3 of the report).
- 2) That the deadline for submitted notices of motion for before a Full Council meeting be amended to 20 working days before that meeting date; and
- 3) That the Constitution be amended accordingly.

ii) that an update report on the procedure changes be brought back to the Committee in six months' time.

24. GUIDANCE FOR THE PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COUNCIL

24.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive regarding an amendment to the constitution concerning questions from members of the public at Full Council meetings.

24.2 The Committee RESOLVED to recommend the County Council to agree to the proposed amendment to the Constitution set out in paragraph 1.4 of the report.

25. IRP REPORT ON REMUNERATION

25.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive regarding the remuneration of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

25.2 The Committee RESOLVED to note the outcome of the review of the rate of remuneration of the Independent Remuneration Panel members and to agree the continuation of the rate of remuneration (IRP) as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

26. PENSION BOARD MEMBERSHIP

26.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive regarding appointments to the East Sussex Pension Board.

26.2 The Committee RESOLVED to:

- 1) Appoint Trevor Redmond to the Pension Board for the period of 28 September 2023 to 27 September 2025; and
- 2) Appoint Neil Simpson and Councillor Andrew Wilson as Pension Board Vice Chairs.

27. RELOCATION SCHEME

27.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Operating Officer regarding the expansion of the employee relocation scheme.

27.2 The Committee RESOLVED to agree that the relocation scheme be expanded to allow reimbursement of all reasonable expenses associated with relocation up to a maximum amount of £8,000.

28. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE REPORT 2022/23

28.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport regarding the Customer Service Annual Report.

28.2 The Committee RESOLVED to:

- 1) Note the progress of the Customer Service Experience Board in the implementation of a series of measures to improve customer experience.
- 2) Support the Customer Experience Board's project which will develop and implement a system that will provide a single, comprehensive dataset of customer contacts across all channels in order to improve service delivery and potential channel shift.
- 3) Note the number and nature of complaints made to the Council in 2022/23; and
- 4) Note the contents of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's annual letter to the Chief Executive.

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Report to:	Governance Committee
Date of meeting:	7 November 2023
By:	Assistant Chief Executive
Title:	Chairing arrangements for Scrutiny and Audit Committees
Purpose:	To consider a report on the current arrangements for the allocation of Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny and Audit Committees.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Governance Committee is recommended to note the report.

1 Background Information

1.1 The arrangements for Scrutiny Committees were reviewed and updated in March 2018 and a new structure was agreed which established three Scrutiny Committees and a separate Audit Committee. As part of this review and restructure, the Governance Committee noted the importance of opposition members to successful scrutiny and agreed that the long-standing arrangements for allocation of Chairs and Vice Chairs in accordance with political balance should continue.

2 Allocations for Chairing Scrutiny Committees

2.1 Officers have been asked to set out the current arrangements for the allocation of Chairs for Scrutiny Committees. The Council's Constitution provides that the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Committees and Audit Committee should be added together and the positions then allocated to groups in accordance to the number of seats they have on the Council. Within this allocation the Chair of the Audit Committee is appointed from the members of the largest Group not represented on the Cabinet.

2.3 The arrangements for the Chairing of Scrutiny Committees are reviewed annually and are next due for review at the May 2024 meeting of Full Council. When they were last reviewed it was agreed that the allocation of the 8 places (4 Chairs and 4 Vice-Chairs) would be as follows:

Conservative – 4

Liberal Democrat – 2

Labour – 1

Green – 1

Independent Democrat – 0

2.4 The allocations remain unchanged after the by-elections in July and August 2023 and therefore no changes were required to the political allocations of Chairs and Vice-Chairs.

3 Conclusion

3.1 The Committee is asked to note the Council's current arrangements for the allocation of Chairs and Vice Chairs to Scrutiny Committees as detailed in the report.

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Georgina Seligmann Tel: 01273 482355
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Local Member: All

Background Documents: None

Committee: **Governance Committee**

Date: **7 November 2023**

Title: **Member Training and Development Update**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Purpose of report: **To provide an update on the training and development activities offered to Members.**

RECOMMENDATION:

The Governance Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the programme of training and development activities offered to Members.

1. Background

1.1. Member Services is responsible for devising and maintaining a programme of Member training and development activities in response to Member needs and requests.

1.2. As part of this offer a comprehensive induction programme was delivered for newly elected and returning Members following the County Council elections in May 2021. A summary of the courses delivered during the induction phase is provided at Appendix 1. After the completion of the induction phase, an ongoing programme of training commenced with new courses being added regularly. The programme has provided Members with access to both internal and external training to support the development of key skills as well as the provision of further topic-specific sessions.

1.3. The programme is developed with input from Members. Members' views are primarily collated via surveys circulated to all Members, feedback from the Member Reference Group who regularly review the training programme at its meetings and requests made by Members on an individual basis.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 Courses delivered to Members cover a wide range of topics. For example, courses have been delivered on support with practical matters such as getting the most out of Microsoft Outlook, Member wellbeing, committee focused courses, scrutiny-related training and sessions that provide Members with useful information about the county (such as briefings on the latest Census outcomes). Following earlier effective scrutiny training, scrutiny committees are now exploring topics for 'bitesize' briefings, with an initial session offering a refresher on questioning skills. A summary of the training sessions delivered as part of the ongoing programme is provided at Appendix 2. The current version of the training programme is provided at Appendix 3. The training for this period includes sessions on treasury management and landscape and planning.

2.2 Following feedback from Members, the majority of training courses are now delivered remotely via Microsoft Teams. This method of delivery makes it easier for Members to attend, is more time efficient and helps reduce travel across the county. Whilst the majority of courses are delivered via remote means, where appropriate some courses have been delivered in person (for example, with the training relates to the specific functions of a committee and the training can take place before a meeting).

2.3 It should also be noted that for those courses delivered remotely, a recording of the session together with the slides used in the session are made available on the Councillors' Area of the intranet. This enables Members who were not able to attend the session to still benefit from the course and also other Members who did attend, to refresh their memory and review the slides when convenient.

2.4 The Member Reference Group has a key role in reviewing the training programme and suggesting new topics that would benefit Members. The group is comprised of a representative from each of the political groups. The group meets on a quarterly basis.

2.5 The most recent survey of Member training needs was conducted in March 2023. This resulted in two responses which asked for training on a number of topics. This included, for example, a request for training on the role of public health in local government. At its meeting in June 2023, the Member Reference Group discussed the survey outcomes and provided feedback on the survey process itself. This feedback will be used by the Member Services team to inform how the next survey is conducted.

2.6 To further enhance the training opportunities available to Members, a list of external training sessions delivered by the Local Government Association, South-East Employers and other external bodies is updated regularly and is available to Members via the intranet and the Members' Room.

2.7 The Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) found that the Council has a continuous member training programme which is reviewed regularly and any improvements needed are taken into account via member feedback and emerging issues. The CPC considered that in the current financial climate it would be prudent to review member training on budget/finances, audit and risk management.

2.8 Members have received training on the Council's budget-setting and monitoring processes and recordings of those remain available for members to refresh their understanding if they wish to. Training has also been delivered to members on the fiduciary duties of the Council and a training session on treasury management is scheduled for November. Members of the Audit Committee also receive a series of specific training sessions to support them in their role. Members are also invited to Whole Council Forums at key points in the annual budget setting and business planning cycle. This area of training will continue to be kept under review and refreshed.

3. Conclusion and recommendations

3.1 The programme of training activities offered to Members is primarily informed by feedback from Members and input from the Member Reference Group. The Governance Committee is asked to consider and comment on the training opportunities offered to Members.

PHILIP BAKER

Assistant Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Stuart McKeown

Tel. 01273 481583

Local Member: All

Background Documents

None

2021 Induction

Date	Session	Attendance
11/05/2021	Welcome Presentation	32
18/05/2021	Member Induction: Essential Guide to the Council and Meetings	25
20/05/2021	Member Induction: Supporting you to be an Effective Councillor	23
28/05/2021	Introduction to RPPR	20
03/06/2021	Pension Committee Induction	6
04/06/2021	HOSC Induction	3
07/06/2001	Planning and Regulatory Committees	16
09/06/2021 & 15/07/2021	External Bodies	12
07/06021 & 14/06/2021	Essential Guide to Scrutiny	11
17/06/2021	Code of Conduct and Equalities Duties	34
22/06/2021	Highways	26
01/07/2021	Essential Guide to the Audit Committee	8
14/07/2021	Planning Committee Induction - TROs	12
14/07/2021	Corporate Parenting	35
16/07/2021	Road Safety	23
20/07/2021	Refresher Member Induction Session: Full Council Meetings	13

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Member Training and Development

Date	Session	Attendance
11/08/2021	Audit Committee - PPE Valuation	4
13/10/2021	Planning Committee - Minerals and Waste Policy	9
21/10/2021	Whole Council Forum on Ashdown Forest	16
19/11/2021	Audit Committee Treasury	6
23/11/2021	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Leadership	11
29/11/2021	East Sussex in Figures	13
10/12/2021	Council Finances and Understanding the Budget Setting Process	15
15/12/2021	Regulatory Committee Village Greens	6
10/01/2022	Data Protection and Elected Representatives	22
01/02/2022	East Sussex Highways	25
11/02/2022 & 28/02/2022	Effective Scrutiny	18
18/02/2022	Emergency Planning	12
21/02/2022	Economic Development	13
16/03/2022	Transport Implications of Development Proposals	10
12/04/2022	Waste Service	12
13/04/2022	Planning Monitoring and Enforcement Training	13
27/04/2022 & 06/05/2022	Climate Awareness	25
15/06/2022	Planning and Archaeology	14
20/06/2022 & 20/09/2022	Digital Footprints	14
29/06/2022 & 13/09/22	Community Safety Partnership Working	5
13/07/2022	Biodiversity	20
15/09/2022	Confidentiality and the Code of Conduct	12
23/09/2022	Strategic Risk Management (Audit Committee)	7
23/09/2022	Counter Fraud (Audit Committee)	7
26/09/2022	Let's Talk Equality	8
19/10/2022	Flood Risk Management	17
21/10/2022	Armed Forces Covenant	14
28/10/2022 & 01/11/2022	Local Transport Plan Briefing	22
04/11/2022	East Sussex as a Place	14
05/12/2022	Let's Talk Wellbeing	8
09/12/2022	Scrutiny Leadership	5
06/02/2023	Making Sense of the Census	13
27/02/2023	Digital Tools	9
08/03/2023	ESCC Map Viewers	12
14/03/2023	Climate Change Update	16
21/03/2023	Questioning Skills	5
31/03/2023	Strategic Risk Deep Dive	6
28/04/2023	Fiduciary Duty	11
26/06/2023	Getting the most out of Microsoft Outlook Workshop	3
28/06/2023	Exploring the latest 2021 Census Results	6

12/07/2023	Planning Reform	14
27/09/2023	Member Interests and the Code of Conduct	7
29/09/2023	The Role of Public Health in Local Government	12
12/10/2023	Climate Change Update and Q&A	11
18/10/2023	Landscape and Planning	4
19/10/2023	Getting the most out of Microsoft Outlook Workshop	4

Member Training Programme: Term 2 - Winter 2023

Date, Time and Venue	Activity / content	Target audience	Lead Officer(s)
<p>8 November 2023</p> <p>14:00 - 15:00</p> <p>Microsoft Teams</p>	<p>Race Equality in East Sussex: Current Picture and emerging challenges</p> <p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the most up-to-date figures on where ethnic minority people live in the county, and their age and disability profiles, languages spoken and other characteristics; • Learn more about current issues of racial inequalities and discrimination facing people from different ethnic backgrounds and the steps the council is taking in addressing those; • Gain insight into Members' roles in working with and for people from ethnic minority backgrounds; and • Explore why language around ethnicity is changing and how to feel confident talking to and about people from diverse ethnicities. 	<p>All Members</p>	<p>Kaveri Sharma and Sarah Tighe-Ford</p>

<p>14 November 2023</p> <p>10:00 - 11:00</p> <p>And</p> <p>17 November 2023</p> <p>14:00 - 15:00</p> <p>Microsoft Teams</p>	<p>ESCC Local Transport Plan 4 Draft Strategy Briefing Session</p> <p>East Sussex County Council have drafted a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) for the County embracing a collaborative development approach with Members Reference Group (a sub-group of the Place Scrutiny Committee), officers and local stakeholder representatives. With this being a statutory document, setting out the strategy and policy framework for transport, we want to engage with you to provide an overview of the plan prior to us consulting more widely with stakeholders and the public, which is proposed to commence from 27 November 2023. So please join the session, where we will be providing:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an overview of the strategy development process, • an outline of the key aspects of the draft strategy, including approaches, draft policies and schemes, • details of the supporting implementation plan, and the • timetable of planned engagement with stakeholders and the public. 	<p>All Members</p>	<p>Lisa Simmonds</p>
<p>24 November 2023</p> <p>10:00 - 11:00</p> <p>In Person and Microsoft Teams</p>	<p>Treasury Management</p> <p>The training will provide members with a deeper understanding of Treasury Management and will cover the statutory framework that the council operates within, the financial, economic and risk environments that affects treasury management activities, and the impacts of these on the council's treasury strategy and decisions. The objective is to enable members to effectively scrutinise the treasury management strategy and better understand treasury management performance reports.</p>	<p>Audit Committee and All Members</p>	<p>Haley Woollard</p>

December 2023 Date and Time TBC In Person - Room TBC	Modern.Gov App Workshop This informal workshop will explore the functionality of accessing, annotating and bookmarking meeting papers within the Modern.Gov app. The workshop will be delivered by the Member Services team and will be available for a small number of Members. Places will be booked on a first come, first served basis. However other details will be available in the future if you are unable to attend the session planned for December. Please email Sophie Webb to book your place(sophie.webb@eastsussex.gov.uk).	All Members	Sophie Webb
Winter 2023 Date and Time TBC Microsoft Teams	Personal Safety for Members Description to follow.	All Members	Stuart McKeown
Available upon request	Social media training Bespoke 1-1/small group social media training sessions can be arranged with the ESCC Communications Team. Please contact Warwick Smith (Warwick.Smith@eastsussex.gov.uk) to discuss your requirements.	All Members	Warwick Smith

Please contact Hannah Matthews if you have any queries:

Email: hannah.matthew@eastsussex.gov.uk Phone: 01273 335138

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Committee:	Governance Committee
Date:	7 November 2023
Title:	Outside Body Appointment: Joint Parking Board
By:	Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
Purpose of report:	To appoint a County Council representative to the Joint Parking Board.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee is recommended to appoint a member as the County Council's representative on the Joint Parking Board until the date of the annual council meeting in the next County Council full election year.

1. Background Information

1.1 At the Lead Member for Transport and Environment meeting on Monday 25 September 2023 the creation of a single Parking Board was agreed (the report can be found [here](#)). The four Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) areas in East Sussex were introduced several years apart. Hastings Borough 1999, Lewes District 2004, Eastbourne Borough 2008, with Rother District being the most recent in 2020.

2. Supporting Evidence

2.1 East Sussex County Council, together with the Eastbourne and Hastings Borough, Rother and Lewes District Councils will form the membership of the Joint Parking Board, which will meet twice a year. East Sussex County Council is committed to open dialogue and receiving suggestions from the borough and district councils for improvements to ESCC's on-street parking schemes. Joint parking boards also give those attending the opportunity to discuss and assess the impact of changes in their area, any changes in national legislation, developments in enforcement and innovations to services.

1.2 The committee, which does not have executive decision-making powers, is comprised of two County Councillors, one being Councillor Claire Dowling, Lead Member for Transport and Environment, and a representative from each of the authorities listed in paragraph 1.1. The Committee's Terms of Reference are set out in appendix 1 of this report.

2. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

2.1 The Governance Committee is recommended to appoint a member to act as a representative for East Sussex County Council on the Joint Parking Board.

Rupert Clubb
Director Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Daniel Clarke
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Local Member: All

Background Documents

None

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Joint Parking Board

Terms of Reference

1. Status

- 1.1 The Joint Parking Board shall provide feedback on the effectiveness of CPE (on and off street) in East Sussex. The Board shall also consider how joint approaches to matters that impact on both on street and off street parking arrangements can improve the overall service. The meetings shall provide an opportunity to share knowledge and start conversations to develop complementary strategies to better support communities and environmental strategies.

2. Membership

- 2.1 The Board will comprise of no more than 6 Members.
- 2.2 No more than two East Sussex County Councillors and one Councillor from each District or Borough.
- 2.3 The County Councils Head of Transport and Operational Services and Team Manager, Parking, shall attend as advisors and to present reports but will have no voting rights.
- 2.4 The Joint Board may be supported and advised by other relevant officers from each Council for the purpose of providing technical advice, but those officers will have no voting rights.
- 2.6 Members shall be entitled to appoint a substitute councillor who may attend any meeting of the Joint Board in place of the appointed councillor.

3. Chair

- 3.1 The chair will be the County Council's Lead Member for Transport and Environment.
- 3.2 In the absence of the Chair, the Board shall appoint a Chair for that meeting from amongst the Members present at the meeting.
- 3.3 In the absence of the chair the Board shall appoint a chair for that meeting from amongst the Members present at the meeting.

4. Quorum

- 4.1 No business shall be dealt with at the meeting unless at least three Members of the Board are present.
- 4.2 If there is no quorum, the meeting will be adjourned immediately and any remaining business postponed either to a time fixed by the Chair or if no time is fixed, the next meeting of the Committee.

5. Attendance by councillors who are not members of the Board

- 5.1 No councillors shall be permitted to attend Board meetings unless acting as a substitute for a Member of the Board who is unable to attend.

6. Frequency of meetings

- 6.1 Meetings of the Board will be held six monthly, one to be held in the spring one in the autumn

7. Agenda

- 7.1 Prior to the meeting of the Board the Head of Transport and Operational Services will circulate to Members agenda and reports to be presented to the Board.

8. Function

- 8.1 The Joint Parking Board shall provide feedback on the effectiveness of CPE (on and off street) in East Sussex.
- 8.2 The Annual Parking Report will be presented to the Board at its Autumn meeting.
- 8.3 To consider joint and consistent approaches to events, where parking on and off street may be impacted.
- 8.4 To share experience and knowledge and ensure all are aware of current and foreseen issues. The Joint Board may be supported and advised by relevant officers from each Council for the purpose of providing advice.
- 8.5 Each Authority to present any changes being considered that may impact on parking arrangements in their area so that any impact can be taken into account by the other Councils.
- 8.6 To present changes to national legislation, where parking on and off street may be impacted.
- 8.7 Refer matters back to the Cabinets of County Council and District or Borough Council where necessary.
- 8.8 Keep the relevant executives of all Councils informed on relevant matters.
- 8.9 To update on any relevant changes to Local Transport Plans.

9. Delegated powers

- 9.1 The Committee is empowered to deal with any functions detailed above, other than those delegated to officers in accordance with the Officer Scheme of Delegation.

Report to: Governance Committee
Date of meeting: 7 November 2023
By: Chief Operating Officer
Title: Employee loans for visa fees
Purpose: To seek the Governance Committee's agreement to increase the limit for employee loans related to visa fees

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Governance Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Agree that the limit for employee loans related to visa fees is increased from £2,000 to £3,000**
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1 Background

- 1.1 As the Governance Committee may recall, the Council operates an employee loan scheme, under which employees can take out loans for various work-related purposes. In September 2022, the Committee agreed expanding the loan scheme to include loans for visa application fees (the link to the report can be found [here](#)).
- 1.2 Under the loan scheme, the current limit for visa application loans is £2,000. However, the government has now increased the application fee for a number of different types of visa by 5-15%, and has also announced that the accompanying NHS immigration surcharge will increase from £624 a year to £1,035 per year in 2024.
- 1.3 The exact cost of a visa application varies depending on the specific application category the individual applies under. However, under the new fee structure, a typical ESCC recruit applying for a Skilled Worker visa will pay £2,535 for their first visa application - £1,500 for the visa itself and an additional £1,035 for the NHS immigration surcharge.
- 1.4 On this basis, it's recommended that the limit for visa applications is increased to £3,000 – this would cover the fee increase as well as allowing some leeway for potential future fee increases, or additional fees such as those for travel documents or status confirmation letters where applicable. As always, employees would need to cover the initial cost of the application, providing receipts as evidence of expenditure, with any outstanding debt recovered in the event that the employee leaves.

2 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 2.1 The Governance Committee is recommended to agree that the limit for employee loans related to visa fees is increased from £2,000 to £3,000.

Ros Parker
Chief Operating Officer

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