

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Governance Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes on 25 June 2024.

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

ALSO PRESENT Councillors Anne Cross, Godfrey Daniel, Johnny Denis (via MS Teams), Stephen Shing and Colin Swansborough.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 APRIL 2024

1.1 RESOLVED – that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 16 April 2024 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2. REPORTS

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

3. EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2021/22 AND 2022/23

3.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer regarding the Grant Thornton (GT) report on the audit opinion on the 2021/22 and the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts.

3.2 The Committee RESOLVED to:

1) note the Independent Auditor's (GT) Report to those charged with governance on ESCC Accounts for 2021/22 and the audit completion;

2) note the Independent Auditor's (GT) Report to those charged with governance on ESCC Accounts for 2022/23 and the audit completion; and

3) note that the updated 2021/22 and 2022/23 Statement of Accounts have been published on the Council's website.

4. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES: LOCAL LEVELLING UP PARTNERSHIP BOARDS

4.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport regarding the appointment of a councillor to the Levelling Up Partnership (LUP) Boards in Hastings, Bexhill and Eastbourne.

4.2 It was proposed that Councillor Daniel be appointed to the Hastings LUP Board, which was seconded. The vote was lost (by 3 votes to 2).

4.3 It was proposed that Councillor Tutt be appointed to the Eastbourne LUP Board, which was seconded. The vote was lost (by 3 votes to 2).

4.4 The Committee RESOLVED to:

1) appoint Councillor Peter Pragnell (by 3 votes to 2) to the Hastings LUP Board as a Council representative until the date of the Annual Council Meeting in May 2025.

2) appoint Councillor Penny di Cara (by 3 votes to 2) to the Eastbourne LUP Board as a Council representative until the date of the Annual Council Meeting in May 2025.

3) appoint Councillor Ian Hollidge to the Bexhill Town LUP Board as a Council representative until the date of the Annual Council Meeting in May 2025.

5. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES: EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

5.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive regarding the appointment of a Councillor as a Council representative to the East Sussex Fire Authority.

5.2 The Committee RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Peter Pragnell to the East Sussex Fire Authority to replace Councillor Roy Galley.

6. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES: POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

6.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive regarding the appointment of a second Council representative to the Sussex Police and Crime Panel.

6.2 The Committee RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Ian Hollidge as a second representative on the Sussex Police and Crime Panel, and Councillor Philip Lunn (substitute) for a one year period.

7. SCRUTINY ACTIVITY REVIEW

7.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive that provided an overview of the scrutiny activity being undertaken by the People, Place and Health Overview Scrutiny Committees and an update on the work of the Audit Committee.

7.2 The Committee RESOLVED to note the updates on recent scrutiny and Audit Committee activity and the current work programmes at appendices 1-4 of the report.

8. FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT POLICY

8.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Operating Officer on the proposed introduction of a flexible retirement policy.

8.2 The Committee RESOLVED to recommend the County Council to agree:

1) the implementation of a flexible retirement scheme for employees (excluding those on Teaching terms and conditions); and

2) that the Local Government Pension Scheme Employer Discretions Policy is updated accordingly as set out in paragraph 2.7 of the report.

9. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION: SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO OFFICERS

9.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport regarding proposed changes to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

9.2 The Committee RESOLVED to recommend the County Council to agree to amend the Scheme of Delegation to Officers as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

10. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

10.1 The Committee received a report by the Chief Operating Officer regarding proposed amendments to the Employee Code of Conduct.

10.2 The Committee RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to agree the following amendments to the Constitution, which relate to the Employee Code of Conduct:

1) additional wording to formally confirm that employees must not access the records of relatives or friends who receive services from the council; and

2) minor amendments and clarifications as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.

11. APPOINTMENT TO THE PENSION BOARD

11.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer regarding the appointment of a representative to the Pension Board.

11.2 The Committee RESOLVED to appoint Linda Hughes as an Employer Representative on the East Sussex Pension Board for the period 25 June 2024 to 24 June 2028.