

MINUTES of the CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEEHeld at Epping Hall, St. John's Road, Epping on **Monday 5th March 2018 at 7.15pm.****(This meeting replaced the meeting on 27th February 2018 which was not quorate and therefore cancelled.)**

PRESENT:

Cllr N Avey	(Chairman and Deputy Town Mayor)
Cllr A Church	(Town Mayor)
Cllr G Scruton	(Key member Finance)
Cllr J A Smith	(Key member Administration)

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Mrs C McCredie

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

468 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

469 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

470 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

471 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions or comments.

472 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee held on 24th October 2017 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

473 STATUS OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations of the CGAC from their meeting on 28th October 2017 (Minutes #289–301 of 17/18) were adopted by Council at the Ordinary Council meeting on 14th November 2017 (Minute #324 of 17/18):

- (i) The Statement of Internal Control and Risk Management Statement, with the Town Clerk's amendments, should be **APPROVED** by Council;
- (ii) The Employee Handbook with the minor revisions should be **APPROVED** by Council;
- (iii) Epping Town Council should pay for items over the telephone, which are subject to the same 'below £500 value' as the online purchases and should be used under the Clerk or Finance Officer's instruction only. This account should be kept topped up to £500. If approved, Council's Financial Regulations should be updated accordingly;

- (iv) No further action was required regarding internal audit reports at this time;
- (v) No further action was required regarding the internal audit programme at this time;
- (vi) No further action was required regarding external audits at this time;
- (vii) No further action was required regarding the half-year financial position at this time;
- (viii) No further action was required regarding the General Data Protection Regulation until the audit results were received;
- (ix) No further action was required regarding staffing terms, conditions & pay scales at this time;
- (x) There were no further staffing matters to consider at this time.

Committee **NOTED** the above information.

474 **PREVIOUS OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were four outstanding recommendations from the previous meeting.

(i) **Alternative pension providers**

At the Ordinary Council meeting on 13th December 2016 (Minute #378 of 2016/17), Council requested the Town Clerk look into possible alternative pension providers for new staff (with no change to the terms and conditions of any existing staff). The Town Clerk has made numerous enquiries to independent pension providers and it is proving difficult to obtain the alternative information. This will continue to be investigated as time allows.

The Town Clerk advised members that this was being worked on at the moment.

Committee **NOTED** this information.

475 **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT REVIEW**

Council **APPROVED** a review of policy and governance documents at the Ordinary Council meeting on 8th March 2016 (Minute #478 of 2015/16).

The list of policies for annual review and the dates for review are as follows:

Internal and External Audits: **February 2018** & October 2018

(Dealt with under items 11 & 12)

Internal Audit Programme: October 2018

Statement on Internal Control: October 2018

Insurance Inventory: **February 2018** (Dealt with under agenda item 21)

Asset Register: **February 2018** (Dealt with under agenda item 13)

Internal Risk Register: **February 2018** (Dealt with under agenda item 10)

Staffing Terms and Conditions: **February 2018** & October 2018

(Dealt with under item 23)

Standing Orders & Financial Regulations: February 2018

(Dealt with under agenda item 9)

Employee Handbook: October 2018

Risk management statement: October 2018

Please note these are the current recommended review dates, but legislation may amend the dates if an earlier review is required.

Changing regulations and audit comments may add further items to this list.

The CGAC review process leads to recommendations to Council for amendments to documents to be made.

Committee **NOTED** the above information.

476 STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, sch 12, para 42 ; Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

There have been no **recommended** changes to the model Standing Orders (**Attachment B**) and Financial Regulations (**Attachment C**) in the past year. The Town Clerk has, however, made minor amendments to both documents to incorporate the forthcoming General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the system of online/telephone payments **APPROVED** by full Council at the Ordinary Council meeting on 14th November 2017 (Minute #297 & #324 of 2017/18).

RECOMMENDATION: The revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations should be **RECOMMENDED** for **ADOPTION** by Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations should be **RECOMMENDED** for **ADOPTION** by Council.

477 INTERNAL RISK REGISTER

Statutory Basis: Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

The Internal Risk Register has been reviewed by the Town Clerk.

RECOMMENDATION: The revised Internal Risk Register should be recommended for **ADOPTION** by Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations should be **RECOMMENDED** for **ADOPTION** by Council.

478 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

Statutory Basis: Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

Committee **NOTED** the internal audit report (first interim) was **NOTED** at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 12th December 2017 (Minute #354 of 2017/18), following their visit on 27th and 28th November 2017 and no further action was required.

The Town Clerk advised members this was at the December 2017 meeting, rather than the November 2017 meeting, as stated on the agenda.

479 EXTERNAL AUDITS

Statutory Basis: Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

At the Ordinary Council meeting on 8th March 2016 (Minute #475 of 2016/17), Epping Town Council resolved to 'opt in' to the External Audit arrangements (which was recommended in this sector) and whereby Council would be allocated an external auditor from 2017-2022.

The Town Clerk has been advised that the external auditor for 2017-2022 for Essex will remain as PKF Littlejohn LLP. The Town Clerk took place in a training webinar from PKF Littlejohn, prior to the new external audit process this year

Committee **NOTED** this information.

480 ASSET REGISTER

Statutory Basis: Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

Members considered the Asset Register 2018, noting the acquisitions and disposals throughout the year.

In accordance with the recommendations:

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Council should continue to record assets as individual items with a value equal to or greater than £1000 in the Asset Register;
- (ii) The Asset Register 2018, as per **Attachment F**, should be **APPROVED** as a correct record of Council's assets at this time;
- (iii) Any revisions to the draft will be presented to full Council in March.

481 DATA PROTECTION (GDPR) POLICY

Statutory Basis: Data Protection Act 1998; The General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)

Committee **NOTED** that the Town Clerk is working on a Privacy Statement for Epping Town Council and this will be brought to Council once completed (nearer to the May requirements).

In accordance with the recommendation:

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The revised Data Protection (GDPR) Policy (working draft) (**Attachment G2**) should be **RECOMMENDED** as a policy of Council;
- (ii) The Town Clerk would investigate a Cyber Policy and look at emails and the internet in more detail, as part of the GDPR 'work in progress' project.

482 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Epping Town Council's complaints procedure was **APPROVED** on 10th January 2017 (Minute #405 of 2016/17) and is now due for review.

In accordance with the recommendation:

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Epping Town Council's Complaints Procedure should be **APPROVED** as the Complaints Procedure for Epping Town Council, with no amendments.

483 GRANT AWARDING POLICY

Epping Town Council's Grant Awarding Policy was **APPROVED** on 8th March 2016 (Minute #478 (iv) of 2015/16) and is now due for review.

In accordance with the recommendation:

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Epping Town Council's Grant Awarding Policy should be **APPROVED** as the Grant Awarding Policy for Epping Town Council, with no amendments.

484 PROCUREMENT POLICY

Epping Town Council's Procurement Policy was APPROVED on 8th March 2016 (Minute #478 (iv) of 2015/16) and is now due for review.

In accordance with the recommendation:

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Epping Town Council's Procurement Policy should be APPROVED as the Procurement Policy for Epping Town Council, with revised wording to make paragraphs 2 and 3 read more easily.

485 RECRUITMENT POLICY

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Epping Town Council's Recruitment Policy was APPROVED on 8th March 2016 (Minute #478 (iv) of 2015/16) and is now due for review. The Town Clerk has amended the Policy to reflect the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

In accordance with the recommendation:

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Epping Town Council's Recruitment Policy should be APPROVED as the Recruitment Policy for Epping Town Council, with the amendments highlighted.

486 TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Epping Town Council's Training & Development Statement (**Attachment L**) was ADOPTED by Council at the Ordinary meeting on 8th March 2016 (Minute #478 (iv) of 2015/16) and is now due for review.

In accordance with the recommendation:

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Epping Town Council's Training & Development Statement should be APPROVED as the Training & Development Statement for Epping Town Council, with the amendment highlighted.

487 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

488 INSURANCE POLICIES (CONTRACTS) & RECONCILIATION

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972 s111 ; Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members & Officers) order 2004

Committee discussed the three insurance quotations as per **Attachments M, N and O**, the recommendations/comments and insurance reconciliation.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The insurance quotation as per **Attachment N** would be **RECOMMENDED** to Council as the preferred insurance provider;
- (ii) A three year contract would be **RECOMMENDED** to Council.
- (iii) This would include lift and boiler inspections as an addition.

489 DATA PROTECTION (GDPR) OFFICER

Statutory Basis: The General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)

Committee discussed the new data protection legislation (GDPR), effective from 25th May 2018 and the present uncertainty about requirements for Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Committee would **RECOMMEND** that Epping Town Council employ an external Data Protection Officer, for one year initially, if no free service is available by 25th May 2018, making sure Council were aware of the liabilities and responsibilities that can be outsourced.

490 STAFF TERMS& CONDITIONS/PAYSCALES

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Epping Town Council staff are governed by the terms and conditions of by the NJC (National Joint Council) (set by NALC and SLCC).

Staff received a salary review in April 2016 for 2016/17 and a further review in April 2017 (for 2017/18). While no salary increases have been issued for 2018/19, these are expected and a 1% increase in staff salaries has been taken into account in the

budget for 2018/19. This will be brought to Council once received. If an increase is agreed, payments would be backdated.

Committee **NOTED** this information.

491 STAFFING MATTERS

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

The Town Clerk advised Committee of two staffing matters. One to note and one requiring action.

Committee **CONSIDERED** this information and **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk would deal with the matter requiring action, bringing proposals for the recruitment of a new assistant grounds person to Council for consideration.

492 TOWN CLERK APPRAISAL

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

The Town Clerk was formally appointed Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer on 1st February 2016 (Minute #392 of 2016/17), following six months as Deputy Clerk and six months as Interim Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk's Review and Development will be undertaken on 7th March 2018.

The Review and Development process for the Town Clerk will be completed by the Chairman of Council (Cllr Tony Church: 2017-18) and the Chairman of the Task & Finish Personnel Committee (Cllr Mrs B Scruton).

Committee **NOTED** this information.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **8.04pm**.

(NB: The matters on this agenda have a statutory basis under the Local Government Act 1972 in sections 101 and 111, in addition to those stated.)

Signature of Chairman

Date