



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Governance Committee held on Wednesday 17 January 2024 at 6.00 pm in E201, Telford College, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford, TF1 2NP

Present: Councillors H Rhodes (Chair), P Davis and
W L Tomlinson

In Attendance: R Phillips (Service Delivery Manager, Legal &
Democracy), A Plummer (Democracy Team Leader) and
S Yarnall (Democracy Officer (Scrutiny))

Apologies: Councillor A D McClements, S A W Reynolds and
R Tyrrell

GOV14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Angela McClements, Shirley Reynolds and Rachael Tyrrell.

GOV15 Declarations of Interest

None.

GOV16 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

GOV17 Member Development Update

The Democracy Manager provided a Member Development Update. The report provided to Members an outline of the learning and development programme for elected Members following the May 2023 elections. The programme was split into four main themes; Hit the ground running, Operating as an effective councillor, Roles and responsibilities, and Continued professional development. Members were informed that the programme was halfway through, with majority of Members completed two out of the four themes.

Overall feedback on the training were largely positive with Members feeling confident in the presenters and for the slides to be accessible after the event on the Councillor Connect Portal.



Feedback was mixed in regards to preferred delivery methods e.g. in-person or virtual. The Member Support Team will continue to schedule both in person and virtual training to meet different needs along with recap or follow-up sessions to capture those Members that missed the initial training.

The next stage of the Member Development Programme was said to be the continued professional development plan. This was said to include the personal development plan with a Members Named Support Officer, where a Member would be able to develop a plan of development based on their needs. At the time of the meeting it was said that 10 elected Members had indicated their interest and that the team were in the process of starting the development plan with them to support in any learning gaps.

Members were informed that the Member Support Team were currently working towards the LGA Member Development Charter. Members were informed that a portfolio was being collated as evidence for the charter. There were two levels that could be achieved; the charter and the charter plus. Officers were currently working on achieving the Charter status for the development programme and hoped to eventually have the Charter Plus status. As the work develops it would be fed back to the Governance Committee for knowledge and comment.

Members commented on the variety of training sessions available and thanked officers for their support. Members raised a number of points of further developments and incentives such as 'scorecards' to monitor the progress of Members.

By majority the Members agreed the recommendations as outlined in the report.

RESOLVED – that Governance Committee:

1) The Committee noted the contents of the report; and

2) The approach set out within the report for the Council to attain the Local Government Association's Member Development Charter and Charter Plus, to be endorsed by the Committee.

GOV18 Annual Report on the Committee for Standards in Public Life

The Service Delivery Manager: Legal & Democracy presented the Annual Report on the Committee for Standards in Public Life to the Committee. Members were informed that a similar report was presented last year and that it would be an annual update to this committee each year. The Committee for Standards in Public Life were empowered by the Government to have power of recommendation to outline the ethical standards that elected Members and



co-opted Members had in their role to represent the public. The report outlined the work from the Committee such as the work conducted on ethical standards, work in public life and the impact of Artificial Intelligence from elected Members. Members were informed that the report was for noting.

GOV19 National Standards Cases Update

The Service Delivery Manager: Legal & Democracy informed Members on the National Standards Case update. There were two examples given to Members. These included an update of an elected Councillor in Woking Borough Council who broke their code of conduct which resulted in further training and a written apology being issued. The other case discussed was where an elected Councillor had put offensive content on social media. Each of these cases were said to be reported by the media.

Members commented on the cases and asked further questions on consequences of such actions from a legal perspective. Officers explained the implications such as being asked to step down as an elected official and that the Monitoring Officer had the ability to refer to the police on such concerns.

The meeting ended at 6.29 pm

Chairman:

Date: Tuesday 26 March 2024