

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Eyre (Chairman)

Cllrs. Barnes, Bayley, Penny Cole and Harrison

Cllrs. Osborne-Jackson were also present.

Cllrs. Clayton and Nelson were present via a virtual media platform, which does not constitute attendance as recognised by the Local Government Act 1972.

1. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 9 November 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

2. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

3. Actions from the previous meeting

There were none.

4. LGA Model Code of Conduct - Recommendation of Working Group

Members considered the recommendations of the Working Group which met to consider the Local Government Association's Model Code of Conduct. The Working Group had concluded that the proposals did not add material advantages to the Council's Code of Conduct and therefore resolved that the Council's existing Code of Conduct be retained.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Council that the existing Sevenoaks District Council Members' Code of Conduct be endorsed and retained.

5. Protocol on Councillor and Officer Relations

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Members considered the revised Council's Protocol on Councillor and Officer Relations. The Protocol had been revised with the advent of video conferencing and the growth in the home office taken into account.

Members noted that most of the original Protocol had been retained and that the changes were valuable to both Members and Officers.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That

- a) the revised protocol on Councillor and Officer relations, be approved; and
- b) it be recommended to Council that the revised protocol on Councillor and Officer Relations, be approved and adopted.

6. Contracts Procedure Rules

Members considered the revised Contracts Procedure Rules which had been taken into account changes since the last revision including the impact of leaving the European Union on purchasing rules.

The next review of thresholds would be implemented by January 2022 by amendments to the public procurement regulations. To ensure variable figures are kept up-to-date it was noted that the Monitoring Officer already had the authority to amend the rules from time-to-time to reflect minor changes.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That

- a) the revised Contracts Procedure Rules be approved; and
- b) it be recommended to Council that the revised Contracts Procedure Rules be approved and adopted.

7. Parliamentary Boundary Review

Members considered a report which detailed the initial proposals from the Boundary Commission for England (BCE), which was in the process of a review of all the Parliamentary constituencies in England. BCE's final recommendations

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would be taken to parliament by 1 July 2023, increasing the number of English constituencies from 533 to 543. The initial proposals were set out in Appendix A.

Members of the Committee spoke about the changes which would impact their own wards. Members noted that it was proposed a survey would be carried out and requested a 'free text' box be included in any survey, so as to enable the capture of as many varied comments as possible. It was noted that it would be helpful to know whether the BCE proposals would increase or decrease the aggregate number of electors in the Sevenoaks Parliamentary constituency.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Council that

- a) the initial proposals from the Boundary Commission for England for Parliamentary boundaries for Sevenoaks District Council area from 2023, be noted; and
- b) the submission of a consultation response to the Boundary Commission for England based on the views collate from Members and following consultation with the Chairman of the Governance Committee, be approved.

8. Work Plan

The work plan was noted. The following item was added to the work plan for consideration at the meeting held on 8 November 2021:

Update on the Council's Response to the Parliamentary Boundary Review

The following items were added to the work plan for consideration at the meeting held on 3 February 2022:

Report of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel
Procedures Relating to the Chairman of the Council

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.28 PM

CHAIRMAN

