

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PANEL

MINUTES 28th April 2017

Executive Boardroom 9.30 a.m.

Panel Members: Nicole Scammell, Cllr. Forehead, Gail Williams, Paul Lewis, Richard Harris, Rob Hartshorn.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Rob Hartshorn (RHn).

2. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10.3.2017 were agreed as accurate.

3. **CHECKLIST SUMMARY**

The summarised checklist comments were introduced by RH who pointed out a theme running through the document was around refreshing staff awareness and knowledge of core policies and procedures. The panel agreed to work through the comments made by the various Heads of Service and consider their significance both individually and as a whole. In discussing each area's comments specific discussions took place around Social Services, PL providing an explanation of an issue around the changes and implementation of the new integrated social care system and reassured the panel that although it was a big project it was in hand. Concerns were discussed about the quantity of issues raised on the Education return and the fact that many of the improvement actions were scheduled for a forthcoming EMT meeting. RH was requested to clarify with the Chief Education Officer the nature of the concerns and to report back to the panel.

NS made the panel aware of some H&S issues within the Community and Leisure Services area and some contract management issues within the Caerphilly Homes service area however it was considered that both were down to operational issues specific to the service areas concerned and the issues were being dealt with. PL outlined the content of his submission confirming that he had included a number of operational items which shouldn't be of concern to the panel.

Overall it was considered by the panel that no fundamental governance issues had been raised and the low level operational issues did not warrant inclusion within the annual governance statement.

4. **EXPERT GROUP**

The comments made by the overview group were reviewed with some of the key discussion points being around:-

Information governance and data protection, it was agreed that the recent attendance at CMT to obtain endorsement of a proposed new approach to addressing the ongoing risks was a big step forward and PL & JJ will now be presenting to management Network in June 2017.

Procurement, it was felt by the panel that some of the procurement processes adopted need to be sensitive to existing arrangements and that there are different ways of assessing value for money in addition to market testing. It was considered that compliance risk and cost of change are additional factors that our existing processes take into account when considering the optimum procurement solution.

General governance issues raised by GW were discussed and seen as a key element of the new scrutiny arrangements. The failure to ensure that cabinet FWP is routinely updated and reports are submitted on time and that delegated decisions are fully and promptly recorded were both seen as candidates for inclusion within the annual statement due to their importance within the authority's governance systems and processes.

5. DRAFT SHELL AGS STATEMENT

RH updated the panel on the position with the shell draft AGS which had been updated for comments made by GW & RHn. The panel also discussed and suggested that the newly developed Assurance Framework should be referenced within the document and RH indicated that the external auditors have suggested inclusion of the Internal Audit Managers opinion within the document.

It was agreed that the redraft of the shell should include points on :-

1. Strengthening the procedures around the operation and maintenance of the cabinet forward work program.
2. An assessment of the recording of delegated decisions
3. The preparedness for the new General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

NS also stated that the revised draft would be discussion by CMT on the 11th May.

6. DRAFT CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

RH updated that no further comments had been received regarding the updated document.

7. DRAFT REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PANEL

RH introduced the slightly amended Terms of Reference and suggested that they be put to the Audit Committee at the same time as the revised Code of Corporate Governance. The panel agreed, with no additional comments on the document.

8. AUDIT COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Audit Committee forward work programme was reviewed and one revision identified. The draft annual governance statement will be presented by S Harris due to NS being unavailable-on pre-booked leave.

9. A.O.B.

With the Local Government elections before the next meeting of the review panel Cllr Forehead was thanked for her attendance and participation at both the review panel and the Improving Governance Project Board.

Due to his retirement Colin Jones was also thanked for his participation and input to the review panel.