

Contact Officer: Richard Dunne

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Friday 13th September 2019

Present: Councillor Will Simpson (Chair)
Councillor Kath Pinnock
Councillor Paola Antonia Davies
Councillor Susan Lee-Richards
Councillor Martyn Bolt
Councillor Bill Armer

In attendance: Councillor Graham Turner, Cabinet Member (Corporate Services)

Apologies: Councillor John Taylor

1 Membership of the Committee

Councillor Bill Armer substituted for Councillor John Taylor.

2 Interests

No interests were declared.

3 Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meetings held on 26 July 2019 and 9 August 2019 were approved as a correct record.

4 Admission of the Public

All Agenda Items were considered in public session.

5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Corporate Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Annual Report

The Committee received a report that provided an annual update on Emergency Planning and Business Continuity for the period 2018/19.

The Committee were advised of the core duties involved in emergency planning and business continuity, the actions taken since April 2019 and planned future actions.

The Committee noted that consideration would be given to producing an all councillor briefing that outlined the work that the council had undertaken in preparation for Brexit.

RESOLVED – That the update on Emergency Planning and Business Continuity for the period 2018/19 be received and noted.

7 Corporate Customer Standards Annual Report

The Committee received the Corporate Customer Standards Annual report which provided an update on complaint handling for the year 2018/19; a review of the Ombudsman; Third Stage Complaints; and details of the Whistleblowing Complaints received.

The Committee was advised that the report had been informed by the Local Ombudsman Annual Report that had been published in July 2019.

The report detailed complaints statistics for Kirklees that included: the number of Ombudsman upheld complaints; the numbers of complaints received both at third stage and at Ombudsman; an overview of the factors which had impacted on the number of complaints; and whistleblowing concerns.

The Committee was also advised of the approach that the council took when dealing with serial complainers.

RESOLVED – That the Corporate Customer Standards Annual Report 2018/19 be received and noted.

8 Compulsory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Stations

The committee received a report on the compulsory review of polling districts and polling stations.

The report detailed the (Acting) Returning Officer's proposals in connection with the Electoral Services review of polling districts and stations and sought approval of the proposed boundary changes and to note the determinations in relation to polling stations.

The report detailed the proposed boundary changes and advised that the (Acting) Returning Officer's proposals had taken account of: the accessibility levels of the current polling stations; information received from polling stations as part of their evaluation of facilities at recent elections; comments from individuals and Groups; and comments from electors.

The committee was also advised that all relevant ward members had been consulted on the proposed changes.

The report advised that should the committee approve changes the Electoral Registration Officer would make appropriate changes to the Register of Electors and these would take effect on publication of the next annual electoral register.

It was noted that the next publication of the register due on 1 December 2019 could be postponed if a general election was called prior to its publication.

RESOLVED – That the proposed boundary changes outlined in the report be approved and the (Acting) Returning Officer's determinations to the changes to location of polling stations be noted.

9 External Audit

The committee received a verbal update from external audit on the final accounts process for 2018/19.

The committee was advised of progress of the accounts and was informed that there had been some late queries relating to valuation of assets and value for money.

The committee was told that both queries were close to being satisfactorily resolved and that the view of the external auditor was that the provisions in the council's accounts were appropriate.

It was noted that the audit was nearly complete; that external audit was satisfied with the council's Value for Money; that outstanding issues were close to being resolved; that external audit would work with officers on lessons learned from the audit with a focus on asset valuation; and that the final and full report would be presented at the committee's next meeting.

RESOLVED – That the verbal update from external audit on the final accounts process 2018/19 be noted.