

Minutes

Special Audit Committee

Venue:	Committee Room
Date:	29 July 2014
Present:	Councillor C Pearson (Chair), Councillor Mrs C Mackman (Vice Chair); Councillor J Cattanach; Councillor J Crawford and Councillor S Ryder
Apologies for Absence:	Councillor M Dyson
Also Present:	Councillor J Deans
Officers Present:	Jonathan Lund, Deputy Chief Executive; Gillian Marshall, Solicitor to the Council; Laura Gillhespy, Legal and Esta Innes & Richard Besley, Democratic Services

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

19. CHAIR'S ADDRESS

The Chair thanked the Committee members present for attending the special meeting.

20. A/14/9 – CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

The Solicitor to Council first summarised the progress of the Committee to date before taking the Committee through the Parts of the Constitution still to be considered.

There were to be no specific changes to Part 1 – Summary and Explanation, other than any tidy up changes to reflect any alterations made to date.

Part 2 – Articles of the Constitution

Article 3.1 – The Rights of the Public

The Solicitor informed the Committee that there was new legislation currently before Parliament that would require amendment to parts of this section to reflect the new laws.

As the Committee had already discussed the future of the State of the Area Address (3.1.d) this may need removing from 3.1.

Article 4.1 – Meanings (Policy Framework)

The Solicitor confirmed that Policy Framework refers to plans and strategies relating to a Housing Investment Programme which due to changes in housing finance rules no longer exists and should be removed.

Article 9 – Standards Committee

As the Standards Committee no longer meets, with complaints dealt with through the Monitoring Officer the Article needs to be removed.

Article 12 – Joint Arrangements

In Joint Committees agreed to add Police & Crime Panel and the Leeds City Region Leaders Board.

Part 5

This Part of the Constitution refers to the Codes and Protocols adopted by the Council and starts with the Code of Conduct for Councillors. The Solicitor pointed out that this section was reviewed and revised in 2012 and that she was not suggesting any further changes at this time.

Part 5 – The Planning Code of Conduct

The Solicitor introduced Appendix A as a draft code to replace the existing code of conduct.

Part 5 – Licencing Code of Conduct

Licencing, like Planning, is a regulatory function and the Solicitor introduced a new draft code of Conduct as Appendix B, based on the model used at Leeds CC.

Part 6 – Councillors Allowance Scheme

No change

Part 7 – Management Structure

The Solicitor agreed that she would confer with HR that the Constitution contained the latest description of the approved management structure.

The Solicitor confirmed that all Parts/chapters of the Constitution had now been reviewed. With the new 'Openness of Proceedings' laws coming into force in August the Solicitor will include these together with all the work from the three special meetings and would compile a complete re-draft of the Constitution for the next full Audit Committee in September.

RESOLVED:

To consider the revised Draft Constitution at the next Committee meeting for submission to the Executive

21. SHARING GOOD PRACTICE – COUNCILLOR CONSULTATIVE CHARTER

The Committee considered the Solicitors paper on a Consultative Charter for Councillors

RESOLVED:

To include the Consultative Charter as a protocol in part 6 of the Constitution

The Committee wished to place on record its thanks to the Solicitor for her time and extensive work preparing the relevant papers and drafts that the Committee had discussed over the series of Special meetings.

The meeting closed at 3.11 pm