

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

- * Councillor Nigel Manning (Chairman)
- * Councillor Jo Randall (Vice-Chairman)

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| Councillor Philip Brooker | * Mrs Maria Angel |
| * Councillor Alexandra Chesterfield | * Mr Charles Hope |
| Councillor Colin Cross | * Ms Gerry Reffo |
| * Councillor Geoff Davis | * Mr Ian Symes |
| * Councillor Mike Hurdle | |

*Present

Councillors Matt Furniss (Lead Councillor for Infrastructure and Governance) and Illman (Lead Councillor for Finance) were also in attendance.

CGS11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Philip Brooker and Councillor Colin Cross.

CGS12 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

CGS13 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2016. The Chairman signed the minutes.

The Committee were informed that an edited version of the Arrangements for dealing with allegations that a member has failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct for parishes would be completed by the end of the Summer.

CGS14 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2015-16

The Committee considered the Annual Governance Statement.

The Committee noted that the South East Employers Charter for Elected Member Development required 60% of Councillors to complete a Personal Development Plan. Twenty councillors had completed their plan. The Committee agreed that councillors should be encouraged to complete their plans so that this requirement was met.

The Committee,

RESOLVED: That the Executive be requested to adopt the Council's Annual Governance Statement for 2014-15 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

Reason for Decision: To comply with Regulation 10 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, the Executive must approve an Annual Governance Statement.

CGS15 ANNUAL REPORT ON GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL'S COMPLIANCE WITH INFORMATION RIGHTS LEGISLATION IN 2015

The Committee considered the Annual report on Guildford Borough Council's compliance with Information Rights legislation in 2015.

The Committee congratulated the Information Rights Officer on the improvement in response timescales. The Committee was informed that this improvement was expected to continue. The three directorates that had the highest number of late responses in 2015 had taken a number of steps to improve their response rates.

The Information Rights Officer would leave the Council at the end of June 2016. The Committee heard that the Governance Lawyer would provide temporary cover.

The Committee,

RESOLVED: That the action to be taken by officers as set out in the report, be approved.

Reason for Decision: To ensure that the Council continues to improve its compliance with Information Rights legislation so it operates in an open manner whilst providing data privacy for individuals.

CGS16 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2016-17

The Committee considered the Internal Audit Plan 2016-17.

The Committee were informed that the internal resource problem, due to the long-term sickness absence of a senior member of staff, was an ongoing issue. However, a contracted qualified accountant auditor was being used in the short term.

The Committee heard that the Council was consulting on the creation of a new Audit and Business Improvement team. The two services had a number of synergies including value for money, improvement and business processing. The structure of this team would include a dedicated audit manager to retain independence and objectivity. The Business Improvement section would act like a consultancy team, focusing on reengineering and business processing.

The Committee were informed that following the data quality review of taxi-licensing fees attempts were being made to build and maintain a good relationship with the taxi trade.

The Committee

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the audit plan for 2016-17 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Committee be approved.
- 2) That the summary of audit reports for the period October 2015 to March 2016, be noted.

Reason for decision: To ensure an adequate level of audit coverage.

CGS17 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

The Committee considered the Treasury Management Annual Report 2015-16.

The Committee noted that paragraph 3.41 of Appendix 1 to the report should state "Our limit was set at £50 million, we ended the year with exposure of £24.8 million."

The Committee,

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the treasury management annual report for 2015-16 be noted.
- 2) That the actual prudential indicators reported for 2015-16, as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report, be approved.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Council's treasury management policy statement, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on treasury management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

CGS18 EXTERNAL AUDIT 2016-17 FEE LETTER AND THE FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXTERNAL AUDIT

The Committee considered the External Audit 2016-17 Fee Letter.

The Committee heard that the fee for grant claim work had increased by 15%. This was due to extra work that had been completed for the audit of the housing subsidy claim, as the Council's claim had been qualified by the auditors in 2014-15.

The Committee,

RESOLVED

- 1) That the external audit fee submitted by Grant Thornton be approved.
- 2) That the arrangements for local body audit following the closure of the Audit Commission be noted.

Reason for decision: To consider the planned audit fee.

CGS19 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its work programme covering the 2016-17 municipal year.

The Committee,

RESOLVED: That the Committee's work programme for 2016-7, be approved.

Reason for decision: To allow the Committee to approve its work programme for 2016-17 municipal year.

The meeting finished at 7.40 pm

Signed

Chairman

Date