



A meeting of the **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **WEDNESDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2019** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

AGENDA

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25th July 2019.

Contact Officer: H Peacey - (01480) 388007

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary and other interests in relation to any Agenda Item.

Contact Officer: Democratic Services - (01480) 388169

3. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS - UPDATE (Pages 11 - 14)

To provide a summary and update of completed or ongoing complaints received regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011 since the start of the year.

Contact Officer: L Jablonska - (01480) 388004

4. POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW - CONSULTATION OUTCOME (Pages 15 - 30)

To receive a report from the Elections & Democratic Services Manager on the Polling Districts and Polling Places Review Consultation Outcome.

Contact Officer: L Jablonska - (01480) 388004

5. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - HOLME PARISH COUNCIL (Pages 31 - 42)

To receive a report from the Elections & Democratic Services Manager outlining the outcome of the Community Governance Review at Holme Parish Council.

Contact Officer: L Jablonska - (01480) 388004

6. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS - BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS (Pages 43 - 58)

To receive a report from the Elections & Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer on Local Government Ethical Standards Best Practice Recommendations for Local Authorities.

Contact Officer: L Jablonska - (01480) 388004

7. ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2018-19 (Pages 59 - 70)

To provide Members with information on complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman and those received by the Council during April 2018 – March 2019.

Contact Officer: L Sboui / A Dobbyne - (01480) 388032 / 388100

8. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2019/20 AND INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER (Pages 71 - 92)

To receive a report from the Internal Audit Manager outlining the Internal Audit Plan for October 2019 – March 2020 and the Internal Audit Charter.

Contact Officer: D Harwood: (01480) 388115

9. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 93 - 94)

To receive the Corporate Governance Committee Progress Report.

Contact Officer: H Peacey - (01480) 388007

10. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - SPECIAL MEETING

To note that a special meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 13th November 2019 at 7:00pm in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House. The meeting will consider the external audit of the 2018/19 final accounts.

Contact Officer: Democratic Services - (01480) 388169

24 day of September 2019



Head of Paid Service

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests

Further information on [Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non - Statutory Disclosable Interests](#) is available in the Council's Constitution

Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings

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Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with [guidelines](#) agreed by the Council.

Please contact Habbiba Peacey, Democratic Services Officer, Tel: 01480 388169 / email: Habbiba.Peacey@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee.

Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the [District Council's website](#).

Emergency Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 25 July 2019

PRESENT: Councillor L W McGuire – Chairman.

Councillors E R Butler, P Kadewere, D A Giles,
Dr P L R Gaskin and D N Keane.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors H V Masson, J P Morris, D J Wells, S M Burton and Mrs S Conboy.

17 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12th June 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

19 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS - UPDATE

By means of a report by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Committee were provided with a summary and update of completed and ongoing complaints received regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011 since the start of the year. With regards to case number 19/24, a Standards (Hearing) Sub-Committee would be convened to consider the report produced by the Independent Investigator.

A discussion then ensued on the level of information provided within the report and requests were made for additional information to be provided. Following debate, the Elections and Democratic Services Manager undertook to include a timeline for each case in future reports and to give further consideration to requests made by Members which were likely to reveal the identity of individuals. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the progress of outstanding complaints and the conclusions of cases resolved since the last meeting be noted.

(Councillor D A Giles abstained from voting on this item).

20 POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW

With the aid of a report by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Committee were acquainted with details of the process involved to undertake a review of polling districts and polling places as required by Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

By way of background, the Elections and Democratic Services Manager informed the Committee of the legislative requirement to undertake the review which was currently out for public consultation closing on 14 August 2019. Members noted that the consultation had also been sent to a wide range of stakeholders including County and District Councillors, MPs, Town and Parish Clerks, Returning Officers for the Constituencies of Huntingdon and Peterborough, the Returning Officer for Cambridgeshire County Council, political agents/parties and local disability groups.

Having had their attention drawn to a minor textual amendment to Appendix A and in noting that final proposals would be submitted to Council for adoption at its meeting on 9th October 2019, the Committee

RESOLVED

that the process involved in the review of polling districts and polling places, proposals and timetable for consultation be noted.

21 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS - A REVIEW BY THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE

A report by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) providing a summary of the review undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life on ethical standards and review of the effectiveness of the arrangements introduced by the Localism Act 2011.

Attention was drawn to the best practice recommendations directed to local authorities, where it was noted that a further report would be submitted at the Committee's next meeting. In doing so, a question was raised by the Chairman querying when the gifts and hospitality register was last reviewed by the Council. The Elections and Democratic Services Manager confirmed that a review would be timely as it had last been considered in 2012 and that consideration should also be given to Member training in this respect. Following brief debate on whether candidates standing for or accepting public offices should not be required publicly to disclose their home address, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the report of the review of Local Government Ethical Standards undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life be noted; and
- (b) that a further report be presented to the next meeting of the Committee reviewing the best practice recommendations for local

authorities and identifies any changes necessary to the Council's processes.

22 APPROVAL FOR PUBLICATION OF THE 2018/19 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

(Mr Suresh Patel, Ernst Young LLP, was in attendance for consideration of this item).

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the process for finalising and publishing the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and the Annual Finance Report (AFR) for 2018/19.

Pursuant to Minute No. 19/16, the Head of Resources confirmed the position with regard to the unaudited accounts and drew attention to Appendix C which outlined the draft Notice of Publication for the Statement of Accounts 2018/19. With reference to the draft Annual Governance Statement outlined in Appendix A, the Finance Manager reported that an additional risk around environmental pressures had been included. Despite this, the Committee were assured that the governance arrangements and the internal control environment were considered to be operating effectively. Attention was then drawn to the key financial highlights where it was noted that the Council had achieved an underspend of £0.248m against a budget of £17.282m.

Mr S Patel of Ernst Young LLP, offered his sincere apologies to the Committee, the Head of Resources and his team for failing to deliver audited accounts by the required deadline. He then went on to explain the significant resource issues he was experiencing within his organisation and the challenges that remained to successfully attract, recruit and retain employees within the audit sector. The Committee were reminded of the meetings held between Ernst Young LLP, the District Council and Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) to discuss the issue of the unaudited accounts. In his concluding remarks, Mr S Patel reassured the Committee that the audit process would commence in August with a view to reporting back to Members at their October 2019 meeting.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman placed on record his disappointment at the impact the unaudited accounts were having upon the Council and the additional pressures it was placing upon staff over the summer holiday period. Members raised a number of questions with Mr S Patel and received a response to each. Matters discussed included assurances on completing the audit over the summer holiday period, whether financial penalties were incurred, the potential impact this might have upon the Council's reputation, the current contract with PSAA, whether additional resource would be necessary to meet the demands of the external audit and if these costs could be recovered and the views of the Cabinet and Senior Leadership Team at the Council. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Annual Governance Statement attached at Appendix A of the report now submitted be approved and the Executive Leader and Managing Director be authorised to sign the Statement on behalf of the Council;

- (b) that the Unaudited Annual Financial Report as attached at Appendix B of the report now submitted be approved; and
- (c) that the Notice of Publication as attached at Appendix C of the report now submitted be approved.

23 IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIONS

By way of a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and in accordance with the Framework agreed by the Committee in 2017, Members were presented with the outstanding internal audit actions as at 30th June 2019.

It was noted that there were 14 audit actions not implemented by their original target date, of which 3 actions were 2 years or more older. Of particular concern to Members was the nature and number of outstanding audit actions falling under the responsibility of 3C ICT. Having expressed their disappointment at the lack of progress made, the Chairman suggested that the Committee might wish to invite Officers to their next meeting if progress had not been delivered over the summer period. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the content of the report now submitted be noted; and
- (b) that the Head of Resources be requested to submit an email update to the Committee in September 2019 on the status of outstanding audit actions to enable Members to determine which Officers to invite to its October 2019 meeting.

24 DISPOSALS AND ACQUISITIONS POLICY: LAND AND PROPERTY - UPDATE ON THRESHOLDS

The Committee were acquainted with a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) providing an update to Members on the Disposals and Acquisitions Policy. Having had their attention drawn to the thresholds outlined in the policy and the outcome of consultations with the Executive Member for Strategic Resources, the Committee

RESOLVED

- (a) to receive and note the report now submitted; and
- (b) to review the acquisition and disposal policy thresholds in 24 months' time.

25 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received and noted a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on progress of actions in response to any decisions taken at previous meetings. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted.

Chairman

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Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Code of Conduct Complaints – Update

Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Committee – 2nd October 2019

Executive Portfolio: Councillor G J Bull, Executive Leader

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

This report provides Members with an update on complaints cases regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. The Committee is responsible for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members of the District and Town and Parish Councils, for monitoring operation of the Code of Conduct and for considering the outcome of investigations in the event of breaches of the Code.

Recommendation:

The Committee is requested to note the progress of any outstanding complaints and the conclusion of cases resolved since the meeting in July 2019.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary and update of completed or ongoing complaints received regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011 since the start of the year.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In accordance with the functions of the Committee, this report seeks to provide a summary of the current position in relation to the Code of Conduct complaints since the last meeting.
- 2.2 At the meeting of the Committee on 13th September 2017, Members requested that this report be submitted on a quarterly basis and to include categories of the Code of Conduct cases to enable feedback to be given to Town and Parish Councils should similar themes emerge on the nature of the complaints to enable further training to be arranged.

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Details of allegations/complaints in relation to the Code of Conduct have been outlined in the table below. Specific detailed information regarding the complaint has not been provided as this may be prejudicial to the conduct of the ongoing complaints process and to protect the identity of councillors who may not have breached the Code of Conduct.

Case Number	District/Town/ Parish Council	Allegation/complaint	Outcome
19/24	Huntingdonshire District Council	Complaint against District Councillor alleging he breached 3.4 (disrepute), 3.7 (independent judgement) and 3.8 (acting unlawfully) of the Code	Matter investigated and report produced by Independent Investigator. Final outcome to be determined at a Hearing schedule for 17th October 2019.
19/32	Godmanchester Town Council	Complaint against a Town Councillor alleging he breached 3.4 (disrepute) of the Code	Matter investigated and concluded that there had been a breach of the Code but not in the public interest to be taken forward for investigation due to difficulty of obtaining further evidence.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no significant implications to report.

5. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

5.1 This is an opportunity for Members of the Committee to be appraised of details of completed complaints and any outstanding complaints alleged against the Code of Conduct. This is in accordance with the functions of the Committee and its duty to discharge functions in relation to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct within the Council and amongst Town and Parish Councils within the District.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name/Job Title: Lisa Jablonska, Elections and Democratic Services Manager &
Deputy Monitoring Officer
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Email: lisa.jablonska@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

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Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Polling Districts and Polling Places Review – Consultation Outcome

Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Committee – 2nd October 2019
Council – 9th October 2019

Executive Portfolio: Executive Leader – Councillor G J Bull

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006 require each authority to undertake a review of all of the polling districts and polling places in its area on a regular basis and the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 requires each authority to complete and carry out a review in a 16 month period beginning on 1st October of every fifth year after 1st October 2013.

The last full review was undertaken in October 2013 and an interim review undertaken in 2016 following the completion of the review of electoral arrangements by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) of Cambridgeshire County Council and Huntingdonshire District Council. It is now necessary to carry out the next scheduled review which needs to be completed by 31st January 2020 so that any changes can be reflected in the new Register of Electors to be published on 1st December 2019.

The results of the formal consultation exercise detailing the representations made are summarised in the report.

Recommendation:

The Committee

notes the outcome of the Polling Districts and Polling Places Review and consultation undertaken.

RECOMMENDS

that the Council approve the Schedule of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2019 as appended to the report now submitted.

The Council is

RECOMMENDED

that the Schedule of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2019 as appended to the report now submitted be approved.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to acquaint Members with details of the process involved with a review of polling districts and polling places as required by Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and consider details of the representations made during the formal consultation process.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006 require each authority to undertake a review of all of the polling districts and polling places in its area on a regular basis. The last such review was completed in 2013 and an interim review in 2016 following the completion of the review of electoral arrangements by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) of Cambridgeshire County Council and Huntingdonshire District Council. Following an amendment in the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, it has been necessary to carry out the next scheduled review in a 16 month period beginning on 1st October of every fifth year after 1st October 2013.
- 2.2 All wards within Huntingdonshire are divided into polling districts which form the basis upon which the register of electors is produced. Most are defined by parish boundaries, but there are exceptions. The Council is responsible for dividing its area into polling districts and for keeping polling districts under review. The Council must also define a polling place for each of its polling districts within which the polling station is located.

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 A formal consultation exercise was undertaken and hosted on the Council's website from 3rd July 2019 until 14th August 2019, whereby all residents, County and District Councillors, MPs, Town and Parish Councils, Returning Officers, Political Agents/parties and local disability groups were asked to make comments on the existing arrangements for polling places and polling stations.
- 3.2 A total of 21 responses were received and detailed at Appendix A in the Consultation Responses Schedule. Arising from the representations made it has not been necessary to make any changes to the polling districts and polling places as the comments received related to polling station concerns that will be investigated further after the review. The new Schedule of Polling Districts and Polling Places is detailed at Appendix B.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no significant legal implications other than the review is a legal requirement and must be completed by 31st January 2020.

5. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 5.1 In accordance with the Representation of the People Act 1983, Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2006 and Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006, the Council must undertake a review of the polling district and polling places within a period of 16 months that starts on 1st October of every fifth year after 1st October 2013. The adequacy and suitability of polling stations is regularly reviewed to ensure that premises remain suitable and accessible for electors.
- 5.2 The Council is required to approve the Schedule of Polling Districts and Polling Places to ensure the effective delivery of elections.

6. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – Consultation Responses Schedule
Appendix B - Schedule of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2019

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Website Consultation Document – Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2019](#)

[Review of Polling Districts, polling places and polling stations guidance – The Electoral Commission](#)

CONTACT OFFICER

Name/Job Title: Lisa Jablonska, Elections and Democratic Services Manager
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APPENDIX A

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL – POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2019

CONSULTATION RESPONSES SCHEDULE

CONSULTEE	WARD/PARISH	COMMENTS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION	ACTION/PROPOSAL
Spaldwick Parish Council	Spaldwick	Recommends no change	No change
Sawtry Parish Council	Sawtry	Recommends no change	No change
Sibson-cum Stibbington Parish Council	Sibson-cum-Stibbington	Considered move to the Environment Centre but not considered necessary	No change
Wistow Parish Council	Wistow	Recommends no change but clearer signage for disabled voters to rear exit as front entrance has three steep steps	No change – Noted action for polling station
Earith Parish Council	Earith	Recommends no change	No change
Yaxley Parish Council	Yaxley	Recommends consideration be given to using Queens Park Hall as a polling station for polling district GB instead of Royal British Legion as positive comments received during its use for the European Parliamentary elections	Re-visit both locations to assess suitability
Bythorn and Keyston Parish Council	Bythorn and Keyston	Recommends no change	No change
Councillor John Morris	Huntingdon Hinchingsbrooke Park polling district	Current polling station at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park not ideal as not central and limited car parking. Suggested Cromwell Academy.	Hinchingsbrooke School/House and Cromwell Academy unable to accommodate a polling station as in previous years. No alternative venue available in polling district.

CONSULTEE	WARD/PARISH	COMMENTS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION	ACTION/PROPOSAL
County Councillor Peter Downes	Huntingdon Hinchingsbrooke Park polling district	Recommends Hinchingsbrooke House	Please see comments against Councillor Morris
Councillor John Morris	Brampton	Recommends relocating polling station back to Community Centre on High Street from Memorial Centre	Re-visit both locations to assess suitability and investigate potential for consultation with electors
County Councillor Peter Downes	Brampton	Recommends relocating polling station to Scout Hut	Site visit required to assess suitability
Brampton Parish Council	Brampton	Recommends either retain Memorial Centre or relocate back to Community Centre	Please see comments against Councillor Morris
Ramsey Town Council	Ramsey	Recommends no change	No change
Holywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council	Holywell-cum- Needlingworth	Recommends no change	No change
Holme Parish Council	Holme	Recommends no change	No change
Alconbury Weston Parish Council	Alconbury	Recommends no change	No change
St Ives Town Council	St Ives Beech ward	Recommends merging ward with St Ives West	Electoral review by the LGBCE completed in 2018 therefore legislatively timeframe does not allow for review for a further two years
Hemingford Abbots Parish Council	Hemingford Abbots	Recommends no change	No change
Leighton Bromswold Parish Council	Leighton Bromswold	Recommends no change	No change
Warboys Parish Council	Warboys	Recommends no change and supports the retention of two polling districts (FR and FS) for the village and two polling stations at the Parish Centre	No change

CONSULTEE	WARD/PARISH	COMMENTS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION	ACTION/PROPOSAL
Hamerton Parish Council	Hamerton	Recommends no change but highlighted difficulty with disabled access with the entrance steps	No change - Noted action for polling station

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WARD NAME	POLLING DISTRICT	PD CODE	POLLING PLACE	POLLING STATION	ELECTORATE	PROPOSED CHANGE
Alconbury	Alconbury	AC	The Parish of Alconbury	Alconbury Memorial Hall, School Lane, Alconbury	1186	
	Alconbury Weston	AD	The Parish of Alconbury Weston	57 Highfield Road, Alconbury Weston	608	
	Barham & Woolley	AF	The Parishes of Barham and Woolley and Spaldwick	Spaldwick Community Room, Spaldwick Community Primary School	52	
	Buckworth	AN	The Parish of Buckworth	The Club Room, Cricket Club, Buckworth	99	
	Easton	BC	The Parish of Easton	Church of St Peter, Easton	137	
	Hamerton & Steeple Gidding	BX	The Parish of Hamerton and Steeple Gidding	Hamerton Village Hall, Hamerton	96	
	Spaldwick	FE	The Parish of Spaldwick	Spaldwick Community Room, Spaldwick Community Primary School	481	
	Upton & Coppingford	FN	The Parish of Upton	Upton Village Hall, Upton	181	
	Winwick	FW	The Parish of Winwick	Winwick Village Hall, Winwick	80	
Brampton	Brampton	AH	The Parish of Brampton	Brampton Memorial Centre, Thrapston Road, Brampton	3883	
	Huntingdon – Hinchingsbrooke Park	CS	The Hinchingsbrooke Park Ward of Huntingdon Parish	The Countryside Centre, Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Huntingdon	1407	
Buckden	Buckden	AM	The Parish of Buckden	Buckden Methodist Hall, Buckden	2250	
	Diddington	BA	The Parish of Buckden		63	
	Southoe	FD	The Parish of Southoe	Southoe Village Hall, Southoe	327	
Fenstanton	Fenstanton South	BJ	The Parish of Fenstanton	Church Centre, School Lane, Fenstanton	2090	
	Hilton	CB	The Parish of Hilton	Hilton Village Hall, Hilton	828	

WARD NAME	POLLING DISTRICT	PD CODE	POLLING PLACE	POLLING STATION	ELECTORATE	PROPOSED CHANGE
Godmanchester and Hemingford Abbots	Godmanchester (part)	DA	The Parish of Godmanchester	Queen Elizabeth School, Godmanchester	2707	
	Godmanchester (part)	DB	The Parish of Godmanchester	Judiths Field Hall, London Road, Godmanchester	2710	
	Hemingford Abbots	BZ	The Parish of Hemingford Abbots	Hemingford Abbots, Village Hall, Hemingford Abbots	503	
	Offord Cluny	DH	The Offord Cluny part of the Parish of Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy	Offord Village Hall, Offord Cluny	413	
	Offord D'Arcy	DJ	The Offord D'Arcy part of the Parish of Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy		649	
Great Paxton	Abbotsley	AA	The Parish of Abbotsley	Abbotsley Village Hall, Abbotsley	467	
	Great Gransden	BR	The Parish of Great Gransden	The Reading Room, Great Gransden	765	
	Great Paxton	BS	The Parish of Great Paxton	Community Room, Great Paxton, Primary School	767	
	Toseland	FM	The Parish of Toseland	St Michael's Church, High Street, Toseland	67	
	Waresley-cum-Tetworth	FT	The Parish of Waresley	Waresley Village Hall, Waresley	227	
	Yelling	GE	The Parish of Yelling	Yelling Village Hall, Yelling	258	
Great Staughton	Ellington	BD	The Parish of Ellington	Ellington Village Hall	462	
	Grafham	BM	The Parish of Grafham	Grafham Village Hall	486	
	Great Staughton	BT	The Parish of Great Staughton	Gt Staughton Village Hall, Great Staughton	712	
	Hail Weston	BW	The Parish of Hail Weston	Hail Weston Village Hall, Hail Weston	477	
	Perry	DM	The Parish of Perry	Perry Church, Perry	550	
Hemingford Grey and Houghton	Hemingford Grey	CA	The Parish of Hemingford Grey	St James Parish Centre, 33 High Street, Hemingford Grey	2383	
	Houghton & Wyton	CE	The Parish of Houghton	Houghton & Wyton Memorial Hall, Houghton	1401	
	Wyton-on-the-Hill	CF	The Parish of Wyton	Wyton on the Hill, Primary School, Cambridge Square	981	

WARD NAME	POLLING DISTRICT	PD CODE	POLLING PLACE	POLLING STATION	ELECTORATE	PROPOSED CHANGE
Holywell-cum-Needingworth	Bluntisham	AG	The Parish of Bluntisham	Bluntisham Village Hall, Recreation Field, Mill Lane, Bluntisham	1535	
	Colne	AW	The Parish of Colne	Colne Community Hall, East Street, Colne	734	
	Earith	BB	The Parish of Earith	Earith Parish Hall, Earith	1278	
	Holywell cum Needingworth	CD	The Parish of Holywell-cum-Needingworth	Needingworth Village Hall, Needingworth	1974	
Huntingdon East	Huntingdon – South	CH	The South Ward of Huntingdon Parish	MS Therapy Centre, Bradbury House, Mayfield Road, Huntingdon	1190	
	Huntingdon – East	CJ	The East Ward of Huntingdon Parish	Hartford Village Hall, Main Street	4151	
Huntingdon North	Huntingdon – South West	CG	The South West Ward of Huntingdon Parish	Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Huntingdon	546	
	Huntingdon – Central	CL	The Central Ward of Huntingdon Parish	Huntingdonshire Regional College, California Road	1779	
	Huntingdon – North East	CN	The North East Ward of Huntingdon Parish	St Barnabas Church Hall, Medway Road, Huntingdon	4346	
	Huntingdon – West	CP	The West Ward of Huntingdon Parish	Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon	1694	
Kimbolton	Brington	AJ	The Brington part of the parish of Brington & Molesworth	St Leonards Hall, High Street, Brington	171	
	Molesworth	AK	The Molesworth part of the parish of Brington & Molesworth	Molesworth Village Hall, Molesworth	118	
	Bythorn	AR	The Bythorn part of the parish of Bythorn & Keyston	Bythorn Village Hall, Bythorn	110	
	Keyston	AS	The Keyston part of the parish of Bythorn & Keyston	Keyston Village Hall, Keyston	138	
	Catworth	AT	The Parish of Catworth	Catworth Village Hall, Catworth	306	
	Covington	AY	The Parish of Covington	Covington Village Hall, Covington	71	
	Kimbolton & Stonely	DC	The Parish of Kimbolton	The Mandeville Hall, Kimbolton	1058	
	Leighton Bromswold	DE	The Parish of Leighton Bromswold	The Old School House, Leighton Bromswold	167	
	Old Weston	DL	The Parish of Old Weston	Old Weston Village Hall, Old Weston	192	

WARD NAME	POLLING DISTRICT	PD CODE	POLLING PLACE	POLLING STATION	ELECTORATE	PROPOSED CHANGE
Kimbolton (contd.)	Stow Longa	FG	The Parish of Stow Longa	The Old Barn, Spaldwick Road, Stow Longa	109	
	Stow Longa	FK	The part of Stow Longa parish which includes Kimbolton Road		6	
	Tilbrook	FL	The Parish of Tilbrook	Tilbrook Village Hall, Tilbrook	224	
Ramsey	Bury	AP	The Parish of Bury	Bury Village Hall, Bury	1443	
	Ramsey (Town)	DR	The Parish of Ramsey	Ramsey Royal British, Legion Hall, Cricket Field Lane	2058	
	Ramsey Heights	DS	The Ramsey Heights part of the Ramsey Parish	306 Uggmere Court Road Ramsey Heights	396	
	Ramsey St Mary's	DT	The Ramsey St Mary's part of the Ramsey Parish	The Barn Ashbeach School, Ashbeach Drove, Ramsey St Marys	657	
	Ramsey Mereside	DV	The Ramsey Mereside part of the Ramsey Parish	Ramsey Mereside Village Hall, Ramsey Mereside	514	
	Ramsey Forty Foot	DW	The Ramsey Forty Foot part of the Ramsey Parish	Ramsey Forty Foot, Village Hall, Ramsey Forty Foot	573	
	Ramsey (Town)	DX	The Parish of Ramsey	Ramsey Library, Great Whyte, Ramsey	2365	
Sawtry	Abbots Ripton	AB	The Parish of Abbots Ripton	Abbots Ripton Village Hall, Abbots Ripton	249	
	Kings Ripton	DD	The Parish of Kings Ripton	Kings Ripton Village Hall, Kings Ripton	156	
	Sawtry	FA	The Parish of Sawtry	The Old School Hall, 37 Green End Road, Sawtry	4451	
	Woodwalton	GA	The Parish of Woodwalton	Rear of The Elephant and Castle, Woodwalton	165	
Somersham	Somersham	FC	The Parish of Somersham	Victory Hall, Parkhall Road, Somersham	2961	
St Ives East	St Ives North	DY	The North Ward of St Ives Parish (north of ward)	Burleigh Hill, Community Centre, Constable Road	2657	
	St Ives North	DZ	The North Ward of St Ives Parish (south of ward)	Burleigh Hill, Community Centre, Constable Road	2472	
	St Ives North	EA	The North Ward of St Ives Parish (Old Ramsey Road)	Burleigh Hill Community Centre, Constable Rd, St Ives	11	

WARD NAME	POLLING DISTRICT	PD CODE	POLLING PLACE	POLLING STATION	ELECTORATE	PROPOSED CHANGE
St Ives South	Fenstanton - North	BQ	The Parishes of Fenstanton and St Ives South	Church Centre, School Lane, Fenstanton and Sacred Heart Church Hall, Needingworth Road, St Ives (District Council elections only)	356	
	St Ives South	EB	The South Ward of St Ives Parish (right of Pig Lane)	Sacred Heart Church Hall, Needingworth Road, St Ives	3693	
	St Ives South	EC	The South Ward of St Ives Parish (left of Pig Lane)	Crossways Christian Centre, Ramsey Rd, St Ives	1916	
St Ives West	St Ives West	ED	The West Ward of St Ives Parish	One Leisure, St Ives Outdoor Centre	1986	
	St Ives Beech	EX	The Beech Ward of St Ives Parish	Crossways Christian Centre, Ramsey Rd, St Ives	331	
St Neots East	St Neots - East	ET	The East Ward of St Neots Parish	Love's Farm House, Kester Way, Love's Farm	2399	
St Neots Eatons	St Neots – Eaton Ford	EN	The Eaton Ford Ward of St Neots Parish (right of Great North Road)	The Scout Hall, Mill Hill Road, Eaton Ford	2098	
	St Neots – Eaton Ford	EP	The Eaton Ford Ward of St Neots Parish (left of Great North Road)	Eatons Community Centre, The Maltings, Eaton Socon	2190	
	St Neots – Eaton Socon	ER	The Eaton Socon Ward of St Neots Parish (right of Great North Road)	The Jubilee Hall, School Lane, Eaton Socon	1586	
	St Neots – Eaton Socon	ES	The Eaton Socon Ward of St Neots Parish (left of Great North Road)	Bushmead School, Bushmead Road, Eaton Socon	2708	
St Neots Eynesbury	St Neots – Eynesbury	EF	The Eynesbury Ward of St Neots Parish (south of Hen Brook)	New Methodist Church Hall, Berkley Street, Eynesbury	2130	
	St Neots – Eynesbury	EG	The Eynesbury Ward of St Neots Parish (north of Hen Brook)	Bargroves Resource Centre, Cromwell Rd, Eynesbury, St Neots	1822	
	St Neots – Eynesbury	EH	The Eynesbury Ward of St Neots Parish (left of Potton Road)	Café Zest, One Leisure St Neots	4054	
	St Neots – Priory Park South	EJ	The Priory Park South Ward of St Neots Parish	St Neots Voluntary Welfare Association, Church Walk, St Neots	778	
	St Neots - Church	EW	The Church Ward of St Neots Parish		279	

WARD NAME	POLLING DISTRICT	PD CODE	POLLING PLACE	POLLING STATION	ELECTORATE	PROPOSED CHANGE
St Neots Priory Park and Little Paxton	Little Paxton	DF	Little Paxton	Little Paxton Village Hall, Little Paxton	3233	
	St Neots - Priory Park	EL	The Priory Park Ward of St Neots Parish	Longsands Academy, Longsands Road	3668	
	St Neots - Crosshall	EQ	The Crosshall Ward of St Neots Parish	The Scout Hall, Mill Hill Road, Eaton Ford	1034	
Stilton, Folksworth and Washingley	Alwalton	AE	The Parish of Alwalton	Colonel Dane Memorial Hall, Alwalton	245	
	Chesterton	AV	The Parish of Chesterton		129	
	Conington	AX	The Parish of Conington	The Green, Cotton Close	172	
	Denton and Caldecote	AZ	The Parish of Stilton	Stilton Pavilion, Stilton	51	
	Elton	BE	The Parish of Elton	Highgate Hall, Elton	560	
	Folksworth & Washingley	BK	The Parish of Folksworth	Folksworth Village Hall, Folksworth	715	
	Glatton	BL	The Parish of Glatton	Glatton Village Hall, Glatton	228	
	Great and Little Gidding	BN	The Great Gidding part of Great and Little Gidding	Great Gidding Village Hall, Great Gidding	250	
		BP	The Little Gidding part of Great and Little Gidding		12	
	Haddon	BV	The Parish of Haddon	The Old Rectory, Haddon	54	
	Holme	CC	The Parish of Holme	The Admiral Wells, Station Road, Holme	503	
	Morborne	DG	The Parish of Haddon	The Old Rectory, Haddon	25	
	Sibson cum Stibbington	FB	The Parish of Sibson cum Stibbington	The Christie Hall Stibbington, Elton Road, Wansford	398	
	Stilton	FF	The Parish of Stilton	Stilton Pavilion, Stilton	1820	
Water Newton	FV	The Parish of Sibson cum Stibbington	The Christie Hall Stibbington, Elton Road, Wansford	64		

WARD NAME	POLLING DISTRICT	PD CODE	POLLING PLACE	POLLING STATION	ELECTORATE	PROPOSED CHANGE
The Stukeleys	Huntingdon – Stukeley Meadows	CR	The Stukeley Meadows Ward of Huntingdon Parish	Stukeley Meadows School, Stukeley Meadows, Huntingdon	2414	
	Great Stukeley	FH	The Great Stukeley part of The Stukeleys Parish	Gt Stukeley Village Hall. Great Stukeley	569	
	Little Stukeley	FJ	The Little Stukeley part of The Stukeleys Parish	Lt Stukeley Village Hall, Little Stukeley	206	
	Alconbury Weald	FQ	The Alconbury Weald part of The Stukeleys Parish	Lt Stukeley Village Hall, Little Stukeley	369	
Warboys	Broughton	AL	The Parish of Broughton	Broughton Village Hall, Broughton	208	
	Old Hurst	DK	The Parish of Old Hurst	Johnson's of Old Hurst	224	
	Pidley-cum-Fenton	DN	The Parish of Pidley-cum-Fenton	Pidley Village Hall, Pidley	320	
	Upwood and The Raveleys	FP	The Parish of Upwood	Upwood Village Hall, Upwood	1020	
	Warboys	FR	The Parish of Warboys	Parish Centre, Warboys	3074	
	Warboys Fen	FS	Warboys Fen part of Warboys Parish		147	
	Wistow	FX	The Parish of Wistow	Wistow Village Hall	450	
Woodhurst	FY	The Parish of Woodhurst	Woodhurst Village Hall, Woodhurst	294		
Yaxley	Farcet	BH	The Parish of Farcet	Farcet Village Hall	1416	
	Yaxley	GB	The Parish of Yaxley (left of Middletons Road)	Royal British Legion Hall, 210 Broadway, Yaxley	3779	
	Yaxley	GC	The Parish of Yaxley (right of Middletons Road)	Owen Pooley Hall, Main Street, Yaxley	3300	

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Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Community Governance Review – Holme Parish Council

Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Committee – 2nd October 2019

Executive Portfolio: Councillor G J Bull, Executive Leader

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager

Ward(s) affected: Stilton, Folksworth and Washingley

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to consider a request from Holme Parish Council to increase the size from 7 to 9 parish councillors.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the Committee –

- (a) agrees the request from Holme Parish Council for a Community Governance Review to increase the number of parish councillors from 7 to 9;
- (b) agrees, with or without amendments, the draft terms of reference of the review as detailed in Appendix A; and
- (c) authorises the Elections and Democratic Services Manager to agree a timetable in consultation with Holme Parish Council.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 A request has been received from Holme Parish Council to increase the council size from 7 to 9 parish councillors.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (“the 2007 Act”) provides for a Principal Council to conduct a review of the community governance arrangements for the whole or part of its area for the purpose of considering whether or not to make changes to parish boundaries or size and/or the creation of new parishes; and the review of the electoral arrangements for new and/or existing parishes.
- 2.2 Section 93 of the 2007 Act allows principal councils to decide how to undertake such a review, provided they comply with the duties in the Act which apply to council’s undertaking reviews. If, following a review, the Council decides that changes should be made to the electoral arrangements they may make an Order giving effect to these changes.
- 2.3 Section 95 of the Act provides, among other things, that when considering the number of councillors to be elected for the parish as a whole, the authority must have regard to the number of electors for the parish and any change in that number likely to occur in the next five years.
- 2.4 The Community Governance Review process, once commenced must be concluded within 12 months of the publication of the terms of reference.

3. REQUEST FROM HOLME PARISH COUNCIL

- 3.1 The Parish Council have provided the following background to support their request to increase the size of the Parish Council to 9 members and approved their request at a meeting of the Parish Council on 16th July 2019 –
- Population of Holme increasing rapidly, with 44 new homes either recently built or with planning permission, representing almost an increase of 20% of population; and
 - A larger Parish Council with a larger budget brings added pressures and responsibility to allow for greater sharing of responsibilities and encourage new members without losing the experience and skills of the existing members.

4. OPTIONS

- 4.1 The current electorate of Holme is 505 (September 2019) and the existing number of parish councillors is 7.
- 4.2 The Council notes that the number of parish councillors for each parish council shall not be less than five. In practice there is a wide variation of council size between parish councils. Currently no statutory requirement regarding the ratio of electors to councillors for parishes of different

electorate sizes exists. The Department for Communities and Local Government reports that, nationally, local councils with the following electorates have, typically, the number of councillors outlined below –

- Less than 500 – between 5 and 8 councillors;
- Between 501 and 2,500 – between 6 and 12; and
- Between 2,501 and 10,000 – between 9 and 16 councillors.

4.3 In dealing with a request the following guidelines, which are based on recommendations from the National Association of Local Councils, should also be considered but each area should be considered on its own merits.

Electors	Councillors	Electors	Councillors
Up to 900	7	10,400	17
1,400	8	11,900	18
2,000	9	13,500	19
2,700	10	15,200	20
3,500	11	17,000	21
4,400	12	18,900	22
5,400	13	20,900	23
6,500	14	23,000	24
7,700	15	45,000	25
9,000	16		

4.4 Prior to a review of parish arrangements in Huntingdonshire in 2008, Holme Parish Council consisted of 9 parish councillors, but following the implementation of the new scale of parish council representation an Order was made on 28th February 2008 to decrease the number of parish councillors from 9 to 7. This was in accordance with the new local scale as the electorate for the parish was significantly lower than the electorate ratio required for a parish council of 9 members.

4.5 In order to consider increasing the size of the parish council, a Community Governance Review needs to be undertaken. Although the statutory provisions must be complied with, the Council must consult with local people and take account of any representations made.

5. CONSULTATION AND TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Following publication of the Notice of Community Governance Review and Terms of Reference, electors will have two months from the date of publication of the consultation to return their views. It is hoped that the final report will be presented to Council in February 2020.

5.2 As the suggested change is minor, it is proposed to ensure completion of the review within a shorter period to enable an Order to be made to allow for the potential increase to take effect from May 2020 to enable an election to be combined with the Police and Crime Commissioner election.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Details have been included in the report.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The request for a community governance review would only warrant a 'light touch' as the request has been made by the Parish Council and the proposal will incur no direct cost to the electorate.

7.2 As the change is minor, it should be possible to do this by posters and leaflets within the parish and adverts on the District Council and Holme websites, rather than the usual method of sending a consultation leaflet to every registered elector.

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

8.1 To enable a community governance review to be undertaken to consider increasing the size of Holme Parish Council

9. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – Notice of Community Governance Review and Terms of Reference of the Community Governance Review of the Parish Electoral Arrangements of Holme.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007](#)
[Communities and Local Government Guidance on Community Governance Reviews March 2010](#)

Request from Holme Parish Council dated 18th July 2019

CONTACT OFFICER

Name/Job Title: Lisa Jablonska, Elections and Democratic Services Manager
Tel No: (01480) 388004
Email: Lisa.Jablonska@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Huntingdonshire District Council

Notice of Community Governance Review

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

The Council has commenced a Community Governance Review in response to a request from Holme Parish Council to increase the number of councillors from seven to nine. The purpose of the review is to enable the Council to consider what changes are needed to the parish arrangements.

The Council is now conducting the first stage of the review process and is inviting residents and interested organisations to submit their views on the above issue.

The Council has published its Terms of Reference document for the review and a copy can be obtained by contacting the Elections and Democratic Services Team as shown below or viewed at the Council offices. It can also be viewed on the [District Council's website](#) or the [parish website](#).

How to contact us.

Should you wish to submit a written representation regarding this review please address it to:

Elections and Democratic Services
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE29 3TN

Alternatively your submission may be emailed to:
democratic.services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

The deadline for submissions is 14 November 2019.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF HOLME 2019

TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

Aim of the review

Following the receipt of a request from Holme Parish Council, Huntingdonshire District Council has agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) of Holme.

The request for the CGR was submitted in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and proposes to increase the number of parish councillors from 7 (seven) to 9 (nine).

In undertaking the review, the Council will be guided by Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972, Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in accordance with section 100(4) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 by the Department of Communities and Local Government and The Electoral Commission in April 2008. Also the following Regulations which guide, in particular, consequential matters arising from the Review: Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008 (S12008/625); Local Government Finance (New Parishes) Regulations 2008 (S12008/626).

This Council is required to have regard to Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government and Local Government Boundary Commission for England. This guidance was published in March 2010 and it has been considered when drawing up the Terms of Reference (TOR).

These terms of reference will set out the matters on which the review is to focus.

What is a Community Governance Review (CGR)?

A CGR is a review of the whole or part of the district to consider one or more of the following:

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes;
- The electoral arrangements for parishes (the ordinary year of elections; council size, the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding); and
- Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes.

The Council is required to ensure that community governance within the area under review will be:

- Reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- Is effective and convenient.

In doing so the CGR is required to take into account:

- The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- The size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

Why undertake a Community Governance Review?

The CGR is to be undertaken due to the receipt of a request from the existing Parish Council. The District Council, although not required to carry out a review, has decided that a review should be carried out in the interest of local electors to ensure the community governance arrangements for the area reflects the identities and interests of the area and are effective and convenient.

The government has emphasised that recommendations made in CGR ought to bring about improved community engagement, more cohesive communities, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.

The recommendation within the request is to increase the number of parish councillors from 7 (seven) to 9 (nine). The existing Parish Council has put forward the following reasons for the request

- Population of Holme increasing rapidly, with 44 new homes either recently built or with planning permission, representing almost an increase of 20% of population; and
- A larger Parish Council with a larger budget brings added pressures and responsibility to allow for greater sharing of responsibilities and encourage new members without losing the experience and skills of the existing members.

Who will undertake the CGR?

As the principal authority, the District Council is responsible for undertaking any CGR within its electoral area.

The Council will approve the final recommendations before a Community Governance Order is made.

Consultation

How the Council proposes to conduct consultations during the Review?

Before making any recommendations or publishing final proposals, the District Council will take full account of the views of local people. The District Council will comply with the statutory consultative requirements by:

- Consulting local government electors for the area under review;
- Consulting any other person or body (including a local authority), which appears to the District Council to have an interest in the review;
- Notifying and consulting the County Council; and
- Taking into account any representations received in connection with the review.

Information relating to the CGR will be available on the Council's website and key documents will be on deposit at the District Council's Offices, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 3TN.

When taking account of written representations the District Council is bound to have regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review:

- Reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- Is effective and convenient.

The District Council will publish its recommendations as soon as practicable and take such steps as it considers sufficient to ensure that persons who may be interested in the CGR are informed of the recommendations and the reasons behind them.

The District Council will notify each consultee and any other persons or bodies who have made written representations of the outcome of the review.

Timetable for the CGR

A CGR must, by statute, be concluded within a twelve month period from the day on which the CGR starts. A CGR starts when the District Council publishes its Terms of Reference and concludes when the District Council publishes the recommendations made in the CGR.

The following is the review timetable: Action	Timetable	Outline of Action
Terms of Reference (TOR) are published.	3 October 2019	District Council publishes TOR and notifies stakeholders, clearly defining extent of CGR.
Introductory stage – submissions are invited.	14 November 2019	District Council invites submissions from stakeholders on future arrangements under TOR.
Consideration of submissions received – recommendations are prepared	November 2019	

Recommendations are published concluding the review	Corporate Governance Committee	Recommendations to be considered by Corporate Governance Committee on 22 January 2020.
Final recommendations are published – concluding the review	January/February 2020	
Council resolves to make a Reorganisation Order	26 February 2020	The Council meet to consider final recommendations and decide on the extent to which the Council will give effect to them.
Order made	Thereafter	Council publishes the Reorganisation Order.

Electoral Forecasts

In considering the electoral arrangement of the parish stated within this Terms of Reference the District Council is required to consider any change in the number or distribution of the electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts.

The District Council has used the Register of Electors 2018 published on 1 December 2018 (September 2019 update) to provide existing local government figures.

Electorate forecasts will be prepared using all available information.

The Present Structure of Holme Parish Council and Their Electoral Arrangements

Present Structure of parish governance in the area to be reviewed.

Parish	Number of Councillors	Electorate
Holme	7	505

Parishes

The Council wishes to ensure that electors should be able to identify clearly with the parish in which they are resident. It considers that this sense of identity and community lends strength and legitimacy to the parish structure, creates a common interest in parish affairs, encourages participation in elections to the parish council, leads to representatives and accountable government, engenders visionary leadership and generates a strong, inclusive community with a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride.

The Council considers that parishes should reflect distinctive and recognisable communities of interest, with their own sense of identity; the feeling of local community and the wishes of local inhabitants are primary considerations in this Review.

Electoral Arrangements

What does 'Electoral Arrangements' mean?

An important part of our Review will comprise giving consideration to 'Electoral Arrangements'. The terms cover the way in which a council is constituted for the parish. It covers:

- The ordinary year in which elections are held;
- The number of councillors to be elected to the council;
- The division (or not) of the parish into wards for the purpose of electing councillors;
- The number and boundaries of any such wards;
- The name of any such ward.

Ordinary year of election

The Local Government Act 1972 states that ordinary election of parish councils shall take place in 1976, 1979 and every fourth year thereafter (i.e. 2011, 2015, 2019 etc). However, the government has indicated that it would want the parish electoral cycle to coincide with the cycle for the District Council, so that the costs of elections can be shared. The Council at its meeting on 22nd February 2017 agreed to set the date of ordinary elections for all Town and Parish Councils as 2018 and every four years thereafter.

If the Review finds that it is appropriate to create a new post for a parish councillor then this will come into effect from May (combined with elections to the Police and Crime Commissioner on 7 May 2020).

A council for a parish

The legislation lays down the different duties that the Council has with regard to the creation of a council for a parish.

- Where the number of electors is 1,000 or more – a parish council must be created;
- Where the number of electors is 151-999 – a parish council may be created, with a parish meeting being the alternative form of governance;
- Where the number of electors is 150 or fewer – a parish council is not created.

What considerations cover the number of parish councillors?

The government has advised, and this Council concurs that "it is an important demographic principle that each person's vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimated competing factors, when it comes to the elections of councillors. Likewise, the Council notes that the number of parish councillors for each parish council shall not be less than five. There is no maximum number. There are no rules relating to the allocations of councillors. However, in dealing with a request the following guidelines, which are based on recommendations from the national Association of Local Councils, should also be considered.

Number of Parish Councillors Guidelines

Electors	Councillors	Electors	Councillors
Up to 900	7	10,400	17
1,400	8	11,900	18
2,000	9	13,500	19
2,700	10	15,200	20
3,500	11	17,000	21
4,400	12	18,900	22
5,400	13	20,900	23
6,500	14	23,000	24
7,700	15	45,000	25
9,000	16		

The government's guidance is that "each area should be considered on its own merits, having regard to its population, geography and the pattern of communities" and therefore the Council is prepared to pay particular attention to existing levels of representation, the broad pattern of existing council sizes which have stood the test of time and the take-up of seats at elections in its consideration of this matter.

By law, the Council must have regard to the following factors when considering the number of councillors to be elected for the parish:

- The number of local government electors for the parish;
- Any change in that number which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts.

Reorganisation of Community Governance Order and Commencement

The Review will be completed when the Council adopts the Reorganisation of Community Governance Order. Copies of this Order, the map(s) (where necessary) that show the effects of the order in detail, and the document(s) which set out the reason for the decisions that the Council has taken (including where it has decided to make no change following a Review) will be deposited at the Council Offices and published on the Council's website.

In accordance with the Guidance issued by the Government the Council will issue maps to illustrate each recommendation at a scale that will not normally be smaller than 1:10,000. These maps will be deposited with the Secretary of State at the Department of Communities and Local Government and at the Council's office at The Council House, South Street, Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 1DE. Prints will also be supplied, in accordance with the regulations, to Ordnance Survey, the Registrar General, the Land Registry, the Valuation Office Agency, the Boundary Commission for England and the Electoral Commission.

It is proposed that the Order will take effect for financial and administrative purposes on 1 April 2020.

If agreed any amendments to the electoral arrangements will come into force at the next scheduled elections (combined with elections to the Police and Crime Commissioner on 7 May 2020).

Consequential Matters

General Principles

The Council notes that a Reorganisation Order may cover any consequential matters that appear to the Council to be necessary or proper to give effect to the Order. These may include:

- The transfer and management or custody of property;
- The setting of precepts for new parishes;
- Provision with respect to the transfer of any functions, property, rights and liabilities
- Provision for the transfer of staff, compensation for loss of office, pensions and other staffing matters.

In these matters, the Council will be guided by Regulations that have been issued following the 2007 Act.

How to contact us

Should you wish to submit a written representation regarding this review, please address to:

Elections and Democratic Services
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE29 3TN

Alternatively your submission may be emailed to:

democratic.services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Should you require any further information or need clarification on the review process, please contact:

Lisa Jablonska
Elections and Democratic Services Manager
Telephone: 01480 388004
Email: lisa.jablonska@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

These Terms of Reference will be published on the [District Council website](#) and will be available for inspection at the District Council's offices at Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 3TN

Notices advertising this Community Governance Review and the availability of the Terms of Reference will also be posted within the Parish of Holme.

Date of Publication

3 October 2019

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Local Government Ethical Standards – Best Practice Recommendations

Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Committee – 2nd October 2019

Executive Portfolio: Councillor G J Bull, Executive Leader

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

This report provides Members with a review of the Council's processes in light of the review undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) on ethical standards and review of the effectiveness of the arrangements introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The CPSL undertook a detailed review in 2018 seeking evidence from all interested stakeholders that resulted in a number of recommendations and identified best practice to improve ethical standards in local government.

At their last meeting Members considered the report by the CSPL and agreed that a further report be presented to their next meeting reviewing the best practice recommendations for local authorities as a benchmark of good ethical practice and whether any changes were necessary to the Council's processes.

The Committee is

RECOMMENDED

to consider the best practice recommendations of the Review of Local Government Ethical Standards and proposed changed to the Council's processes.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to review the best practice recommendations as a benchmark of good ethical practice as detailed in the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) review that was presented to Members at their last meeting on 25th July 2019 and compare these against the Council's current processes to establish whether any changes are necessary.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced significant changes to the way that conduct of elected councillors was handled. It abolished a national framework headed by a regulator and a national Code of Conduct and removed powers to suspend or disqualify councillors for serious breaches of the Code of Conduct. Instead it placed a duty on councils to: adopt their own local Code; to put local procedures in place to investigate allegations the Code may have broken, with principal authorities carrying out that duty for town/parish councils; and to appoint at least one Independent Person whose views they had to take into account when considering matters under investigation.
- 2.2 The CSPL undertook to review the effectiveness of the arrangements once they had bedded in. They undertook a detailed review during 2018 seeking evidence from all interested stakeholders and issued its report in January 2019.

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 The CSPL have made some best practice recommendations which are directed at local authorities. The table attached at Appendix A outlines the best practice recommendations and issues for the Committee to consider. Whilst some gaps exist in the current arrangements, there are a number of provisions that are already covered and it is proposed that the Committee consider the comments attached and action required, with a view to providing further updates on progress at future meetings.
- 3.2 For ease of reference a copy of the current Code of Conduct is attached at Appendix B.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Under Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members. In discharging its duty the Council must, in particular, adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of Members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity. Huntingdonshire District Council's Code of Conduct and standards arrangements were adopted at full Council in July 2012 and Town/Parish Councils across the District have also predominantly adopted the Huntingdonshire District Council Code.

5. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 5.1 The CSPL have undertaken a review of ethical standards in local government. High standards of conduct in local government are needed to demonstrate that decisions being taken are in the public interest to maintain confidence. It is expected that their best practice recommendations should be implemented and a review will be undertaken the implementation in 2020.

6. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A - CSPL – Best Practice Recommendations Action Plan
Appendix B – HDC Code of Conduct

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Local Government Ethical Standards: A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life, January 2019](#)

CONTACT OFFICER

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Best Practice Recommendation	Comment	Action Required
<p>Best practice 1: Local authorities should include prohibitions on bullying and harassment in codes of conduct. These should include a definition of bullying and harassment, supplemented with a list of examples of the sort of behaviour covered by such a definition.</p>	<p>Code of Conduct does not explicitly include this provision. Code does not include list of examples.</p>	<p>Will await the Government’s response to the recommendations on new model Code and Monitoring Officer to review and propose amendments as required.</p>
<p>Best practice 2: Councils should include provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with any formal standards investigation, and prohibiting trivial or malicious allegations by councillors.</p>	<p>Code of Conduct does not include these provisions.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Best practice 3: Principal authorities should review their code of conduct each year and regularly seek, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities.</p>	<p>There is currently no specific review period for the Code of Conduct. Code of Conduct last reviewed in 2012.</p>	<p>Process to be put in place to review Code on a regular basis and determine timescale for review pending the outcome of the Government’s response to the recommendations on the new model Code.</p>

Best Practice Recommendation	Comment	Action Required
Best practice 4: An authority's code should be readily accessible to both councillors and the public, in a prominent position on a council's website and available in council premises.	Code of Conduct is published on the Council's website and as part of the Constitution. There is a designated page on how to complain about a councillor.	No action required.
Best practice 5: Local authorities should update their gifts and hospitality register at least once per quarter, and publish it in an accessible format, such as CSV.	The register is updated as the Monitoring Officer is notified by councillors that they have been offered gifts or hospitality. These details are not currently published on the Council's website.	Process to be put in place to remind councillors to register gifts and hospitality received each quarter and publish these details against their personal details record on the Council's website.
Best practice 6: Councils should publish a clear and straightforward public interest test against which allegations are filtered.	Monitoring Officer Protocol already makes provision for this arrangement.	No action required.
Best practice 7: Local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.	Huntingdonshire has access to a Lead and Deputy Independent Person.	No action required.

Best Practice Recommendation	Comment	Action Required
<p>Best practice 8: An Independent Person should be consulted as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation, and should be given the option to review and comment on allegations which the responsible officer is minded to dismiss as being without merit, vexatious, or trivial)</p>	<p>This is current practice. The Independent Person is consulted as part of an initial assessment of every Code of Conduct complaint submitted to the Council and any outcome of investigations.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>Best practice 9: Where a local authority makes a decision on an allegation of misconduct following a formal investigation, a decision notice should be published as soon as possible on its website, including a brief statement of facts, the provisions of the code engaged by the allegations, the view of the Independent Person, the reasoning of the decision-maker, and any sanction applied.</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer Protocol already makes provision for this arrangement.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>

Best Practice Recommendation	Comment	Action Required
<p>Best practice 10: A local authority should have straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the code of conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes.</p>	<p>Accessible guidance is already published on the Council's website and Monitoring Officer Protocol is available that explains the process and timescales for the handling of complaints.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>Best practice 11: Formal standards complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the parish council as a whole, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.</p>	<p>Different arrangements exist all for Town/Parish Councils in their Standing Orders. No power to impose this provision.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>Best practice 12: Monitoring Officers' roles should include providing advice, support and management of investigations and adjudications on alleged breaches to parish councils within the remit of the principal authority. They should be provided with adequate training, corporate support and resources to undertake this work.</p>	<p>Complaints have been investigated in accordance with the Monitoring Officer Protocol. There is budget for training and development and there is attendance on a regular basis by the Monitoring Officer and his Deputy.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>

Best Practice Recommendation	Comment	Action Required
<p>Best practice 13: A local authority should have procedures in place to address any conflicts of interest when undertaking a standards investigation. Possible steps should include asking the Monitoring Officer from a different authority to undertake the investigation.</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer is appointed by 3C Legal and covers Huntingdonshire, South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. Each authority has an appointed Deputy to deal with complaints where the Monitoring Officer has a conflict of interest. In most cases an investigation can be outsourced to an external investigator if necessary.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>Best practice 14: Councils should report on separate bodies they have set up or which they own as part of their annual governance statement, and give a full picture of their relationship with those bodies. Separate bodies created by local authorities should abide by the Nolan principle of openness, and publish their board agendas and minutes and annual reports in an accessible place.</p>	<p>To raise as part of the Annual Governance Review procedure. Separate bodies are covered by their own statutory requirements in terms of reporting etc.</p>	<p>Refer recommendation to Head of Resources for consideration in the context of the Annual Governance Statement.</p>
<p>Best practice 15: Senior officers should meet regularly with political group leaders or group whips to discuss standards issues.</p>	<p>Ad-hoc meetings are scheduled with group leaders as and when required.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

Introduction

Huntingdonshire District Council (the Authority) has adopted this Code of Conduct pursuant to Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members and co-opted members whenever they are acting in their capacity as a member of the Authority or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Authority.

This Code is based on the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership (“the Nolan Principles”).

1. Application

This Code of Conduct applies to you whenever you are acting, claim to act or give the impression you are acting in your capacity as a Member of the Authority, including –

- 1.1 at formal Meetings of the Authority
- 1.2 when acting as a representative of the Authority
- 1.3 in taking any decision as a Cabinet Member or a Ward Councillor
- 1.4 in discharging your functions as a Ward Councillor
- 1.5 when corresponding with the authority other than in a private capacity.

2. Meeting

In this Code “Meeting” means any meeting organised by or on behalf of the Authority, including –

- 2.1 any meeting of the Council, or a Committee or Sub-Committee of Council
- 2.2 any meeting of the Cabinet and any Committee of the Cabinet
- 2.3 at any briefing by Officers; and
- 2.4 at any site visit to do with the business of the Authority.

3. General Conduct

You must –

- 3.1 provide leadership to the authority and communities within its area, by personal example
- 3.2 respect others and not bully or threaten or attempt to bully or threaten any person

- 3.3 respect the confidentiality of information which you receive as a Member by –
 - 3.3.1 not disclosing confidential information to third parties unless required by law to do so or where there is a clear and over-riding public interest in doing so; and
 - 3.3.2 not obstructing third parties' legal rights of access to information
- 3.4 not conduct yourself in a manner which is likely to bring the Authority into disrepute.
- 3.5 use your position as a Member in the public interest and not for personal advantage.
- 3.6 comply with the Authority's reasonable rules on the use of public resources for private and political purposes.
- 3.7 exercise your own independent judgement, taking decisions for good and substantial reasons by –
 - 3.7.1 attaching appropriate weight to all relevant considerations including, where appropriate, public opinion and the views of political groups;
 - 3.7.2 paying due regard to the advice of Officers, and in particular to the advice of the statutory officers, namely the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer; and
 - 3.7.3 stating the reasons for your decisions where those reasons are not otherwise apparent
- 3.8 do nothing that causes the Authority to act unlawfully.

4. Registration of Interests

- 4.1 Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Council, or your election (if later), you must register with the Monitoring Officer any interests listed in Appendices A and B.
- 4.2 You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up to date and notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within 28 days of becoming aware of any change in respect of any interests listed in Appendices A and B.

5. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- 5.1 You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if it is of a description specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State (attached at Appendix A) and either:
 - (a) it is an interest of yours, or
 - (b) it is an interest of:
 - (i) your spouse or civil partner; or
 - (ii) a person with whom you are living as husband and wife; or
 - (iii) a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners;

and you are aware that other person has the interest.
- 5.2 You must -
 - 5.2.1 comply with the statutory and the Authority's requirements to disclose and withdraw from participating in respect of any matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

5.2.3 make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

5.2.4 Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether the interest is registered or not, you must not (unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Authority's Monitoring Officer) –

- (i) participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; or
- (ii) remain in the meeting room whilst the matter is being debated or participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

6. Non Statutory Disclosable Interests

6.1 In addition to the requirements of Paragraph 5, if you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a “non-statutory disclosable interest in that item, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

6.2 You have a “non-statutory disclosable interest” in an item of business of your authority where –

6.2.1 a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of you or a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the authority's administrative area, or

6.2.2 it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests listed in the Table in Appendix A to this Code, but in respect of a member of your family (other than a “relevant person”) or a person with whom you have a close association; or

6.2.3 it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests listed in Appendix B to this Code and that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest.

7. Gifts and Hospitality

7.1 You must, within 28 days of receipt, notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of any gift, benefit or hospitality with a value in excess of £50 which you have accepted as a Member from any person or body other than the authority.

7.2 The Monitoring Officer will place your notification on a public register of gifts and hospitality.

NOTE: Members must also comply with the relevant Codes and Protocols contained in Part 5 of the Constitution.

Appendix A

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

The duties to register, disclose and not to participate in respect of any matter in which a member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 as follows –

<i>Interest</i>	<i>Prescribed description</i>
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by M in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of M. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992).
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority— (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to M's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where— (a) that body (to M's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than

one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

For this purpose –

“the Act” means the Localism Act 2011;

“body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest” means a firm in which the relevant person is a partner or a body corporate of which the relevant person is a director, or in the securities of which the relevant person has a beneficial interest;

“director” includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society;

“land” excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for the relevant person (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income;

“M” means a member of a relevant authority;

“member” includes a co-opted member;

“relevant authority” means the authority of which M is a member;

“relevant period” means the period of 12 months ending with the day on which M gives a notification for the purposes of section 30(1) or 31(7), as the case may be, of the Act;

“relevant person” means M or any other person referred to in section 30(3)(b) of the Act;

“securities” means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

APPENDIX B

An interest which relates to or is likely to affect any body:-

- (a) exercising functions of a public nature; or
- (b) directed to charitable purposes; or
- (c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy
(including any political party or trade union

of which you are a member or in a position of control or management.

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Annual Complaints Report 2018-19

Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Committee 02/10/19

Executive Portfolio: Councillor Tysoe Executive Councillor for Digital and Customer

Report by: Adrian Dobbyne Corporate Team Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The report provides Members with information on complaints referred to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) during 2018/19. 17 complaints were received by the LGO, four were investigated. Of the four complaints investigated, only one was upheld. The report also provides data relating to Stage One and Stage Two complaints received by the Council between April 2018 – March 2019, broad themes and lessons learnt from these have been considered.

Recommendation(s):

The Committee is invited to comment on the LGO local authority report for Huntingdonshire District Council and the data relating to formal Stage One and Stage Two complaints received.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with information on complaints referred to the LGO and those received by the Council April 2018 – March 2019.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 One of the purposes of the annual summary of statistics on complaints made to the LGO is to help ensure that learning from complaints helps inform service provision. The LGO statistics show complaints and enquiries received by service area and whether a decision was upheld, not upheld, advice given, closed after initial enquiry, incomplete/invalid, or referred back for local resolution.
- 2.2. A further purpose of this report is to provide Members with data relating to Stage One and Stage Two complaints by Service area.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

- 3.1 There were 17 complaints received by the LGO during 2018/19 (19 received during 2017/18) this includes those which did not progress to the LGO assessment stage or beyond. Of these 17 complaints there were four detailed investigations carried out, of the four complaints investigated, only one was upheld.

In summary:

One was **upheld**:

- Planning - the Council was at fault in not providing the complainant with an opportunity to comment on a change of ground levels for a neighbouring development, but its apology was a suitable remedy for the limited injustice caused. The Council has taken suitable actions to mitigate the limited impact of the changed levels on the complainant's amenity

Three were **not upheld**:

- Planning - complaint about the way the Council managed an application for development. The Ombudsman found no evidence of fault in the way the Council considered these matters.
- Planning – complaint about the way the Council managed an application for development. The Ombudsman found no evidence of fault in the way the Council considered these matters.
- Planning – complaint that the Council failed to properly determine a neighbour's planning application and it failed to properly consider an enforcement matter. The Ombudsman found no evidence of fault in the way the Council considered these matters.

- 3.2 The LGO has created a new interactive map - [Your Council's Performance](#) (see App 5 for snapshot of graphics) the site also provides helpful links to decisions made on all cases where the LGO have been involved. It should be noted that most cases are closed after initial enquiries made.

- 3.3 The number of Stage One complaints (419) has decreased from last year (565).
- 224 complaints received by Operations, these related mainly to missed bins¹ (for context approx. 6 million bins were collected)
 - 93 complaints received by Leisure & Health, these related mainly to poor service and site facilities (for context in total there were over 226 5538 admissions)
 - 46 complaints received by Development, these related mainly to Planning decisions
 - 43 complaints received by Customer Services, these related mainly to Council procedures e.g. decisions made
 - 8 complaints received by Community these related mainly to Council procedures e.g. decisions made
 - 3 complaints received by Shared Services; no general theme identified
 - 1 complaint received by Corporate Team, this related to poor service
 - 1 complaint received by Resources, this related to Council procedures.

One Leisure are now providing the Corporate Office with their complaint's spreadsheets, thus enabling the team to record and report on the data.

- 3.4 Twenty Stage Two complaints were received, this indicates that complaints are largely being resolved at Stage One, which is positive indication that formal complaints are being dealt with effectively in the first instance. Themes and lessons learnt from Stage One and Stage Two complaints are included in Appendix 3.

- 3.5 Annual Performance monitoring:
- 85% of Stage One complaints were resolved within time (PI 38a) against a target of 95%, 46 of 60 late responses this year relate to complaints about services provided by Operations.
 - Responses to Stage Two complaints were also below target at 81% (against a target of 95%) with three not responded to within time this year.

3.6 Complaints Tracker

The Complaints SharePoint site continues to be well used by staff across HDC and has improved the process of tracking and monitoring complaints, Q4 2018/19 reported a 100% response rate of all complaints with no outstanding items requiring follow up, marking a significant improvement. There are still challenges that are being encountered such as Customer Services still requiring to use their own CRM system which can cause delays when tracking complaints raised in their system, but this is being looked at as part of the Customer Portal Complaints System that is being developed by SCDC with support from HDC.

3.7 Customer Portal

A complaints tracking system is being developed within the IEG4 (Customer Portal) Platform; this work is being led by SCDC to their

¹ Missed bins not recorded as a formal complaint until report of a 4th missed bin / returned bin through CRM in the last 6 months

timescales, with HDC working collaboratively with their Project Team. The discovery phase started at the end of May 2019 and the building process is currently underway; the Corporate Project Officer at HDC is helping with a view to implementing and adopting this as a replacement for the HDC Complaints Tracker system, if it proves a suitable alternative. The new system would likely require a review on how complaints are assigned to officers within HDC and could provide an opportunity to review/refresh the complaints policy as the ways of working would change with this new system.

- 3.8 In 2018/19, four people were classified/continue to be classified as Unreasonable Complainants. All cases are active. All have a single point of contact at HDC, all cases have been managed better this year, although in one case some officers were involved unnecessarily. Cases can involve the LGO and ICO, but we are managing these cases in a way that does not entail a disproportionate amount of time at the expense of other residents.

4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 4.1 With complaints, there is always a risk that we do not record all the complaints we receive and so do not have the full picture or identify trends. Complaints continue to come in by a variety of means and so it relies on too many systems and people to comprehensively and accurately record them all.
- 4.2 We still don't have a system in place that gives us the best opportunity to have a comprehensive recording and monitoring system, however, the Complaints Tracker is helping.
- 4.3 Next year the aim will be to provide a more comprehensive breakdown of themes and lessons learnt by Service area and display complaints in the context of customer transactions e.g. as a % of total customer transactions per Service area.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES *(See [Corporate Plan](#))*

- 5.1 Complaints handling links to the following Strategic Priority within the Corporate Plan - Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led Council.

6. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 6.1 Members are invited to note the LGO Local Authority Report for Huntingdonshire District Council and note the data relating to Stage One and Stage Two complaints received by the Council.

7. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 LGO statistics for HDC

- Appendix 2 HDC internal complaints
- Appendix 3 Complaints – themes and lessons learnt
- Appendix 4 LGO statistics – neighbouring authority comparison
- Appendix 5 LGO graphics

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Complaints and Enquiries Received

HDC	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Environment Services	Planning and Development	Housing	Highways and Transport	Total
2018/19	6	3	2	6	0	0	17
2017/18	2	5	3	7	1	1	19
2016/17	2	2	2	8	0	2	16
2015/16	7	2	2	11	1	0	23

Decisions Made

HDC	Upheld	Not Upheld	Advice Given	Closed After Initial Enquiry	Incomplete/Invalid	Referred Back For Local Resolution	Total
2018/19	1	3	0	6	0	5	15
2017/18	2	1	1	6	0	10	20
2016/17	1	1	0	5	0	9	16
2015/16	1	1	0	11	0	8	21

A number of cases will have been received and decided in different business years, this means the number of complaints and enquiries received will not always match the number of decisions made.

Appendix 2 HDC Recorded Complaints

Service	Stage One			Stage Two			Total			LGO investigations		
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Community	13	2	8	1	1	4	14	3	12	-	-	-
Corporate Team	3	4	1	2	-	1	5	4	2	-	-	-
Customer Services	24	11	43	2	4	7	26	15	50	-	-	-
Development	18	24	46	3	5	5	21	29	51	2	3	4
Operations (1)	149	480	224	3	12	3	152	492	227	-	-	-
Resources	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
Leisure and Health	76	42	93	4	-	-	76	42	93	-	-	-
Shared Services	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	-
Community/Development/Legal	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Total	284	565	419	12	23	20	296	588	439	2	3	4

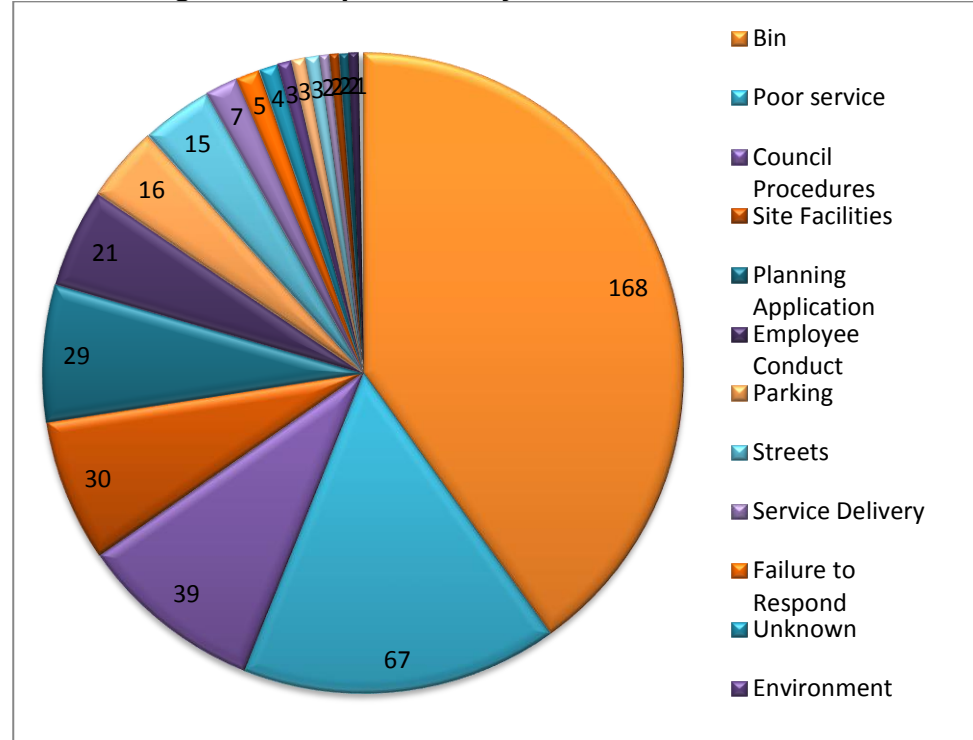
Notes (1) Operations do not include most complaints relating to Bin Collections made in Quarter 4 2016/17, following the introduction of new waste collection rounds.

Appendix 3 2018/19 Stage Two complaints lessons learnt and themes

	Service	Theme	Lessons learnt
1	Community	Complaint about taxi driver. Delay in responding to Stage One complaint	Clearer accountability within the team for how complaints are managed
2	Community	Neighbour dispute re trees.	Home visit was helpful to better understand both customer and Council perspective - further clarification provided
3	Community	Damage to fencing caused by people parking in a supermarket car park.	Further clarification provided
4	Community	Enforcement of Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)	Location of offence not detailed in FPN or covering letter and acknowledgement that more careful language in correspondence to avoid misinterpretation needed. Team informed and issues addressed
5	Customer Services	Poor customer service on telephone.	Training and guidance for staff member
6	Customer Services	Council tax bill. Customer unable to get through on phone to query Council Tax bill.	Further clarification provided – correspondence outlines the various other ways to contact the Council
7	Customer Services	Council Tax recovery. Dissatisfaction with Council policy on Council Tax for properties which are uninhabitable	Further clarification provided
8	Customer Services	Housing benefit overpayment recovery. Complaints policy not followed plus delay in responding to customer	Processes reviewed
9	Customer Services	Business tax recovery.	Further clarification provided and team noted customer feedback on this matter
10	Customer Services	Council tax recovery, way in which Council took action to recover Council Tax debt	Further clarification provided
11	Customer Services	Business tax - customer claims that staff failed to provide advice about Valuation Office Agency	Further clarification provided
12	Corporate Team	Land charges - delay in responding to customer to confirm the Council's final position re access to land charges searches & reasonable adjustments due to disability	Further clarification provided

	Service	Theme	Lessons learnt
13	Development	Information on Public Access, customer unhappy with comments on planning application made publicly available	Reminder to staff to follow practices re considering wishes of objector
14	Development	Development Management - neighbour notification when changes made to development	Home visit was helpful to better understand both customer and Council perspective. Policy amended to ensure neighbours informed when amendment proposed to floor and ground levels
15	Development	Planning Enforcement – enforcement of permitted development and delays in responding to customer	Apology to customer for delay
16	Development	CIL regulations - lack of clarity over CIL regulations and chargeable development	Acknowledgement that regulations are difficult to understand, team made aware
17	Development	Development Management - customer unhappy they were unable to have a meeting or telephone conversation with Planning Officer about their objections to planning application	Clarification provided to the customer
18	Operations	Grounds Maintenance - trees blocking light to a customer's property	Authority given for the progression of tree felling and new planting
19	Operations	Grounds Maintenance - customer concerned about impact of grass cutting on wildlife	Further clarification provided, and reassurance provided to the customer
20	Operations	Refuse/recycling - concern about early morning bin collection. Initial online enquiry not responded to.	Further clarification provided to the customer re rounds schedules. Apology for enquiry not dealt with effectively (issue with online form).

2018/19 Stage One complaints – key themes



Total complaints - 419

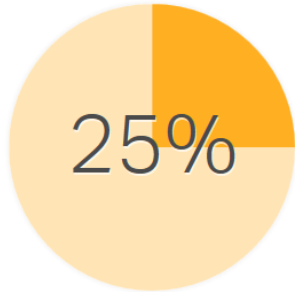
Service	Lessons learnt
Community	Importance of early differentiation between complaints about service and requests for service Importance of engaging with complainant at early stage to establish dialogue. Importance of engaging with partners where there are joint aspects to a complaint Importance of involving front line staff in investigation and lessons learned phases.
Corporate Team	Additional clarity in correspondence required
Customer Services	Advice given to staff Email/letter template created to send to customers to clarify difference between a complaint and an Appeal to the Valuation Tribunal Service. Amendments made to complaints and Feedback page on the website
Development	Review of procedures Training rolled out for officers, agents forums launched, increased DMC training, new consultation letters/templates, improved collaboration between teams
Operations	Advice/instruction given to Staff Review/Change in procedures
Leisure & Health	Continued regular inspection & cleaning Advice/training for staff Activity timetable reviewed & amended
Resources	N/A
Shared Services	Clearer signposting on Planning Portal on how to obtain assistance with the site if something goes wrong

Appendix 4 LGO Neighbouring Authorities Statistics

Cambridgeshire Councils	Complaints and enquiries decided (by outcome)		Complaints and enquiries received	
	2018/19	Not upheld	Upheld	2018/19
Huntingdonshire	3	1	15	19
South Cambridgeshire	2	3	18	23
Fenland	3	1	13	13
East Cambridgeshire	6	2	16	14
Cambridge City	0	3	13	19
Cambridgeshire County Council	5	8	53	39

App 5 extract from LGO - Your Performance website

Complaints upheld



■ **25%** of complaints we investigated were upheld.

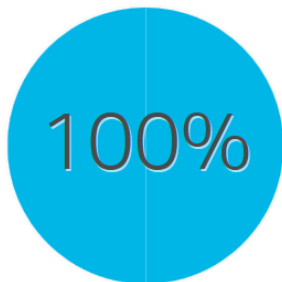
This compares to an average of **43%** in similar authorities.

1
upheld decisions

Statistics are based on a total of 4 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

Source: www.lgo.org.uk

Satisfactory remedies provided by the Council



■ In **100%** of upheld cases we found the Council had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.

This compares to an average of **12%** in similar authorities.

1
satisfactory remedy decisions

Statistics are based on a total of 4 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

Source: www.lgo.org.uk

**Public
Key Decision – No**

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title:	Internal Audit Plan 2019/20 and Internal Audit Charter
Meeting/Date:	Corporate Governance Committee 2 October 2019
Executive Portfolio:	Cllr J Gray (Resources)
Report by:	Internal Audit Manager
Wards affected:	All Wards

Executive Summary:

The Committee has responsibility under its terms of reference for ensuring that the Council undertakes an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes taking into account the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

In January 2019 the Committee agreed that the internal audit plan for 2019/20 should be prepared on a six-monthly basis. The internal audit plan for the period October 2019 to March 2020 is attached for review and approval.

Details of the work completed from the audit plan for the period April – September 2019 is also provided. This is significantly less than anticipated as 70 days were lost in the period due to delays in the introduction the Resources restructure and staff sickness. This is of concern. If the audit plan does not get delivered a robust annual audit opinion may not be able to be provided.

The Committee also approve the Internal Audit Charter. Changes have been introduced to reflect the move from internal audit of the insurance and risk management services to another team in Resources.

The internal audit service has also not commissioned an external independent review as required by PSIAS. This is due to the loss of the 70 days and the need to deliver the audit plan. An external independent assessment will be commissioned during 2020/21.

Recommendation

That the Corporate Governance Committee review and approve:

1. The Internal Audit plan for the period October 2019 to March 2020; and
2. The Internal Audit Charter.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update the Committee on:

- the proposed Internal Audit (IA) plan for the period October 2019 to March 2020;
- progress in delivering the IA plan for the period April to September 2019;
- the failure to commission an independent external assessment of the IA service as required by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS); and
- changes required to be made to the IA Charter following the Resources restructure.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that the Council ‘...must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) or guidance’. The Council have adopted the PSIAS through the Committees Terms of Reference.

2.2 The Council requires the Internal Audit Manager (IAM) to “establish risk-based plans to determine the priorities of internal audit activity, consistent with the organisations goals”. The risk-based plan must also:

- take into account the requirement to produce an annual internal audit opinion;
- incorporate a strategic high-level statement of how the internal audit service will be delivered and developed and how it links to the Council’s objectives and priorities;
- explain how internal audit’s resource requirements have been assessed; and
- include the approach to using other sources of assurance and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources.

Furthermore, the IAM must review and adjust the plan as necessary, in responses to changes in risks, operations, programs, systems, and controls.

3. ANALYSIS

Available resources and evaluation

3.1 A formal restructure of the Resources Service commenced in October 2018. The outcome of which took effect from 22 July 2019 for the Internal Audit team. The posts within the team were downgraded following formal re-evaluation. However, staff resources have increased by 0.14 full time equivalent (fte), from 1.86 fte to 2.0 fte, the equivalent of 20 days. These additional days will be delivered by the current internal audit team.

3.2 When the audit plan was considered by the Committee in March 2019, no time was included in the plan for the Internal Audit Managers continued involvement in insurance and risk management. This was due to both service areas, as part of the restructure, being transferred to two new posts (created to manage several service areas including insurance and risk).

- 3.3 The implementation of the restructure took longer than anticipated. Appointments to the two newly created posts have only recently been made. Consequently, the Internal Audit Manager has spent unplanned time dealing with insurance matters. In addition, the Internal Audit Manager was absent from work for eight weeks. Both these matters reduced the time available to deliver the agreed audit plan during the first half year by some 70 days. To ensure that there were sufficient days available for completing reviews in the second half of the year, the Internal Audit Manager has mitigated the loss of the 70 days through the following actions:
- Not allocating any time to prepare for the PSIAS external review (see para 3.16 – 3.19 below)
 - Reducing the time allocated for general advice and assistance,
 - Reducing the time allocated for undertaking follow-up reviews
 - Stopping a new initiative to identify themes and trends from suggested audit actions proposed.
- 3.4 The audit plan for March/September 2019 contained nine reviews. The loss of 70 days in the period has meant that three reviews have not been delivered and they have been carried forwarded into the second half of the year. One audit, IT system administration, will not be done. This is due to other reviews taking priority.
- 3.5 It is anticipated that the Internal Audit team will have 150 days to deliver the internal audit plan in the second half year. In addition, BDO will also deliver 57 days covering IT related areas. A summary explaining how the 150 days total has been reached is included below.

Time Allocation: October 2019 to March 2020

Total days available		283
Less Leave, sick, elections etc.	45	
Staff development & training	11	
Management	32	88
		195
Less Risk Management & Insurance	5	
General advice	7	
Corp Gov Cttee support & review	9	
Follow-up reviews	15	
4action – reporting	6	
Ann. Gov. Statement & Code	3	45
Delivery of the audit plan		150

Internal audit plan - October 2019 to March 2020

- 3.6 The 150 days available for delivery of the audit plan for the six-month period October 2019 to March 2020 will allow 12 audit reviews to be undertaken by the in-house team together with quarterly reviews of the main financial systems. A small amount of time has also been included for dealing with any whistleblowing allegations that may be received and oversight of the Cabinet Offices' national fraud initiative.
- 3.7 The audit plan consists of reviews in the following areas:

- 1 Budget monitoring and control (b/fwd review)
- 2 Delivery of CCTV capital schemes
- 3 Corporate enforcement policy (b/fwd review)
- 4 Delivery of staff survey actions
- 5 Disabled facilities grants
- 6 Embedding icare values (b/fwd review)
- 7 Evaluation of performance clinics
- 8 Homelessness initiatives – follow-up review
- 9 GDPR – delivery of May 2018 action plans
- 10 Management of cash-flow
- 11 Sickness monitoring
- 12 Staff recruitment

3.8 In addition to the audit reviews noted above, BDO will also undertake five audit reviews together with follow-up reviews on a sample of agreed audit actions. The audit reviews planned are:

- 1 Protocol policy management system
- 2 Maintenance schedule planning
- 3 Network system resilience and availability
- 4 Network access control
- 5 Software and hardware asset management

3.9 Appendix 1 provides more information on each of the 17 audits above.

3.10 In line with the approach agreed by the Committee in March 2019. The plan continues to focus on current and future risks rather than the more traditional backward-looking approach that focused on how risks had been managed. The plan has been discussed with the Corporate Management Team

3.11 The plan has been prepared after considering the aims and outcomes of the Corporate Plan, the progress made in delivering the 2018/19 annual governance statement, the requirement to review key financial and significant internal control systems and procedures and the significant risks recorded in the risk register.

Internal audit plan - April to September 2019

3.12 The audit plan for the period April to September 2019 consisted of nine audit reviews. Progress against each review is set out below:

Position as at 17 September 2019	Audit area
1 Underway	Delivery of Capital schemes
2	Key performance indicators
3	Purchase order compliance
4 Not started. Carried forward.	Corporate enforcement policy
5	Budget monitoring and control
6	Embedding icare values
7 Not started. Not carried forward.	IT systems administration

3.13 Two draft reports have been issued.

8 Audit area	T1 (FMS) Post-implementation review
Opinion	Adequate assurance
Key findings	The system specification was developed primarily by the lead local authority, Cambridge City Council. Whilst a 3C joint project, each Council had different needs that needed to be delivered. Not all variances in need were identified. User Acceptance Testing sign-off was well documented. Due to exit clauses not being included in the legacy suppliers' contract, data migration was delayed. Risk management was in place throughout the project, but did not consider at the outset resource issues, such as staff turnover or availability.
9 Audit area	Lone working
Opinion	Limited assurance
Key findings	No current corporate protocol for lone working New staff are not informed of lone working responsibilities and procedures at induction. Managers are not aware of expectations and responsibilities. The Council Anyway project is not addressing lone working. Lone worker risks assessments are not in place.

3.14 Reviews have also been completed on the key controls with the main financial systems (Accounts payable and receivable, Council tax and business rates, housing benefit and the main accounting system). There are no matters of concern arising from these reports that need to be brought to the Committee's attention.

External independent review of the Internal Audit service

3.15 The PSIAS require an external independent review of the Internal Audit Service to be completed at least once every five years. This is overdue. The last independent review was completed in February 2014 and reported to the former Corporate Governance Panel in May 2014.

3.16 A member of the internal audit team completed both a self-assessment review against the PSIAS in May 2018 and prepared an action plan, in readiness for the external review due by February 2019. However due to the need to concentrate efforts on delivering the audit plan and so ensure that the Internal Audit Manager would have sufficient work against which to prepare their annual opinion, the external review was postponed until December 2019.

3.17 The December 2019 date is also not going to be achieved. The loss of 70 audit days, outlined at paragraph 3.3 above, has again meant that the time allocated for preparing and participating in the external review process has had to be lost, due to the need for the internal audit plan to be delivered. This will mean that the requirements of PSIAS are not met. Whilst the external auditors may be critical of this, postponement is considered the only practical solution.

3.18 Delivering an internal audit service with two fte staff is a challenge. Both in respect of ensuring that the audit plan covers sufficient work across the whole of the internal control environment, but also allowing internal audit to contribute to new initiatives

and developments, an area where often the greatest benefit and value can be added. The Internal Audit Manager is of the opinion that full compliance with PSIAS will be difficult to achieve. An external independent assessment will be commissioned during 2020/21.

Internal Audit Charter

3.19 The Internal Audit Charter (Charter) was last approved by the Committee in March 2018. Due to removal of the management of risk and insurance services from the Internal Audit Manager as a result of the Resources restructure, the Charter needs to be revised to reflect the current position.

3.20 It is proposed that the Charter be amended as follows.

	Section	Proposed amendment
4	Independence & Objectivity 5 th & 6 th paragraph.	Delete the text that refers to the IAM being responsible for insurance and risk management services and references to the Institute of Internal Auditors position paper on risk management.
6	Internal audit management 1 st bullet.	Remove the requirement to prepare a quarterly audit plan and replace with a half yearly audit plan.
	Post title changes	Replace all references to the Internal Audit and Risk Manager, with Internal Audit Manager.
	Post title changes	Replace the Head of Resources with the Head of Corporate Resources. This change will only occur when the Senior Leadership Team restructure has been completed.

3.21 The IA Charter is included at Appendix 2.

4. RISKS

4.1 Non delivery of the internal audit plan, or not undertaking sufficient work across the Council's control environment (the framework of governance, risk management and control) may affect the ability of the Internal Audit Manager to provide the Committee with a robust annual internal audit opinion. With the loss of 70 audit days, such a position may be reached in 2019/20.

4.2 The Internal Audit Service will not be able to conform to the PSIAS until an external review has been completed. Non-conformance with PSIAS would suggest that the

Council isn't providing an effective internal audit, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

- 4.3 Whilst internal audit staff resources have increased following the restructure, the restructures overall effect on the team may lead to current staff looking for employment opportunities elsewhere. Internal audit consists of two full time equivalent staff. As events of the last six months have shown, it has little resilience to cope with the loss of staff even for a short period of time. Any further loss this financial year would have a detrimental effect on the delivery of the audit plan. Whilst BDO, our current suppliers of IT audit, would be able to deliver part of the plan, this is not a long-term solution due to the costs involved.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 5.1 The Internal Audit Service through the audit plan contributes to all the strategic themes and outcomes. Specifically, it supports the Senior Leadership Team by undertaking reviews that provide assurance that:
- significant risks identified in the risk register are managed effectively;
 - laws and regulations are being met,
 - business and financial processes and systems are managed effectively; and
 - assets are safeguarded.

It also improves the performance of the Council by assessing current risks, considering emerging risks, identifying efficiency gains and process improvements.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The 2019/20 service budget is sufficient to support the internal audit establishment.

7. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 7.1 The Committee's terms of reference require it to approve the internal audit plan and Charter.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – 2019/20 Internal Audit plan – October 2019 to March 2020.
Appendix 2 – Internal Audit Charter

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards](#)

CONTACT OFFICER

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Internal Audit & Assurance Plan
2019 - 2020

In delivering the Internal Audit (IA) Mission Statement -

to enhance and protect organisational value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice and insight and to specifically support the Council successfully achieve its vision and priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan -

it is important that IA engagements not only consider and review internal control, risk and governance issues but also:

remain future focused,
positively influence and contribute to service developments and initiatives
lead to a strengthening of the control environment, and
are performed in accordance with professional standards.

Remain future focused

Traditionally IA have reviewed how risks and objectives have been delivered in the past, rather than consider how they are to be managed going forward. The audit plan is future focused, considering the risks that lie ahead of the Council, and so allow IA to provide advice and insight that will help Corporate and Service Plan objectives be achieved. This is a step-change in approach and will require a new planning assessment model to be developed together with a greater input into the audit planning process from senior managers. The Resources restructure has reinforced this point by making an explicit statement that IA is expected to operate a business partnering model, supporting services to achieve their optimum performance.

In developing the plan, the requirements of both the Corporate Plan and 2018/19 annual governance statement have been considered. There are a number of new initiatives being taken to deliver the requirements set out in both of these documents and the audit plan has been devised to consider and respond to, amongst others, new areas of activity, priorities and emerging risks, issues of local significance and importance and the impact of change to existing controls.

Positively influence and contribute to service developments and initiatives

Due to the many challenges facing the Council, change remains a constant and all Services either have reviewed or will be reviewing how they deliver their services.

IA is able to add value at an early stage of service or transformational developments through contributing advice and assistance that influences how risks can be reduced through introducing appropriate controls. Providing assurance at an early stage will also allow IA to gain a fuller understanding as to how the changes proposed will assist in delivering service objectives and their consequential impact elsewhere across the Council. This approach should lead to a strengthening of the overall control environment and time will be made available in the audit plan for IA to undertake this type of advisory work. IA strives to be trusted advisor to senior management and the Corporate Governance Committee (CGC). Contributing positively to service developments and initiatives is one way in which that trust can be gained.

Lead to a strengthening of the control environment

The results of IA work are communicated to Managers and Members via IA reports. Arising from the external LEAN review undertaken within IA in 2017, changes have been made to the audit 'wash-up' and reporting process. The aim being to improve the discussions and feedback provided to Managers and the speed by which they respond to IA reports. In addition, the IA report template has been redesigned so that issues identified are reported with greater clarity and impact.

Managers agree to implement actions that will strengthen the control environment and IA will continue to use the 4Action software to monitor and report upon their introduction. IA will undertake follow-up reviews at least twice a year on a sample of actions that managers have indicated are fully introduced. The results of the follow-up work will be one of the factors that inform the annual IA opinion and time will be made available in the audit plan for follow-up reviews to be completed.

CGC will receive a summary update on the delivery of the audit plan, be informed of any issues of concern and the progress being made with the implementation of agreed audit actions. Such a summary will allow the CGC to receive timely and relevant information and allow them to question IA whilst issues remain relevant.

Performed in accordance with professional standards.

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) require an external independent review of the IA service to be completed at least once every five years. The last review was completed in February 2018. Whilst an internal review against the PSAIS was conducted in May 2018 by a member of the internal audit team and an action plan prepared, an external review was not commissioned. This was due to the need to concentrate efforts on delivery of the audit plan.

The internal audit and assurance plan for the first half of the year proposed that an external review be commissioned by December 2019. This date will not be achieved. The time allocated for preparing and participating in the external review process cannot be delivered due to the need for the internal audit plan to be delivered. This will mean that the requirements of PSIAS are not met.

Whilst the external auditor may have a view on this matter, the lack of an external review will mean that the Council is unable to state that its Internal Audit Service is delivered in conformance with PSIAS.

The Internal Audit Manager reviews the work performed by internal auditors at key stages throughout the audit process and evidences the checks they have performed. The IA service aims to act in conformance with the PSIAS. An external review will confirm if that is the case or not.

Internal Audit performance measures

Performance measures agreed with the Head of Resources through the service planning process for 2019/20 are set out below.

Action	Performance Measure / Indicator	Internal Audit Managers comments
To prepare (following consultation with Senior Management Team (SMT)) an audit plan that is aligned to the key risks facing the Council.	Audit plan reviewed and agreed by SMT 6 monthly and CGC as per their meeting timetable.	Plan prepared and presented to CGC in March 2019 and October 2019.
Deliver the agreed internal audit plan.	Complete 2019/20 audit plan by 30 April 2020.	It is anticipated that the revised plan as set out in this report will be completed by 30 April. An update will be provided to CGC in January 2020.
Monitor the effectiveness of the internal audit service provided.	Results of end of audit survey forms (85% rating for service quality good or better).	The indicator is calculated on a rolling yearly basis. For the year ending 17 Sept 2019, only two survey forms had been received. The rating was 100%
To include within audit reports effective 'suggested actions' that will improve the internal control environment whilst taking account of the Council's risk appetite.	100% of suggested audit actions agreed or CMT agree to accept the risk identified	For the year ending 17 Sept 2019, all suggested audit actions have been agreed.

Internal Audit & Assurance Plan October 2019 to March 2020.

It is estimated that 150 days will be available in the period October 2019 to March 2020 for delivery of the plan. This time has been provisionally allocated to the following areas:

Create, protect and enhance our safe and clean built and green environment

Delivery of CCTV capital schemes (from April/Sept 2019 plan)

The CCTV service is a joint service with Cambridge City Council and the first commercialised service, working alongside a private sector partner. £490k has been allocated in the capital programme for works to upgrade the CCTV equipment. This review will examine the project management and delivery of the scheme.

Corporate enforcement policy (from April/Sept 2019 plan)

The CCTV service is a joint service with Cambridge City Council and the first commercialised service, working alongside a private sector partner. £490k has been allocated in the capital programme for works to upgrade the CCTV equipment. This review will examine the project management and delivery of the scheme.

Becoming a more efficient and effective Council

Budget monitoring and control (from April/Sept 2019 plan)

The T1 financial management system has introduced new 'self-service' procedures into the monthly service budget review process. Managers are now responsible for reviewing monthly budgets and forecasts. Significant staffing changes have been introduced into the accountancy team to reflect the increased 'self-service'. This audit will review the effectiveness of the new process, the accuracy of forecasts/budgets and level of support required from the accountancy team.

Management of cash-flow

This audit was postponed from 2017/18 due to the T1 implementation. The audit will review the process for cash-flow forecasting, the use of financial advisors, counterparty list and the Treasury Management strategy.

Evaluation of performance clinics

Monthly performance clinics are held between Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and service managers within one team. The clinics are an opportunity for CLT to review performance against service plans and performance targets. This review will examine the 'why' element of the service plans and whether it is clear, so enabling CLT to quickly focus on how services are contributing to both the Corporate Plan and Annual Governance Statement requirements.

Staff recruitment

A review of the effectiveness of the staff recruitment process following interviews, ensuring that engagement with successful candidates is maintained and they take up the post offered, so stopping the need for a further recruitment round.

GDPR

All Services were required to prepare action plans to manage the GDPR process both pre and post the 25 May 2018, when GDPR took effect. This review will

consider the delivery of those action plans and the current state of data management and GDPR compliance.

Sickness monitoring

Paper based systems used for many years for recording staff sickness and informing HR/Payroll of staff absence were replaced in June 2018 (and February 2019 for Operational Services) by an electronic, real time system. Since the change, staff sickness levels have reduced from 10 to 7.8 days fte. This review will consider if this is linked to the change in recording procedures. The audit will also review the operation of the new recording procedure and effectiveness of absence trigger meetings to better manage sickness.

Becoming a more customer focused organisation:

Embedding the icare values (from April/Sept 2019 plan)

The icare values were launched in February 2018. This review will consider how well the values have become embedded and if team/staff culture is changing and delivering outcomes that are producing tangible improvements in service delivery

Homelessness

To consider the effectiveness of the homelessness prevention pilot and current initiatives that are looking to reduce longer term demand

Delivery of staff survey actions

Staff surveys have been run annually for a number of years. This review will consider the effectiveness of the actions introduced from the 2018 survey and the work being undertaken to deliver the 2019 action plan.

Disabled Facilities Grants

Cambridgeshire County Council passport from the Government's Better Care Fund, disabled facilities grants money to the Council. A first-time request was received last year from the County Council asking for a formal certification of the grant expenditure. This audit will examine the financial records maintained that support the grant certification.

Quarterly assurance reviews	Accounts Payable
of the main financial systems:	Accounts Receivable
	Housing Benefit
	Council Tax / NDR
	Main accounting system

Computer audit reviews

The outline scope of each audit is listed below

Protocol Policy Management System

Benefit realisation against original business case
Governance arrangements (policy development, approval and roll out)
Extending scope of system to include non-ICT policies (Finance, HR, and Health & Safety)

Maintenance Schedule Planning

Policy and procedure for planned maintenance/ upgrades
Maintenance forward schedule monitoring and review
Performance indicators developed and reported on
Assess the effectiveness of communication arrangements

Network system Resilience & Availability

Policies and procedures
Network server capacity monitoring
IT Network staff and resource planning and capability
Data back-up process and control
System upgrade management
System resilience monitoring, IT DR planning, scenario testing

Software & Hardware Asset Management

Process for recording/updating hardware and software assets.
Software asset register review and monitoring
Issuing and receiving hardware to and from staff
Review software licensing monitoring

Access Management Control

Policy and procedures
Staff access to and removal from the network
HR processes for new starters, movers and leavers
Active directory setup
Administrator permissions and controls
Staff establishment monitoring and review

In addition to reviewing the areas listed above, time has also been made available in the IA work plan to provide for the following:

- Completion of reviews already underway
 1. Preparing key performance indicators underpinning Corporate Plan.
 2. Purchase order compliance.
 3. Lone working.
 4. Lean (Transformation).
- providing help and advice to managers
- Monthly 4Action reports, follow-up reviews of agreed audit actions introduced
- attendance at quotation openings
- managing whistleblowing allegations
- reviewing and investigating National Fraud Initiative output
- quality assessment of audit work undertaken and file review, and
- supporting the work of the Corporate Governance Committee through the delivery of training, preparation of the local code of governance, annual governance statement and its annual reporting.

David Harwood
Internal Audit Manager
September 2019



Internal Audit Charter

2019

The Council considers its Internal Audit Services to be a key component of its governance framework. This Charter provides a framework for the conduct of Internal Audit in Huntingdonshire District Council and has been approved by the Council's Corporate Governance Committee.

The key provisions of this Charter are set out below.

Internal Audit Service

The Council's internal audit service is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the Council's operations. It helps the Council accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

Independence & Objectivity

The internal audit service will remain free from interference by any element in the Council and its scope shall not be restricted in anyway. It shall be free to review the arrangements of any aspect of service delivery, finance or governance irrespective of whether those arrangements are provided directly or indirectly (via partnerships, contractually or any other business arrangement).

The objectivity, impartiality, integrity and conduct of all Internal Audit staff must be above reproach at all times.

Authority

Internal auditors are authorised to have full, free and unrestricted access to all services and functions, premises, assets, employees, elected members, suppliers and contractors, records and other documentation and information that the Internal Audit Manager considers necessary to enable the Internal Audit Service to meet its responsibilities. All employees are required to assist the internal audit activity in fulfilling its roles and responsibilities.

Confidentiality

All records, documentation and information accessed in the course of undertaking internal audit activities shall be used solely for the conduct of internal audit activities. The Internal Audit Manager and individual audit staff (including contractors and external service providers performing work on behalf of internal audit) are responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of the information they receive during the course of their work.

Reporting

The Internal Audit Manager shall submit to the Corporate Governance Committee, no later than the date at which the Council's annual governance statement is approved, an annual report and formal audit opinion.

1. Purpose of Internal Audit

The Internal Audit Service (IAS) has been established to:

- provide independent, objective assurance, advice and insight to the Council on its operations.
- enhance and protect value, by assisting management in improving the delivery of the Council's objectives and operations through evaluating, challenging and improving the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

2. Mandatory Guidance

The IAS will govern itself by adhering to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS)¹ as required by regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015.

Guidance issued and endorsed by the Relevant Internal Audit Standard Setters as applying to local government will also be adhered to along with the Council's relevant policies and procedures and the internal audit manual.

Non-conformance with the PSIAS shall be reported to senior management and the Corporate Governance Committee.

3. Relationship with Members & Senior Management

Corporate Governance Committee

The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 require the Council to “undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance”.

The Council has established a Corporate Governance Committee (CGC) and specifically delegated to it responsibility for “fulfilling the Board responsibilities of the PSIAS and ensuring effective internal audit is undertaken in accordance with the PSIAS”² The internal audit service shall report functionally to the Corporate Governance Committee.

The Internal Audit Manager (IAM) shall have:

- free and unrestricted access to the CGC and the right to attend all of its meetings, and
- the right to meet with the Chairman of the CGC and/or the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder to discuss any matters or concerns that have arisen from internal audit work.

¹ The PSIAS are based upon the Institute of Internal Auditors' mandatory guidance including the Definition of Internal Auditing, the Code of Ethics, and the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*.

² Extract from Committee's terms of reference approved by Council on 29 March 2017.

Senior Management

The Managing Director and the Corporate Director (Services) and the Corporate Director (Delivery) together with the Head of Resources³ shall fulfil the role of senior management as defined by the PSIAS.

The Head of Resources shall support the CGC by ensuring that there are effective arrangements⁴ for the internal audit of the control environment.

The IAM shall:

- report administratively to the Head of Resources; and
- have free and unrestricted access to senior management.

4. Independence & Objectivity

Independence is essential to the effectiveness of the internal audit service; so it will remain free from all conditions or interference that threaten the ability of internal auditors to carry out their responsibilities in an unbiased manner. This shall include, but not be limited to matters of audit selection, scope, procedure, frequency, timing or report content.

Internal auditors must exhibit the highest level of professional objectivity in gathering, evaluating, and communicating information about the activity or process being examined. They must make a balanced assessment of all the relevant circumstances and not be unduly influenced by their own interests or by others in forming judgments.

Internal audit staff with real or perceived conflicts of interests must inform the IAM as soon as these issues become apparent so that appropriate safeguards can be put in place.

The IAM will confirm to the CGC annually, the organisational independence of the internal audit service. They shall also disclose to the CGC any interference and its related implications in determining the scope of internal auditing, performing work and/or communicating results.

~~The IAM is responsible for the delivery of the Internal Audit, Insurance and Risk Management services. All three areas have a key part to play in mitigating the risks facing the Council. Responsibility for these operational areas is recognised by senior management and the CGC.~~

~~In respect of risk management activities, the IAM shall be guided by the Institute of Internal Audits position paper on *The Role of Internal Auditing in Enterprise-Wide Risk Management*. The IAM will not undertake any roles defined as inappropriate by that guidance. Inappropriate roles include setting the Council's risk appetite, imposing a risk management process and taking on full accountability for risk management. The position paper lists the following as legitimate roles (with safeguards):~~

- ~~• Co-ordination of risk management activities;~~

³ Fulfilling the duties of Section 151 of the 1972 Local Government Act

⁴ As outlined in the Cipfa publication "The Role of the CFO in public sector organisations".

- ~~Consolidating risk reporting;~~
- ~~Developing a risk approach for approval and its subsequent maintenance;~~
- ~~Facilitating identification and evaluation of risks; and~~
- ~~Coaching management in responding to risks.~~

Internal audit staff will not implement internal controls, develop procedures, install systems, prepare records, or engage in any other activity that may impair their judgment. They shall also not assess specific operations for which they had responsibility in the previous 12 months. Internal audit reviews of insurance and risk management services shall not be undertaken by the IAS. Internal audit reviews in these areas will be commissioned by the Head of Resources.

5. Authority & Confidentiality

Internal auditors (including contractors and external service providers engaged to perform work on behalf of the IAM) shall have full, free and unrestricted access to all services and functions, premises, assets, employees, elected members, suppliers and contractors, records and other documentation and information that the IAM considers necessary to enable the IAS to meet its responsibilities. All employees and members are required to assist the internal audit activity in fulfilling its roles and responsibilities.

All records, documentation and information accessed in the course of undertaking internal audit activities shall be used solely for that purpose. Individual internal auditors are responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of the information they receive during the course of their work.

6. Internal Audit Management

The Council shall appoint an IAM who shall determine the priorities of, manage and deliver the internal audit service in accordance with this Charter.

The IAM shall:

- ensure they have a comprehensive understanding of the Council's systems, structures and operations so allowing the preparation of a risk based audit plan each ~~quarter~~ half year that is closely aligned to the need to provide assurance against the Council's strategic priorities, key business objectives and risks, as contained or identified within its Corporate Plan, Service Plans, risk register and framework of assurance.
- review and adjust the audit plan as necessary, in response to changes in the Council's risks, operations, programs, systems and controls.
- report annually the impact and consequence of any resource limitations to the CGC, who will then recommend to Cabinet whether or not to accept the consequence identified or seek an increase in internal audit resource.
- maintain a quality assurance and improvement programme to ensure that all audit work is completed to high standards and in accordance with the standards, practices and procedures as set out in the internal audit manual.
- undertake an annual review of the development and training needs of internal audit staff and arrange for appropriate training to be provided.
- put in place arrangements that ensure internal audit is notified of all suspected or detected instances of non-welfare fraud, corruption or impropriety and in conjunction with the Corporate Fraud Team Leader:
 - promote a counter-fraud culture within the Authority

- determine the most appropriate method of investigating allegations.
- establish effective relationships with managers at all levels.

7. Role and responsibilities

Internal audit reviews shall examine and evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management, and internal control processes. This shall be achieved via:

Assurance activities: *results of which will influence the opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the control environment.*

Risk based system audit reviews. The documentation, evaluation and testing of financial, operational and management information systems.

Information technology reviews. Specialist evaluation of hardware, software and the IT environment.

Fundamental financial systems. Reviews focusing on agreed key controls.

Performance improvement. The economy, efficiency and effectiveness of business systems and processes.

Advisory activities: *results of which will contribute to the opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the control environment.*

Systems & processes. Control advice on new and developing systems.

Consulting services. Reviews at the request of management, that add value and improve governance, risk management and control processes and support management in their work.

Shared services

Where the Council provides 'shared services' to, or receives 'shared services' from other organisations, the IAM shall liaise with the other organisations IAS and agree the scope of the assurance that is to be provided or received and take account of that requirement when preparing the annual audit plan.

8. Reporting and Monitoring

Internal Audit Reports

At the conclusion of a review, a written report will be issued to the appropriate manager, that will

- include an overall assurance opinion, but not provide absolute assurance, on the adequacy of the governance, risk and control processes;
- identify inadequately addressed risks and non-effective control processes;
- detail management's response and timescale for corrective action;

- identify issues of good practice

When corrective action has not been agreed, reporting will be escalated to a level consistent with the IAM's assessment of the risk.

The IAM shall regularly review and report to senior management, the progress made by managers in introducing the agreed corrective actions. Senior Management are responsible for ensuring that agreed corrective actions are introduced.

Reporting to the Corporate Governance Committee

The CGC will be provided with periodic updates on the work of the IAS. The updates shall cover significant findings and actions and provide information on the status of the agreed audit work plan. Amendments and revisions to the audit plan shall also be reported and agreed by the CGC.

Full copies of closed internal audit reports will be issued to CGC members on a quarterly basis.

The IAM shall present an annual report to the CGC that meets the requirements of the PSIAS. The annual report shall be timed to support the Council's annual statement of assurance on corporate governance and include an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the control environment.

9. Quality and assurance programme

The IAM shall maintain a quality assurance and improvement programme that meets the requirements of the PSIAS. The results shall be reported to senior management and the CGC.

The IAM will arrange for an independent review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal audit service to be undertaken at least once every five years. The results of the review will be reported to senior management and the CGC.

Improvement plans arising from periodic reviews of internal audit shall be prepared as appropriate and reported to senior management and the CGC in the Internal Audit annual report.

10. Relationships with external audit and other assurance activities

Internal Audit will establish and maintain an open relationship with the external auditor and other assurance providers. Internal audit will plan its activity so that there is adequacy of audit coverage and to minimise duplication of assurance effort. However, the work of Internal Audit will not be driven by external audit's own priorities.

External audit will have full and free access to all internal audit strategies, plans, working papers and reports.

11. Review of the Charter

The IAM will review each year the Internal Audit Charter and report the outcome of that review to the CGC. Approval of the Charter shall be the responsibility of the CGC. This version was approved on the 2 October 2019.

End

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CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT

Committee	Decisions	Date for Action	Action Taken	Officer Responsible	Delete from future list
10/10/2018	<p>Annual Complaints Report 2018</p> <p>Consideration of content of future reports be given to include any key lessons learnt from complaint resolutions as well as a summary of complaint themes.</p>	02/10/2019	These will be added to the next annual report for the period April 2018 and March 2019. This item appears elsewhere on the agenda.	Corporate Team Manager	Yes

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