

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Title/Subject Matter:** Governance Boards – Effectiveness Review  
**Meeting/Date:** Corporate Governance Committee – 12 July 2017  
**Executive Portfolio:** Executive Member for Strategic Resources  
**Report by:** Head of Resources  
**Ward(s) affected:** All

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**Executive Summary:**

Following a critical review of two significant capital projects by a Project Management Select Committee, and subsequent reporting to Cabinet in April 2015, a series of Governance Boards (GB) were established with the purpose to review internal governance across all Council services.

With the GB's having been in operation for a couple of years, Internal Audit undertook a review of the GB framework and made a recommendation to the Head of Resources, that an effectiveness review of GB's should be undertaken.

Since their formation, the GB's have changed to better reflect the operational environment in which the Council operates. Following a review of their Terms of Reference and the work undertaken to date, it is considered that the GB's have, in the main, met their objectives.

However, with the recent commencement of the Mosaic transformation programme, two Governance Boards have been absorbed into respective Mosaic workstreams; one has been dissolved, with its responsibilities being undertaken by Community and three Boards will continue. In addition, a new 'Safeguarding' Governance Board to be established to review and enhance the Councils safeguarding policies and practices.

**Recommendation:**

The Corporate Governance Committee considers the report and comments as it considers necessary.

## 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update members in respect of the operation of the Councils Governance Boards (GB).

## 2. WHY REPORT NECESSARY

- 2.1 In July 2016, Internal Audit issued a report entitled "Effectiveness of Governance Boards" and assigned to the Head of Resources was the following audit action:

*"A summary report on the improvements to the Council's governance arrangements, based on the activities / achievements of the Governance Boards, should be provided to the Corporate Governance Committee on a least an annual basis."*

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members will recall that back in April 2015, Cabinet received a report from a Project Management Select Committee that looked into two significant capital projects; namely the One Leisure St Ives Leisure Centre redevelopment and the Huntingdon Multi-Storey Car Park. As a consequence of these reviews the Managing Director established a number of officer led GB's.
- 3.2 The intention of the GB's was to look into the strategic aspects of governance across the Councils delivery framework. As a consequence of the changing local and national environment in which the Council finds itself the Boards have evolved since they were originally established; **Appendix 1** illustrates the change in their role to that prior to the start of the Mosaic transformation programme

## 4. EFFECTIVENESS

- 4.1 As required by the aforementioned Audit Action (2.1), to determine the effectiveness of each of the GB's the Head of Resources has reviewed the terms of reference and the GB outputs. It is considered that, in the main, the GB's have been effective, and continue to be effective in the achievement of oversight of governance. The summarised conclusions are shown in **Table 1** below.

Review of Effectiveness of Governance Boards by the Head of Resources		Table 1
Original Board	Conclusion on Effectiveness	
Our People	3	
Programme and Projects	5	
Customer Experience	4	
Information Management	N/A	
Finance and Procurement	5	
Health and Safety	3	
<b>NB</b> Ranking: 5, excellent; 4, good; 3, fair; 2, improvement required; 1, poor. Detailed conclusions are shown in <b>Appendix 2</b> .		

## **5. GOING FORWARD**

- 5.1 With the commencement of the Councils Mosaic transformation programme, Senior Management considered this has presented an opportune time to consider the future of the Governance Boards framework.

### **Our People/Customer Experience**

- 5.2 It has been decided that the above two GB's should be dissolved and the responsibilities of each be transferred to the Peoples and Customer Workstreams within the Mosaic transformation programme. This is because the workstreams will themselves fundamentally review the cultural and governance aspects of work practices to ensure that they are best aligned to meet the requirements of the Councils customers.

### **Health and Safety**

- 5.3 It has been decided that the Health and Safety GB should be dissolved and its responsibilities should be embedded within the day-to-day responsibilities of the Business Team within Community.

### **Programme & Projects, Information Management and Finance & Procurement**

- 5.4 It has been decided that the above three GB's will continue. This is because
- both the Programme & Projects and the Finance & Procurement Boards are providing an essential governance role in the effective management of both large and small projects and financial management.
  - although the Information Management Board has yet to get going, as the 3C's ICT shared service matures this Board will seek to ensure that the governance around information management is secure and fit for purpose.

### **Safeguarding**

- 5.5 As a consequence of a recent Limited Assurance Audit Report into Safeguarding, management has established a new Safeguarding Governance Board that will fundamentally review the Councils approach to safeguarding. This review will include the establishment of clear, cross council policies and procedures, which address as a minimum DBS processes, training standards, nominated roles and responsibilities, reporting structures and record keeping arrangements. Policies will be formally launched to all staff and supported by training. The implementation of new Safeguarding procedures will be completed by October 2018.

## **6. KEY IMPACTS**

- 6.1 The change in the Governance Board framework reflects how the Council has changed over recent years; they are pragmatic and reflective of what is needed now and over the next few years. Consequently, the key impacts should be positive in supporting the Councils governance framework.

## **7. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 7.1 The changes are in place now.

## **8. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

8.1 The changes to the Governance Boards will contribute to the overall governance of the Council and will assist the Council in achieving the:

- Strategic Priority: “Efficient and Effective Council”, and the
- Objective “Become more efficient in the way we deliver services providing value for money services”.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The changes in the Governance Board framework are reflective of the changing environment that the Council has found itself operating within. All costs associated with the various Governance Boards, and those being taken over by Mosaic have been, and will continue to be met from within current resources

## **11. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

- Appendix 1 - Analysis of change in Terms of Reference of Governance Boards
- Appendix 2 - Review of Effectiveness of Governance Boards by the Head of Resources

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Governance Board SharePoint Site

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## Analysis of change in Terms of Reference of Governance Boards

### Appendix 1

Original Board	Terms of Reference	Reason for Change	Latest Board	Terms of Reference
		<i>New Board, to directly look into aspects of people management.</i>	<b>Our People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review HR strategies and compliance.</li> <li>Plans post Staff Survey</li> </ul>
<b>Project Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly monitoring of corporate projects and programmes</li> <li>Sign-off of project closure and review of lessons learned</li> <li>Review and updating of Council's project management arrangements</li> </ul>	<i>Broaden the role of the Board to ensure that all Council programmes are managed in line with the Councils project management programme.</i>	<b>Programme and Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that the Council has the appropriate structures and processes in place to properly manage projects, lessons are learnt and best practice is disseminated; and</li> <li>To ensure that risks associated with all projects are known and properly managed.</li> </ul>
<b>Customers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversee the implementation and review of the customer strategy</li> <li>Develop and implement the Council's channel migration strategy</li> <li>Develop and monitor customer data and intelligence</li> <li>Support the transformation of services</li> </ul>	<i>To tighten the role of the Board around how the Council supports its customers.</i>	<b>Customer Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act as the project Team for the Customer Service Strategy and ensure HDC has a clear vision of the Customer Service it needs to achieve its aims and objectives.</li> <li>Work towards ensuring that a Customer Service culture is embedded into</li> </ul>

Original Board	Terms of Reference	Reason for Change	Latest Board	Terms of Reference
				<p>the way things are done at HDC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep under review the customer service strategy and report formally (at least once a year) to CMT progress against the action plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and Compliance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of the Council's equalities agenda</li> <li>Overview and monitoring of the Council's governance arrangements, including the annual governance statement (and the actions flowing from it)</li> </ul>	<p><i>This Board was dissolved, the "human resource" elements were transferred into the "Our People's" Board.</i></p> <p><i>The remaining elements were incorporated into the Information Management Board that dealt with "workstream" related matters.</i></p>	<b>Information Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review document retention, security, collaboration and sharing with partners</li> <li>To ensure information policies, training, plans and delivery are robust.</li> </ul>
<b>Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly monitoring of revenue and capital programme</li> <li>Overseeing the delivery of in year saving targets and development of options for future years</li> </ul>	<p><i>Remit of the Board was expanded to review more of the control framework within the Resources service.</i></p>	<b>Finance and Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial Investment Strategy - governance</li> <li>To ensure the robust management of the Council's Capital Programme process</li> </ul>

Original Board	Terms of Reference	<i>Reason for Change</i>	Latest Board	Terms of Reference
<b>Procurement and Commissioning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview and review of all commissioning activity</li> <li>• Contract monitoring and compliance testing, including lessons learned and review process</li> </ul>	<p><i>This Board was dissolved and its responsibilities were transferred into the Finance and Procurement Board.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium Term Financial Strategy – Revenue, ZBB.</li> <li>• To oversee revenue budgets, primarily focusing on key areas as identified by the Board and Responsible Financial Officer</li> </ul>
<b>Risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review and monitor risk management arrangements across the council</li> <li>• To review and monitor the council’s approach to health and safety, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keeping under review measures to ensure H&amp;S of employees and others affected by Council activities</li> <li>○ Statutory duty to consult workforce on H&amp;S</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To evaluate the corporate risk profile and in</li> </ul>	<p><i>To tighten the review framework around Health and Safety.</i></p> <p><i>Corporate risk management has been streamlined. A fundamental review of the Risk Register has been undertaken with services taking a direct role in management of both corporate and operational risks.</i></p>	<b>Health and Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review existing H&amp;S policies to ensure they were fit for purpose.</li> <li>• Shape new H&amp;S policies prior to implementation.</li> <li>• Undertake compliance testing when considered appropriate.</li> </ul>

Original Board	Terms of Reference	<i>Reason for Change</i>	Latest Board	Terms of Reference
	particular the council's appetite for risk.			



## Review of Effectiveness of Governance Boards by the Head of Resources

### Appendix 2

Original Board	Commentary on Information Held on SharePoint	Conclusion on Effectiveness
Our People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the 2016 Staff Survey Development of action plans.</li> <li>Reviewed results of 2015 staff survey.</li> </ul>	3
Programme and Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive review of the Councils approved programme of projects.</li> <li>Review of adherence to project management; project monitoring, closedown and lessons learnt.</li> </ul>	5
Customer Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited review of the implementation of the Customer Service Strategy (CSS). Mainly due to the fact:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the revised CSS has had limited time to bed-down, and</li> <li>considerable in-service changes as a consequence of the ZBB programme.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Lead on some of the actions resulting from the 2016 Staff Survey i.e. the new Anti-Bullying &amp; Harassment process.</li> </ul>	4
Information Management	The Information Management Governance Board has yet to “get going”. This is because there has been limited work for it to undertake as a consequence of the bedding down of the recently establishment of the 3C’s ICT Shared Service. As the shared service matures, the Board will ensure that governance arrangements in respect of information, the bedrock of any Councils operations, is secure and fit for purpose.	N/A
Finance and Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive review of capital proposals, capital programme shortlisting and monitoring.</li> <li>Commenced reviews of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>revenue outturn, and</li> <li>current procurement matters.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	5
Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited review of health and safety from the Boards perspective.</li> <li>However, health and safety is a statutory responsibility of the Council (both for its own workforce and in some aspects of external facing services) so such matters are picked up as business-as-usual.</li> </ul>	3
<b>NB:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ranking: 5, excellent; 4, good; 3, fair; 2, improvement required; 1, poor.</li> <li>ZBB: Zero Based Budgeting.</li> </ul>		