

Crawley Borough Council

Governance Committee

Agenda for the **Governance Committee** which will be held in **Ashurst Main Hall - The Charis Centre**, on **Tuesday, 22 June 2021** at **7.00 pm**

Nightline Telephone No. 07881 500 227



Chief Executive

Membership:

Councillors

K McCarthy (Chair), T Lunnon (Vice-Chair), R D Burrett, D Crow, C R Eade, M Flack, G S Jhans, P K Lamb, R A Lanzer and S Malik

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democratic.services@ Crawley.gov.uk

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Switchboard: 01293 438000
Main fax: 01293 511803
Minicom: 01293 405202 DX:
57139 Crawley 1
www.crawley.gov.uk

Town Hall
The Boulevard
Crawley
West Sussex
RH10 1UZ

The order of business may change at the Chair's discretion

Part A Business (Open to the Public)

	Pages
1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Disclosures of Interest	
In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, councillors are reminded that it is a requirement to declare interests where appropriate.	
3. Minutes	5 - 10
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Governance Committee held on 15 March 2021.	
4. Public Question Time	
To answer any questions asked by the public which relate to an item on this agenda and which are in line with the Council's Constitution.	
Public Question Time will be concluded by the Chair when all questions have been answered or on the expiry of a period of 15 minutes, whichever is the earlier.	
5. Annual Governance Statement 2020-2021	11 - 26
To consider report LDS/170 of the Head of Legal, Governance and HR.	
6. Review of Public Written Questions at Full Council and Public Question Time at Committees	
Provisions for Public Written Questions to the Full Council and for Public Question Time at the Audit Committee, Governance Committee and Licensing Committee were introduced when the revised Constitution was adopted in February 2020 (report LDS/157 refers which was considered by the Governance Committee on 29 January 2020 and by the Full Council on 26 February 2020). At that time the Governance Committee agreed that these newly introduced provisions would be subject to a one year trial and that an evaluation report be submitted to the Governance Committee.	

However, when the Covid-19 pandemic struck it was not possible to hold in-person Council meeting and in April 2020 *The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392* came into force which enabled all formal Council meetings to be held virtually until 7 May 2021. Since this legislation came into force all formal meetings of the Council were held virtually and Virtual Committee Procedure Rules and Licensing Sub-Committee (Hearings) Virtual Procedure Rules were introduced into the Council's Constitution to replace those sections of the standard Procedure Rules which related to in-person meetings.

The legislation which allowed Councils to hold formal meetings virtually was not extended beyond 7 May 2021 and therefore all formal meetings of the Council beyond this date have, and will, be held in person. Consequently, the Virtual Committee Procedure Rules and Licensing Sub-Committee (Hearings) Virtual Procedure Rules contained within the Councils Constitution are no longer in use and the previously agreed provisions which allowed increased public involvement have come back into effect.

Given the unusual circumstances which have taken place since these provisions were introduced, officers are of the opinion that using this period to review the public's use of these provisions would not provide a true representation of public involvement or public interest. It is therefore suggested that the trial period be extended by a year and that an evaluation report be brought before the Governance Committee in approximately one year's time.

RECOMMENDATION

That the trial period for the provisions set out in the Constitution relating to public written questions to the Full Council (Full Council Procedure Rules) and Public Question Time at the Audit Committee, Governance Committee and Licensing Committee (General Committee Procedure Rules) be extended by one year and that an evaluation report relating to these matters be brought back to the Governance Committee for its consideration circa June 2022.

7. Update on Format of Council Meetings

At its meeting on 15 March 2021, the Governance Committee considered report [LDS/165](#) (Future Format of Council Meetings) which set out the current legislative position on the format of Council meetings (in-person, virtual or hybrid) and requested that the Committee consider the potential options available in relation to those matters. At that meeting the Committee agreed that it would consider the matter on a cycle-by-cycle basis and would provide a recommendation to the Full Council on the format of meetings for each forthcoming cycle.

Following that Committee meeting the legislation (*The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392*) which allowed formal Council meetings to be held virtually was not extended and therefore the provision allowing virtual meetings ceased on 7 May 2021.

In light of this, the Governance Committee, and subsequently the Full Council, are required to hold all formal Council meetings in person and therefore, until such time as relevant legislation is enacted, there is no option to hold these meetings either virtually or in hybrid format. Should the legislative position change a further report will be brought before the Committee for its consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee note that legislation does not currently allow formal Council meetings to be held virtually or in hybrid format but, should that legislative position change, a report will be brought before the Committee for its consideration.

8. Further Deliberations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Mayoral Allowances 2021/22 and 2022/23)

27 - 30

To consider report LDS/169 of the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

9. Supplemental Agenda

Any urgent item(s) complying with Section 100(B) of the Local Government Act 1972.

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