

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Governance Committee

Tuesday, 18 September 2018 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

R D Burrett (Vice-Chair in the Chair)

D Crow, C R Eade, P K Lamb, R A Lanzer, K McCarthy, A C Skudder and K Sudan

Also in Attendance:

Councillors R G Burgess and C A Cheshire

Officers Present:

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| Roger Brownings | Democratic Services Officer |
| Heather Girling | Democratic Services Officer |
| Andrew Oakley | Electoral Services Manager |

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors T Lunnon and R S Fiveash

Absent:

Councillor B J Quinn

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 17 July 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Review of Outside Bodies and Organisations: Scrutiny Panel Final Report

The Committee considered report OSC/272 of the Chair of the Review of Outside Bodies and Organisations Scrutiny Panel. The Scrutiny Panel had been established to evaluate the current system and to consider how and if it adds value to the Council. The report presented the findings and recommendations.

Councillor Cheshire, as Chair of the Panel, presented in detail the Panel's report and drew the Committee's attention to the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny

Commission at its meeting on 25 June 2018 (comments are attached as Appendix C to the report).

The Committee considered the recommendations proposed by the Scrutiny Panel, whilst making the following comments:

Recommendation a). A Member referred to the proposed information sheet, as set out in Appendix B to the report. He highlighted the need for ensuring that all details contained in those information sheets, including the meeting arrangements of the outside bodies concerned, were accurate. In terms of the accuracy of meeting arrangements, Heather Girling (HG) (Democratic Services Officer) indicated that details regarding meeting arrangements had been submitted by the outside bodies themselves as part of the evaluation process. The Committee was advised of the intention to expand further the details to be included in the information sheet.

Recommendation f). Members welcomed the greater flexibility proposed by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission with regard to the option to appoint to some outside bodies or organisations despite there having been a lack of response received to the evaluation - suggesting that demand for nominations from those organisations was questionable.

In response to an issue raised, HG explained that in cases where an invite for nomination(s) was not received from an organisation, subsequent communications would be made with that organisation to seek whether a nomination was required or not. Similar to that included in the information sheet trialled in advance of the 2018 AGM, a list would be provided for future AGM purposes detailing nominations which had been removed due to either nominations no longer being required, or where an organisation had ceased to operate.

Amendment

It was moved by Councillor McCarthy and seconded by Councillor Lanzer that the following additional recommendation be made to the Full Council:-

“That where an outside organisation with more than one Council representative expresses a desire for political diversity, we should honour this request.”

The amendment upon being put to the Committee, was declared to be CARRIED.

The Committee thanked Councillor Cheshire, Members of the Scrutiny Panel and the Democratic Services Officer (HG) for a thorough review and detailed report, as well as the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for its comments.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

1. That
 - i) An information sheet be prepared giving pertinent information relevant to the Outside Organisations to assist Councillors in agreeing nominations at group meetings which was trialled in advance of the 2018 AGM. (Further information is included in section 7 of the report).
 - ii) It be highlighted that the nomination of Councillors to Outside Organisations is not predicated on their receipt of a Council grant or the need for scrutiny of its use, due to the stringent monitoring already in operation.

- iii) Councillors who sit on Outside Bodies must accept their obligations to maintain their responsibilities and that guidance/support should be provided to enable an effective service (be this from the Council, the Outside Organisation or that the Councillor initiate this themselves through effective liaison).

2. That Full Council be requested to approve that:

- i) Nominations for Conservation Area Committees be defaulted to 'Ward Councillor(s)'.
- ii) 'Friends Groups' be removed from the official list of Outside Bodies as there should be no formal Councillor representation.
- iii) Where a response was not received to the evaluation, an appointment would not usually be made by the Council (this is in line with other authorities undertaking a similar review).
- iv) There should be a mutual understanding between Councillors and organisations to maintain communication and effective liaison.
- v) Where an outside organisation with more than one Council representative expresses a desire for political diversity, we should honour this request.
- vi) Councillor M G Jones and Councillor J Tarrant be appointed to represent the Council on Crawley Community and Voluntary Service. (Paragraph 8.1 of the report refers).
- vii) The Head of Legal, Democracy and HR be instructed to amend the Council's Constitution to reflect any relevant changes in relation to any outcomes of this review.

4. Polling District Review

The Committee considered the report LDS/143 of the Head of Legal, Democracy and HR. The purpose of the report was to approve arrangements for a Polling District Review following changes to wards implemented by the Local Government Boundary Commission's review of Crawley's electoral arrangements and in accordance with the legislative requirements for regular reviews.

RESOLVED

That a Polling District Review be conducted as set out in paragraph 4.3 of the report.

5. Constitution Review Working Group Update

Councillor P Lamb, as Chair of the Constitution Review Working Group, provided a verbal update on the comprehensive review of the Constitution which had been established by the Committee at its meeting on 15 March 2017 (report LDS/126 refers). Several re-drafted sections of the Constitution had been sent to him for comment and those sections would be circulated via email to the Working Group as soon as was practicable.

RESOLVED

That the update provided by the Chair of the Constitution Review Working Group be noted.

6. Notification of Change in Date of the Governance Committee

It was reported that the Committee's meeting scheduled for 22 January 2019 had been cancelled and will now take place on 14 January 2019 at 7pm. This change had been made so that the Polling District Review (See Minute 4. above) could be debated by the Committee prior to its consideration on 23 January 2019 by the Special Full Council. The Licensing Committee meeting originally scheduled for 14 January 2019 had now been moved to 15 January 2019. The Chairs of the respective Committees had agreed these changes.

RESOLVED

That the change of date of the Committee's January meeting be noted.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Governance Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.34 pm.

Chair