

**Wednesday, 25th September, 2019,
6.15 pm**

**Council Chamber - West Somerset
House**

Members: Sue Buller (Chair), Lee Baker (Vice-Chair), Simon Coles, Dixie Darch, Hugh Davies, Caroline Ellis, Janet Lloyd, Steven Pugsley, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Terry Venner, Sarah Wakefield, Mrs Anne Elder, Sally de Renzy-Martin and Bryn Wilson

Agenda

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive and note any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or prejudicial or personal interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The personal interests of Councillors and Clerks of Somerset County Council, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes.)

4. Public Participation

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time

(Pages 7 - 14)

limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| <p>5. Audit, Governance and Standards Committee Action Plan</p> <p>To update the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee on the progress of resolutions and recommendations from previous meetings of the Committee.</p> | <p>(Pages 15 - 16)</p> |
| <p>6. Audit, Governance and Standards Committee Forward Plan</p> <p>To receive items and review the Forward Plan.</p> | <p>(Pages 17 - 18)</p> |
| <p>7. Grant Thornton External Audit - Annual Audit Letter 2018/19</p> <p>The purpose of the report is to introduce the Annual Audit Letter from Grant Thornton, which summarises the key findings arising from their work carried out at West Somerset District Council for the year ended 31 March 2019.</p> | <p>(Pages 19 - 36)</p> |
| <p>8. Grant Thornton External Audit - Progress & Update Report</p> <p>The purpose of the report is to provide the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee with a progress update regarding the work of the external auditors, Grant Thornton, together with information relating to emerging issues which may be relevant to the Council.</p> | <p>(Pages 37 - 52)</p> |
| <p>9. SWAP Internal Audit - Progress Update 2019/20</p> <p>The purpose of the report is to update the Committee on the function that Internal Audit play in the central role in corporate governance by providing assurance to the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee, looking over financial controls and checking on the probity of the organisation.</p> <p>The 2019-20 Annual Audit Plan is to provide independent and objective assurance on SWT Internal Control Environment. This work will support the Annual Governance Statement.</p> | <p>(Pages 53 - 74)</p> |
| <p>10. Annual Governance Statement Action Plan Update</p> <p>The purpose of the report is to present the Committee with an update of progress against the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan for 2019/20.</p> | <p>(Pages 75 - 80)</p> |

11. Corporate Equality Action Plan

(Pages 81 - 106)

This report contains the Council draft Corporate Equality Action Plan which identifies actions we will take to deliver the equality objectives.

The Action Plan will be a 'living document' which will enable additional actions to be added. Any additions will be brought to the attention of the Audit, Governance & Standards Committee as part of the Plan's review cycle.

12. Local Government Ombudsman Report

(Pages 107 - 142)

The purpose of the report is to present the Committee with the Local Government Ombudsman Summary of Complaints for 2018/19. As these reports relate to the previous financial year they are for Taunton Deane Borough Council (Appendix A) and West Somerset Council (Appendix B).

13. Access to Information - Exclusion of the Press and Public

During discussion of the following item it may be necessary to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 13 13.02(e) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution. This decision may be required because consideration of this matter in public may disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act. The Committee will need to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Recommend that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the next item of business on the ground that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to any individual.

14. Monitoring Officer Update

This report will be a verbal update on any items that the Monitoring Officer needs to make the Committee aware of.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Hasset". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

**JAMES HASSETT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Please note that this meeting will be recorded. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy. Therefore unless you are advised otherwise, by entering the Council Chamber and speaking during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact the officer as detailed above.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions. There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions. Speaking under "Public Question Time" is limited to 3 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chair will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate. Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, if a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chair will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group. These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room. Full Council, Executive, and Committee agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

The meeting room, including the Council Chamber at The Deane House are on the first floor and are fully accessible. Lift access to The John Meikle Room, is available from the main ground floor entrance at The Deane House. The Council Chamber at West Somerset House is on the ground floor and is fully accessible via a public entrance door. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are available across both locations. An induction loop operates at both The Deane House and West Somerset House to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. For further information about the meeting, please contact the Governance and Democracy Team via email: governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

If you would like an agenda, a report or the minutes of a meeting translated into another language or into Braille, large print, audio tape or CD, please email: governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk