

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

17 January 2023

Present:- Councillor Paul Smith (Chair)
Councillor Dave Harris, Councillor Sam McCarthy,
Councillor Chris Pearson

Substitutions: Councillor William Sunnucks for Councillor Barbara Wood
Councillor Dennis Willetts for Councillor Sara Naylor

Also Present:- Councillor Martyn Warnes, Councillor Leigh Tate*,
Councillor David King, Councillor Adam Fox, Councillor
Andrea Luxford Vaughan*

*attended remotely

348. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Committee noted that there had been two typographical errors in the minutes, the misspelling of the word 'arrests' and 'Turnstone Estates'. A Committee member requested that they be specifically named in the minutes of the meeting of the Committee of 7 December 2022, demonstrating that they had requested the draft statement of accounts be circulated to the Committee.

RESOLVED that: the minutes of the meeting of the Committee of 22 November 2022 be confirmed as an accurate record, subject to the correction of two typographical errors.

349. Have Your Say!

A written representation had been sent to the Councillor Smith as the Chair of the Committee from Nick Chilvers, and Councillor Smith accordingly read this representation to the Committee which stated:

"Dear Cllr Smith.

You'll be aware of general queries I've raised about Colchester Holdings Ltd which I understand have been referred to your Governance committee.

To Joe Public, including Nick Chilvers, It's all a bit of a mystery.

I'll be perfectly happy with an officer verbal answer at the meeting. No need for long written replies. If it engenders some debate all well and good. If not never mind but it might quell some doubts and even enlighten some Councillors, let alone the public..

A few simple business questions:

So we have these holding companies- Why?

What are the financial and operational advantages compared with the old way of doing things?

Are they delivering?

Tell us about the range of services that the trading Company supplies.

Explain what the Energy company actually does. Could/should it be contracted out?

How much more have they contributed to CBC coffers compared to the old system?

Who do the executives and staff work for?

Does any crossover between CBC and CHL cause difficulties?

Is there enough expertise at Director and Board level to manage such a diverse portfolio?

Is there a risk that these enterprises get all the attention and the bread and butter stuff gets sidelined?

Is there a need, if CBC is treading this path, to work harder at explaining the alleged benefits of this structure to the public?.

It'll be interesting to see if any of these points are picked up by the committee. (or maybe they already know all the answers)

Kindly put these up for response.

Feel free to quote this.

Thanks,

Nick Chilvers."

Councillor Smith, as Chair of the Committee, noted that the questions that had been asked would likely form the subject of the discussion of the Committee at the meeting, however, given the confidential nature of the discussion, this was not something which would be able to be shared with Mr Chilvers. The Chair had already explained this to Mr Chilvers, who was in contact with his Ward Councillors.

A Committee member thought that many of the questions which had been posed by Mr Chilvers concerned information which was already in the public domain, and suggested that these questions could be answered during the public session of the next appropriate meeting of the Committee, in order to preserve transparency as much as possible.