

ACCOUNTS AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

26 JUNE 2012

Present :- Councillor Dennis Willetts (Chairman)
Councillors Ray Gamble, Glenn Granger,
Scott Greenhill, Marcus Harrington, Julia Havis and
Gerard Oxford

Substitute Members :- Councillor Lesley Scott-Boutell
for Councillor Theresa Higgins
Councillor Michael Lilley for Councillor Cyril Liddy
Councillor Nick Cope for Councillor Jon Manning

Also in Attendance :- Councillor Paul Smith

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 24 January 2012 and 23 May 2012 were both confirmed as a correct record.

Councillor Scott Greenhill (in respect of his membership of Myland Community Council) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)

4. Community Governance Review - Myland Community Council

Mrs. Amanda Chidgey, Democratic Services Manager presented the report on the Community Governance Review (CGR) for Myland Parish.

Mrs. Chidgey explained that the CGR report was about the outcome of the public consultation concerning a review of the Myland parish boundary. The review followed a request from Myland Community Council supporting a petition to conduct a CGR to change the boundary of Myland Parish by incorporating the area of New Braiswick Park and the unparished part of Bergholt Road.

The proposal was that the Myland parish boundary should include the defined unparished area identified on the map included in the agenda papers. If the Accounts and Regulatory Committee agree to the draft recommendations, Mrs. Chidgey explained that there will be a second period of consultation from which the proposal will seek final approval from the Committee at the September meeting. The reorganisation would then take effect from 1 April 2013.

Following an enquiry from Councillor Willetts with regards to why the Myland Parish boundary did not align with the A12 road, but reflected the field layout, Mrs. Chidgey indicated that she was unaware of any request to address this anomaly within the current proposals but would check the situation and confirm this detail with the Committee members.

Councillor Greenhill said the three Mile End Ward Councillors all supported the

recommendations within the CGR report.

RESOLVED that

- (i) The outcome of the initial consultation on the proposal that the Myland Parish boundary be amended to include the defined unparished area identified on the map at Appendix A(ii) be noted;
- (ii) In accordance with the appropriate Guidance, a further period of consultation be commenced and the outcome be reported to this Committee at its meeting on 25 September 2012.

5. Honorary Alderman

Mrs. Chidgey presented the report on the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen that requested the Committee to consider a proposition that former Councillors John Bouckley, Christopher Garnett and Henry Spyvee be appointed Honorary Aldermen.

Councillor Willetts said the three former Councillors are absolutely worthy of the honour. Councillor Harrington concurred, saying it was in recognition of their long length of public service. Councillors G. Oxford and Gamble also agreed with the previous speakers, saying they all thoroughly deserved the honour.

In response to Councillor Willetts and in respect of the Honorary Aldermen robes, Mrs. Chidgey said there are currently 20 Honorary Aldermen, five of whom are very unlikely to attend most civic events. In usual circumstances this will mean that the current stock of 16 robes held in the Town Hall would suffice. It was envisaged however, that most of the Honorary Aldermen would attend the special meeting of the Council.

The report explained that the Mayoralty Task and Finish Group recommended in December 2010 that in respect of future Honorary Aldermen ceremonies, that new Aldermen would meet the cost of any new robes, later confirmed by Mrs. Chidgey to be in the region of £1000 each. Councillor G. Oxford a member of the Task and Finish Group explained that this decision had been a cross party decision. Mrs. Chidgey confirmed that the Civic Fund Budget does not have sufficient funds to provide new robes, and this had been explained to the former councillors.

Councillor Harrington said he felt this was not in keeping with the honour given the long service of the former councillors. Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources said the Cabinet could consider funding the purchase of new robes in the future, but at present and given the financial pressures on public spending this was not currently possible and would send the wrong message to local people.

Mrs. Chidgey confirmed to Councillor Willetts that no charge was made to Honorary Aldermen for parking in the Town Hall car park.

RECOMMENDED that –

i) A special meeting of the Council be convened for the purpose of passing the following resolution:

“That in pursuance of the provisions of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, this Council confers the title of “Honorary Alderman” on former Councillors John Gordon Bouckley, John Christopher Garnett and William Henry Forester Spyvee in recognition of their loyal and eminent service as Members of the Council and its constituent authority.”

(ii) An illuminated transcript of the resolution be given to each former Councillor concerned.

6. Governance Framework and Draft Annual Governance Statement

Ms. Hayley McGrath, Risk and Resilience Manager presented the Governance Framework and Draft Annual Governance Statement.

Ms. McGrath said the report was presented to the Committee, complying with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011, and the purpose of the review was of the system of internal control that assesses the Council’s compliance with the six principals of good corporate governance.

Ms. McGrath said the review had highlighted four areas of significant Governance risk, Vehicle Workshop, Contract Register, Parking Services and Corporate Debt. Ms. McGrath said appendix 2 of the report provided an Action Plan for 2012/13 for addressing the identified risks.

Ms. McGrath confirmed to Councillor Willetts that the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel would be provided with an update on the issues identified within the Statement, at the November meeting.

Mrs. Ann Hedges, Executive Director explained to the Committee the issues identified with the Vehicle Workshop could not be discussed at present due to an ongoing Police Investigation, that will shortly be heard by the Crown Prosecution Service. Details of the outcomes would be reported to the Committee at a later date. Mrs. Hedges said the report has highlighted the value and effectiveness of the Governance and auditing process, and senior officers continue to look at the lessons that can be learnt from the process.

RESOLVED that the Committee;

i) Considered and noted the review of the Council’s compliance with the six principles of good governance.

ii) Approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2011-12.