

Extract from the draft minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee meeting of 23 November 2021

290. Review of the Council's Ethical Governance Policies

Andrew Weavers, Strategic Governance Manager, attended the meeting to present the report and assist the Committee with its enquiries. The Committee was advised that it was requested to review the updated set of Ethical Governance Policies which were presented to it, before making a recommendation to Full Council that the Policies were included in Colchester Borough Council's (the Council) Policy Framework. It was considered that the Council's Ethical Governance Policies as presented to the Committee were fit for purpose.

The Council was committed to maintaining the highest standards of corporate and ethical governance, and the policies detailed how the Council would achieve that commitment. The Committee were advised that the Council's Statement of Intent had been refreshed following the latest change in Administration and Leader, and the Committee was also requested to recommend to Full Council that the Statement be adopted.

Councillor Willetts made reference to the fact that it had been unnecessary to invoke any of the Policies over the preceding year, and indeed very few times in previous years, and considered that this demonstrated how effective they had been. The Committee were invited to raise a question or make a comment on each of the Policies presented to it which were listed in turn, but no comments were received.

Councillor Bentley noted that the Policies contained a lot of information, and wondered whether it would be appropriate to circulate them to all Councillors ahead of their being presented to Full Council. New Councillors in particular may value the opportunity to read through the Policies before being asked to vote on them. It was confirmed to the Committee that the Policies would be circulated as soon as possible after the meeting.

Councillor Kind praised both the depth and value of the Policies in offering the public assurance that, no matter their political background or differences, Councillors conducted themselves in a fair and transparent manner, and in accordance with the codes and rules that were set.

RESOLVED that:

1. It be ***RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL*** that it adopts the statement of intent in relation to ethical governance.

2. The following revised policies had been reviewed, and it be *RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL* that they be approved for inclusion in the Council's Policy Framework:

- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Anti-Money Laundering Policy
- Covert Surveillance Policy
- Colchester Borough Council Social Media RIPA Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Retention Policy
- Income and Debt Management Policy