

Bristol City Council Minutes of the Values and Ethics Sub-Committee

26 July 2021 at 2.00 pm



Members Present:-

Councillors: Adebola Adebayo, Tony Dyer, Zoe Goodman, Gary Hopkins and Jonathan Hucker

Officers in Attendance:-

Lucy Fleming (Head of Democratic Engagement), Louise deCordova (Democratic Services Manager) and Simba Muzarurwi (Chief Internal Auditor), Alison Mullis (Head of Internal Audit)

1 Welcome, Introduction and Safety Information

The Chair led introductions and issued the safety information.

2 Apologies for Absence

None received.

3 Declarations of Interest

None received.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED the minutes of the previous meeting 24 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

5 Value & Ethics Work Programme

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the report and the following points were noted in discussion:

- This was an outline of the proposed topics for the V&E sub-committee to consider in their work programme.



- It was agreed that Officers would check eligibility of nominations prior to the meeting and flag any eligibility issues by exception. It was noted that many councillors had stood down this year prior to the election, and this was a way to recognise their service.
- There was a discussion about whether Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) discussions were more appropriate for the full Audit Committee. [ACTION] The Head of Internal Audit agreed to raise this with the Chair of Audit Committee.

6 Code of Conduct

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the report and the following points were noted in discussion:

- It was important to consider the most effective training and communications channels to ensure maximum reach and attendance for any additional briefings.
- It was noted that the Code of Conduct guidance was planned as a written resource that Members could return to as reference material as and when required.
- It was noted that Members were consistently taking in significant amounts of information and there needed to be a balance of educating and informing without being overwhelming.
- Some consideration to be given to providing virtual briefings on these topics if appropriate.
- It was noted that Code of Conduct training was not mandatory as mandatory training was specifically related to statutory subjects. Where there was discretion, important non-statutory subjects were promoted as highly recommended.
- There was considerable public interest surrounding conduct in public office. It was important to public trust that all Members were apprised of their responsibilities under the code of conduct.
- It was recognised that the frequency of issued guidance needed to be appropriate. [ACTION LDC to follow up with party whips]

7 Member Development

The Head of Democratic Engagement introduced the report and summarised it for the committee. The member induction programme was part way through delivery. In 2016, requests for an effective Member Development programme with an applicable budget was highlighted as a priority. The current programme was the result of a member-led cross-party process.

The following points were noted in discussion:

- Clarity around training records had been inconsistent in the past. This would now be recorded via iTrent.
- Challenges had been experienced with the use of Eventbrite to book onto training sessions and this had been reviewed to provide Members with Outlook appointments instead.
- It was noted that the sequencing of training for the next induction programme should allow additional time post-election for Members to review the induction offer and book onto courses.



- It would have been helpful for candidates to have had advance notice of the training programme before the election so they could prepare their diaries for it. Some issues were experienced in getting IT up and running which meant some early courses were missed. Outlook booking was effective as it enables councillors to compare with other appointments. The course content was generally very good.
- Increased clarity around course content would be helpful as it was not always easy to tell the course content the title
- It would be helpful to get committee memberships agreed earlier so training needs can be identified.
- Some slides were difficult to follow due to colour or text size used, making them challenging for the visually impaired.
- Some members had fed back that the induction programme had been good, comprehensive and a great achievement given the scale.
- Member feedback to be sought directly after each session to address issues as they arise.
- Refresher sessions may be useful later in the year, as Members may have new questions by then.
- It would be useful to have a Member Development Steering Group that had had the opportunity to fully engage in the training that had been on offer
- The programme could consider the roles of co-opted members and independent members.
- Members will be asked to design and support a full review of the programme for 2024, and to consider the KPIs and whether they have been achieved.
- The biweekly member briefing sessions will be reintroduced in mid-August as they had proved very popular.
- There will be bi-annual updates for the V&E sub-committee on progress.
- We are aiming for a South West Charter award in member development practice. This will need to prove training is member led. The requirements which need to be met to obtain the award can be found in the document pack.

Meeting ended at 3.00 pm

CHAIR _____

