

PERSONNEL AND GENERAL PURPOSES SUB-COMMITTEE

2nd March 2022

- Present:** Councillor Chris Mitchell in the Chair
Councillors Barnes, Denham, Mackay and Stephen
- Officers:** Shane Flynn, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources
Sian Stroud, Corporate Director – Planning and Governance
- Apologies:** Councillors Bayliss and Mrs L. Hodgson, David Blake Managing Director

33 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor Barnes for Councillor Gregson, Councillor Mackay for Councillor Stanley.

34 Declarations of Interest

None.

35 Public Participation

None.

36 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

37 Corporate Health and Safety and Welfare Policy

The Sub-Committee considered a revised draft Corporate Health and Safety and Welfare Policy. The Corporate Director – Planning and Governance presented the report and explained that existing Policy was last reviewed and approved in 2018 and was therefore due for review. Existing policy and procedure had been combined into one document, designed to underpin the overarching Corporate Health & Safety Policy.

The key changes to the Policy were:

- The policy has been renamed the 'Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Policy' to capture a key aspect of the Council's duties towards welfare, as an employer.
- The document has been simplified, in terms of structure and language, to increase its transparency and accessibility.
- There is a clear description of the different roles that groups and individuals within the Council play, in terms of accountability but also continuous improvement.

- The commitment to a positive culture of health and safety, as a leadership responsibility, is made more explicit.
- The document adheres closely to the HSG65 system of Plan-Do-Check-Act.
- The document explicitly references our duties to, and the duties of, workers, councillors, customers, and the public with regards to health and safety.
- The policy includes a glossary of common terms used – such as ‘risk’, ‘hazard’, ‘accident’ and ‘near hit’.
- The policy includes an index of the health & safety arrangements documents that underpin this policy.

The revised draft Policy had been consulted on with the Corporate Leadership Team, the Corporate Management Team, the Corporate Health and Safety Risk Management Group and the Council’s elected member Health and Safety Champion. Feedback from each of those consultees had been considered in arriving at this draft version.

In the ensuing discussion, Sub-Committee Members expressed support for the revised Policy. In response to comments, the Corporate Director explained that adoption of the policy and the training that sits beneath it will fall within the responsibility of the Council’s wider management team and there will be tailored training for employees.

With reference to paragraph 4.15, there was a proposal that the final bullet point should be amended to read “Not engage in acts of ‘horseplay’, practical jokes, or acts *which may* cause harm or injury to themselves or anyone else. It was felt that the threshold of “likely to cause...” was too high. Sub-Committee Members expressed support for this amendment.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee approve the draft updated Health and Safety and Welfare Policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report, subject to amendment of paragraph 4.15 as set out above.

38 Outcome of Postal Vote Review - May 2021 Elections

The Sub-Committee received a report which provided information on further assurances that have been put in place to maintain the integrity of the process for the delivery of elections following the outcome of the Postal Vote Review in relation to the May 2021 elections. The Corporate Director – Finance and Resources presented the report and explained that a detailed operating procedure had been compiled and put in place to ensure the necessary quality control measures are in place at each stage of the postal vote process. The operating procedure clearly identified the specific tasks, quality checks and who is responsible for each task at each stage of the process.

In response to questions and comments, the Corporate Director stated that he would provide a written response on the Absent Vote Refresh exercise undertaken in January 2022, which had recently been completed.

He explained that the project management for each election includes a review of issues arising and lessons learned from previous elections, as well as anticipating issues that may arise as part of the risk management plan.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee note the further assurances that have been put in place.

39 Any Other Business

None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00p.m. – 7.31p.m.

Chair at the meeting on
6th July 2022