

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE GROUP MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, 14 MARCH 2012  
(9.30 - 10.50 AM)**

**Present:** D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive) (Chairman) B Bassington (Chief Internal Auditor), C O'Boyle (Director of Corporate Support Services) and R Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT), G Lunnun (Assistant Director Democratic Services)

**Apologies for  
Absence:** I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive)

**Place:** Room 1.05, First Floor, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, Essex

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**98. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 15.2.12**

Agreed subject to:

- (i) insertion of the word "the" before the word "Trust" in Minute 85(a) (Minutes of the meeting on 14.12.11);
- (ii) substitution of "151" for "155" in Minute 91 (Officer Employment Procedure Roles).

**99. MATTERS ARISING**

**(a) EFDC v Savva – Legal Proceedings (Minute 94)**

Noted that the Judge had advised the defendant to obtain proper legal advice and that following an approach to the Citizens' Advice Bureau the advice given to Mr Savva had been that it was not a good idea to write such a letter.

**100. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None for this meeting.

**101. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Noted.

**102. AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12**

Noted that the report had been written in the style requested by the Audit and Governance Committee. Agreed report subject to correction of typographical errors.

**Action:**

- (1) B Bassington to correct typographical errors; and**
- (2) B Bassington to seek views of Members of the Committee on the report.**

**103. AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (AGC) - REVIEW OF ARTICLE 11**

Considered a draft report for the Constitution and Members Services Scrutiny Panel in June 2012. Noted that the proposals would not be in place for the Annual Council meeting this year but that the report could be drawn to the attention of the Appointments Panel, in particular the aspects concerning the qualities expected of members to be appointed to the Audit and Government Committee.

Questioned how “aptitude, experience or interest” in recommendation (2)(d) could be tested - Committee Member Role Accountability Statement, decision of Group Leader or other?

Questioned appropriateness of the use of the words “over familiarity” in paragraph 13.

Questioned whether paragraph 11.12(d) would be applicable if the Chairman was an Independent Member.

Noted the comments made on the draft report by R Thompson (Independent Member):

(a) in relation to the reference in the report to the difficulty of finding more Independent Members it was considered that this should be left in as it was not a weak point as it reflected the difficulty experienced in recruiting such members;

(b) suggested inclusion of a reference to replacement of a member mid-term – questioned whether there should be a different standard applied to the Audit and Governance Committee from any other Committee of the Council; pointed out that there were only five meetings of the Committee each year and there might be a good reason for a member missing the first and/or second meetings;

Questioned who would judge whether attendance record was acceptable; questioned whether standard would be applicable to only Independent Members as intimated in the proposals section under paragraph 15;

(c) Meaning of next available Council meeting – considered preferable to next “normal” Council meeting which term was not recognised in the Constitution etc;

(d) References to the appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman – agreed the need for consistency.

**Action:**

**I Willett to revise report taking account of views expressed and any further views to be made by existing members of the Audit and Governance Committee.**

**104. AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - SUBMISSION OF CGG MINUTES**

Agreed draft report to the Audit and Governance Committee subject to the deletion of the words “in relation to the current practice” in the recommendation.

**Action:**

**Report to be included on the agenda for the next Committee meeting.**

**105. RISK MANAGEMENT - EFFECTIVENESS OF ARRANGEMENTS**

Agreed draft report for the Audit and Governance Committee subject to expansion of the section regarding risk management in directorates to refer to risk assessments being undertaken in relation to capital projects etc.

**Action:**

**R Palmer to revise report.**

**106. GRANT CLAIM CERTIFICATION 2010/11**

Noted the report of PKF to be made to the Audit and Governance Committee.

**Action:**

**PKF to present report to Committee.**

**107. INTERNAL AUDIT - DRAFT PLAN 2012/13**

Considered the draft Audit Plan 2012/13 being submitted to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 19 March 2012.

Agreed that the reference to an audit of Local Area Agreements was not applicable as these were no longer in existence. An audit of Local Commissioning/Community Budgets might be applicable in the future but would be premature for 2012/13.

In relation to the audit of Corporate Procurement it was agreed that this should include checks to ensure compliance with the requirement to seek quotations from local businesses.

**Action:**

**B Bassington to amend Plan after Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee.**

**108. LOCALISM ACT 2011 - GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

Agreed report to be submitted to Extended Management Board.

**Action:**

**Report to be included on agenda for EMB.**

**109. STANDARDS COMMITTEE****(a) Complaints – Assessments, Reviews, Investigations and Adjudications**

Schedule noted.

**(b) Future Standards Arrangements**

Noted report of the Standards Committee to be submitted to the Council on 27 March 2012.

**(c) Repeat Training Session**

Noted the arrangements for a repeat training session for District and Parish/Town Councillors on 23 March 2012 at 7.00 p.m.

**110. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**(a) Job Evaluation**

C O'Boyle drew attention to some issues arising from the results of recent Job Evaluation Panel meetings.

**Action:**

**C O'Boyle to discuss issues with P Maginnis to determine whether existing procedures are sufficient or whether there is a need for additional procedures.**

**111. DATE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

25 April 2012 at 9.00 a.m. in Acting Chief Executive's Office.