

**Audit and Governance Committee**

15 January 2015

Report of the Chief Executive

**Local Government Association Report**

**Summary**

- 1) A motion was submitted and approved by Council on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2014, the details of which are set out in paragraph 4 below.
- 2) Mark Edgell from the Local Government Association lead the review, alongside the LGA's lead peers for each of the political parties.
- 3) Mark Edgell attended the Audit & Governance Committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 to present early findings of the review into member-officer relations.
- 4) A final report (Annex A) was completed and shared with Group Leaders, and the Chair of Audit & Governance, on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

**Background**

The following motion was submitted & approved by council on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

***“40. Notice of Motion - Organisational Development Plan***

***Minutes:***

***A Motion submitted for consideration directly by Council, in accordance with Standing Order 12.1(b)***

*(i) Organisational Development Plan (proposed by Cllr Steward)*

*“Council notes with concern the results of the Organisational Development Action Plan, in particular the Leadership section and the*

*current position re 'Concern about the Behaviour of some Members'. This follows last year's Peer Challenge review which also expressed concern regarding members' understanding of council priorities and the lack of clarity within the council.*

*Council requests that an independent body be appointed to report back to the Audit and Governance Committee no later than its meeting of 10 December 2014 and that the report is delivered directly to this committee, investigating these concerns and whether Members have acted in a manner which falls below that which staff and residents expect."*

*An amendment was proposed by Councillor Alexander as follows:*

*The **addition** of the following final paragraph:*

*This report should take into account the personalised politics being exhibited within York by elected members and their supporters – most notably on social media.*

*On being put to the vote the amendment was declared CARRIED."*

*The original motion, as amended on being put to the vote, was also declared CARRIED.*

*Resolved: That the motion, as amended, be approved. <sup>1</sup>.*

Following this motion, the Leader wrote to the Chief Executive to ask the Local Government Association to carry out the review.

The Chief Executive contacted the LGA to commission the review. This was lead by Mark Edgell, Principal Advisor for North East, Yorkshire & Humber and East Midlands. He was supported by the lead political peers for the LGA:

Labour – Cllr Tudor Evans

Conservatives – Cllr Glen Sanderson

Liberal Democrats – Cllr David Faulkner

Independents – Cllr Apu Bagchi

Mark Edgell and the LGA peers spoke to their respective Group Leaders, and Mark Edgell to the Council's Management Team. The LGA prepared a report based on these conversations.

The motion required Mark Edgell to attend Audit & Governance to provide an update on the review on the 10<sup>th</sup> December.

The work was completed and the report shared with Group Leaders and the Chair of Audit and Governance on the 16<sup>th</sup> December.

The report contains recommendations based on its findings.

### **Consultation**

- 5) The LGA has met with both members and officers as part of their work.

### **Options**

- 6) Not relevant for the purpose of the report.

### **Analysis**

- 7) The committee are asked to consider the report from the LGA, which contains recommendations. The committee may then wish to:

- (i) Refer the report to all members

At present the report has been circulated to Group Leaders, the Chair of Audit & Governance, and to the Audit & Governance Committee. The Committee may wish to refer the report to Full Council for all members' reference.

- (ii) Develop an Action Plan

The committee may decide on recommended courses of action to carry out the required outcomes identified in the LGA review's recommendations. They would then also need to agree a process for monitoring actions from the plan against a set timescale.

- (iii) Determine the role of the Committee in the oversight of the implementation of the recommendations

The Committee may wish to establish their role in providing oversight in the implementation of the recommendations.

### **Council Plan**

- 8) This report contributes to the overall effectiveness of the council's governance and assurance arrangements contributing to an 'Effective Organisation'.

### **Implications**

- 9)
  - (a) **Financial** – This report reflects upon the employer-employee relationship, with significant financial risks in the form of any potential claims by employees against the council. Costs of the LGA review will be met from council budgets.
  - (b) **Human Resources (HR)** – This report reflects on the employer-employee relationship, with significant HR risks in the form of cost, disruption of the normal business of the council, and reputational damage.
  - (c) **Equalities** – This report reflects on the employer-employee relationship and the requirement of all parties to operate within the legal duties and policies of the council relating to Equality.
  - (d) **Legal** – The employer-employee relationship is set down in employment legislation. Contravention of this would leave the council open to legal challenge.
  - (e) **Crime and Disorder** - There are no implications
  - (f) **Information Technology (IT)** - There are no implications
  - (g) **Property** - There are no implications

### **Risk Management**

- 10) The LGA report identifies a number of significant issues which if not resolved may prevent the council from effectively achieving its priorities and ambitions.

## Recommendations

- 11) The Committee is asked to note the findings of the LGA report, and to consider:
- a. Referring the report to all members
  - b. The development and monitoring of an action plan
  - c. The role of the Committee in oversight of the implementation of the recommendations

Reason: To progress work in addressing the recommendations arising from the LGA review.

## Contact Details

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**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 07/01/2015

## Specialist Implications Officers

Head of Civic, Democratic & Legal Services

**Wards Affected:** Not applicable

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

None