

Governance Matters



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Issue 21

June 2009

Welcome to the June issue of Governance Matters.

As May has been such a busy month we have two extra pages of news for you in this issue. On Thursday 21st May all the Councillors met for the Annual Meeting. Turn to page 2 and 3 for details of what was decided.

Our regular in-depth feature 'Spotlight on..' is taking a break this month. In our last issue we promised to provide you with details of the forthcoming revised Members' Code of Conduct. However Communities and Local Government have not yet responded to the consultation and the date for the Code's implementation has been delayed until Summer 2009. As soon as we have details of the new Code we will let you all know.

As always, we also take a look at what the governance committees have been doing over the past three months, and at their busy schedule for their first meetings of the new municipal year. We hope you find the information helpful and interesting. You can play your part by emailing suggestions for articles to cxd.corporategovernance@leeds.gov.uk

Front Page News...

Standards Committee Annual Report

The Standards Committee Annual Report has now been completed and will be published on the [Leeds City Council website](#) after being received by Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and Full Council. The report provides an interesting insight into the work of the Committee, including their first year of local assessment, and their plans for the new municipal year.

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report

The Corporate Governance and Audit Committee has produced its Annual Report for 2008/09, and it will be available to download from the Leeds City Council website soon. The report summarises the Committee's achievements in the previous municipal year and their future plans.

Constitution Amendments

A number of changes to the Constitution were agreed at the Annual Meeting of Council. An updated version of the [Constitution](#) has been published on the Council's website and will also be circulated in hard copy to relevant officers, in the near future.

Consultation on Leadership Arrangements

The consultation on the Council's leadership arrangements is now underway. The people of Leeds are being asked to give their views on whether they would prefer to have an elected mayor and cabinet, or an indirectly elected leader and cabinet. More information can be obtained by emailing exec.arrangements.consultation@leeds.gov.uk
The consultation closes on July 3rd.

STOP PRESS...

The Annual Meeting 21st May 2009

The Annual Meeting is the first meeting of the municipal year. At the meeting Council agrees the appointment of the Lord Mayor and Leaders of the Council for the municipal year as well as the terms of reference and membership of the Council committees. They are also informed of decisions taken by the Leader regarding the Executive arrangements for the year.

THE LORD MAYOR

The Lord Mayor is a Councillor who is chosen to be the 'First Citizen' of Leeds for a year, during which time he/she adopts a strictly non party political approach and represents the City in carrying out a wide range of engagements. The Lord Mayor also Chair's meetings of Council.

The Lord Mayor's proper mode of address is "The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds" but it is correct and quite usual to use the short title "The Lord Mayor of Leeds".

This years Lord Mayor is [Councillor Judith Elliott](#)

This years Deputy Lord Mayor is [Councillor Andrew Barker](#)

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leadership of the Council has remained the same as last year.

[Councillor Richard Brett](#) will be Leader of Council from 21st May 2009 to 30th November 2009, and Deputy Leader from 1st December 2009 until the Annual Meeting 2010.

[Councillor Andrew Carter](#) will be Deputy Leader of the Council from 21st May to 30th November 2009, and Leader from 1st December 2009 until the Annual Meeting 2010.

SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

At the Annual Meeting the Council Committees' terms of reference are approved. The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) were amended to allow it to exercise functions of a crime and disorder committee, in accordance with Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules were also amended to reflect the above amendment, as well as other legislative changes implementing Councillor calls for action (which gives Councillors the opportunity to ask for discussions at Scrutiny Boards in relation to any "local government matter") and Local Involvement Networks (LINKs).

Further details of the Council's scrutiny arrangements are available from the [Scrutiny Support Team](#).

STOP PRESS...

Executive Arrangements

The Executive Board is the principal decision making body of the Council. The Members of the Board and their portfolio or status are decided by the Leader of the Council and are announced at the Annual Meeting.

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Central and Corporate

Executive Member – Cllr R Brett

Development and Regeneration

Executive Member – Cllr A Carter

Environmental Services

Executive Member – Cllr J Monaghan

Neighbourhoods and Housing

Executive Member – Cllr J L Carter

Children's Services

Lead Executive Member – Cllr S Golton

Learning

Executive Member – Cllr R Harker

Leisure

Executive Member – Cllr J Procter

Adult Health and Social Care

Executive Member – Cllr P Harrand

Leader of the Opposition and Labour Group

Executive Member – Cllr K Wakefield

Leader of the Morley Independent Group

Executive Member – Cllr R Finnigan

The Leader has also identified Cllr R Lewis as a non-voting advisory member who will be able to attend and speak at meetings to assist the Labour nominated Executive Member.

The Executive Members are assisted with specific aspects of their portfolio by **Deputy Executive Members**, who carry out policy and development work.

Governance Committees – functions and membership

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee (CGA)

As Councillor Elliott is now the Lord Mayor there were some changes to the Committee membership. You can find details of the new membership of CGA Committee on the Committee page.

Standards Committee

Prior to the Annual Meeting the Council approved an increase in the Standards Committee's membership in order to allow them to deal with the local assessment of complaints more efficiently.

At the Annual Meeting the Council approved the appointment of one additional Independent Member (plus a reserve Independent Member), one additional Parish Member, and two additional Leeds City Council Members.

The updated membership of the Standards Committee can be found on the Standards Committee page.

General Purposes Committee

As Councillor Ann Blackburn is now the Leader of the Green Group, she has taken up Councillor David Blackburn's position on the General Purposes Committee.

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

**18th March, 30th April & 12th
May 2009**

The Committee received reports regarding the Joint Area Review (JAR) Action Plan, the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2007/08, and an internal audit report regarding decision making.

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Committee received an internal audit report which had tested a number of key and major decisions taken by officers under delegated or sub-delegated authority during 2008/09.

Several recommendations were made within the report, including:

- Prioritise the completion of the sub-delegation review;
- Develop a programme of training for all officers involved in the decision making process;
- Identify and train an officer to co-ordinate understanding of and compliance with the Constitution;
- Each directorate should have procedures in place to ensure that the requirements of the Constitution are communicated;
- The Head of Governance Services should monitor compliance with the Constitution; and
- The outcomes of controls within the Constitution should be reviewed against the objectives of the controls and their anticipated benefits.

The Committee resolved that a report should be submitted to a future meeting detailing the follow-up work undertaken as a result of the report and that the Chair should raise the Committee's concerns regarding the outcome of the report with Executive Board and senior officers.

ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER 2007/08

A representative of the Audit Commission attended the meeting held on 30th April to present the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2007/08.

The Committee highlighted some areas of concern from the letter, in relation to Children's Services, Adult Social Care, ALMOs, and regional governance.

It was resolved that the Committee's concerns should be referred to the Children's Services and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Boards, as well as East North East Homes Leeds and West North West Homes Leeds. It was also agreed that a report regarding regional governance should be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor John Bale (Chair)
Councillor Geoff Driver
Councillor Pauleen Grahame
Councillor Alison Lowe
Councillor Graham Latty
Councillor Neil Taggart
Councillor David Blackburn
Councillor Colin Campbell
Councillor Graham Kirkland
Councillor Thomas Leadley
Mike Wilkinson – Chair of the Standards Committee (non-voting)

30th June 2009

Items to be considered on 30th June include:

- Corporate Governance Statement; and
- Statement of Accounts.

Standards Committee

21st April 2009

The Committee approved the final draft of the Standards Committee Annual Report 2008/2009, and received annual reviews of the Monitoring Officer Protocol, and the Code of Practice for the Determination of Licensing Matters.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2008/2009

The Standards Committee approved the final draft of their annual report at this meeting. The report will now be published on the Leeds City Council internet page and be considered by the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and Full Council at their first meetings of the new municipal year.

MONITORING OFFICER PROTOCOL

As required under paragraph 5 of the Monitoring Officer Protocol, the Standards Committee received the annual report of the Monitoring Officer.

Some amendments were proposed to the Monitoring Officer Protocol as a result of the new standards arrangements that were brought about by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, and the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008.

The Committee resolved to approve the amended Monitoring Officer Protocol, and noted the performance information and issues raised within the report. The Protocol can be found on page 84 within Part 5 of the [Council's Constitution](#).

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE DETERMINATION OF LICENSING MATTERS

The Committee received the annual report of the Code of Practice for the Determination of Licensing Matters, the aim of which is to ensure that in the licensing process there are no grounds for suggesting that a decision has been biased or not well founded.

The Committee agreed that no amendments were required to the Code of Practice. The Code of Practice can be found on page 121 within Part 5 of the [Council's Constitution](#).

8th July 2009

Items to be considered in July include:

- Arrangements for Conducting Local Hearings; and
- Standards Regulations 2009.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Independent Members

Mike Wilkinson (Chair)
Rosemary Greaves
Philip Turnpenny
Joanne Austin
Gordon Tollefson (Reserve)

Parish Representatives

Councillor Mrs P Walker
Councillor J Priestley
Councillor P Cook

Leeds City Councillors

Councillor C Campbell
Councillor B Gettings
Councillor J Harper
Councillor B Selby
Councillor R D Feldman
Councillor J L Carter
Councillor D Blackburn

Corporate Governance Board

12th March, 8th April and 15th May 2009

The Board considered reports on:

- the proposed appraisal and development scheme for non-JNC managers;
- the register of significant partnerships;
- the draft Annual Governance Statement;
- the Chief Officer appointment process;
- the results of the Aspirational Culture – Governance and Regulation survey; and
- the Council/ALMO relationship.

Items on the work programme for forthcoming meetings include:

- performance management;
- the use of covert surveillance;
- PPPU governance arrangements; and
- data security.

In June the Board will also be holding a special workshop session to look at the ALMO assurance agreement. The Board also plans to review the Council's Code of Corporate Governance in the near future.

General Purposes Committee

28th April & 13th May 2009

In April, the Committee approved initial proposals for the Polling District Review, and in May the Annual Review of the Constitution was considered.

INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR THE POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW

The Committee received over 100 representations in relation to the polling district review and decided in each case whether to confirm, revise or reject each representation as an initial proposal.

The proposals that were approved will be consulted upon, and the final proposals will then be presented to the Committee for their approval in October 2009. The revised register must then be published by 31st December 2009.

THE NEXT ISSUE OF GOVERNANCE MATTERS

We hope you have found this issue of Governance Matters useful. In the next issue we will focus on the Annual Governance Statement.

If you have any ideas for our 'Spotlight On...' feature or any questions you would like answering, please contact the Corporate Governance Team on 0113 39 50261 or email us at cxd.corporategovernance@leeds.gov.uk