



Lewes District Council

www.lewes.gov.uk

Scrutiny Panel – Call-in

Minutes of a meeting of a **Scrutiny Panel – Call-in** held in the **Warren Room, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes** on **Monday 1 August 2011** at **4.00pm**.

Present:

Councillors D M Gray (Chair on election), S Adeniji and R Blackman

Officers Present:

R Allan, Scrutiny and Committee Officer

J Magness, Director of Finance

Minutes

Action

1 Election of Chair

Resolved:

1.1 That Councillor D M Gray be elected Chair for the meeting.

2 Call- In – Cabinet 12 July 2011, Minutes 31.1. – Risk Management - Annual Report to Cabinet

The Panel considered Report No 130/11 which provided background information to support the call-in procedure.

At the request of the Chair, the Scrutiny and Committee Officer outlined the procedure as defined in Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 (Appendix A to the Report). The Panel considered the Report presented to Cabinet on 12 July 2011 (Appendix B) and Resolution 31.1 (within Minute 31 at Appendix C), the subject of the call-in. It further considered in detail the reasons for the request for a call-in (Appendix D).

On 12 July 2011 Cabinet had approved the Annual Report on Risk Management. The Report considered the reputational risk to the Council by councillors or officers who could bring the Council into disrepute. This part of the Report was the subject of the call-in.

In discussion, the following points were made:

- The Chair proposed that this risk should be raised as situations could occur where reputational risk had an affect on the Council, especially

in the communications field, and a higher risk score would lead to extra vigilance in this area by the Council.

- Councillors commented that there was a process in place to deal with breaches of the Code of Conduct through the Local Standards Framework, and that it was difficult to see what changes a higher risk score could make to the consideration of this issue.
- The Panel agreed that the reputation risk meant the Council's reputation as a whole, rather than individuals or political groups.
- The Chair commented that the risk score could be raised, taking into account the increased use of social media and new technologies. A higher risk score could lead to increased preventative measures.
- The Director of Finance advised that it was important to note that the risk was scored on the impact and likelihood of the risk, which led to the calculation of an overall score.
- The Panel was not convinced that the impact of the risk on the Council was high.
- The Chair commented that the increased use of social media could lead to more possibilities of increased negative publicity.
- The Director of Finance explained the risk management methodology to the Panel, and commented that there was a detailed procedure in place to assess the impact and likelihood of risk.
- He advised that reputational risk for Councillors had been scored as medium, but that the reputational risk overall outcome was low. This was due to other areas that were included within reputational risk such as audit, planning and litigation.
- Councillors commented that the risk management methodology needed to be more preventative and that each case was individual.
- The Director of Finance explained that the likelihood of a risk could influence a higher risk score, but that there had been few cases in recent history to support this for the risk category being reviewed.
- Councillors could not identify an incident where reputational risk could have a large impact on service provision.
- The Director of Finance advised that the Risk Management methodology at the Council was consistent with other Councils.

Resolved:

- 2.1 That the Panel resolved not to intervene in the decision of Cabinet;
and
- 2.2 That the impact of social media and new technologies be
considered when determining the risk score for reputation at the
Council.

DF

The meeting ended at 4.30pm.

D M Gray
Chair