

GOVERNANCE STRATEGY GROUP

9th November 2020

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is to update the Board on the intended reformation of the existing LVJB Governance Group.

2 MAIN REPORT

- 2.1 Since the inception of the Governance Group in 2018, meetings have been held to report on corporate governance and service assurance matters reflecting the principles of the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government framework.
- 2.2 More recently the Group has been used as a forum to discuss the financial challenges facing the organisation over future years.
- 2.3 The opinion had been raised by members of previous Governance Group sessions that there was a lack of interaction and participation between the Board and LVJB, and that further consideration should be given as to the remit of the group.
- 2.4 Therefore, a meeting was arranged between the Board Convenor, the Assessor and Head of Governance to discuss a draft terms of reference for a new Governance Strategy Group (GSG). See Appendix one attached to this report for a copy of this terms of reference.
- 2.5 The focus of the GSG will not only be oversight on Corporate Governance matters but that the group should play an active role in formulating future strategic options for the LVJB. This would include;
 - providing a focal point for the discussion of LVJB operational & organisational issues
 - An awareness of future LVJB Governance goals and assess their progress
 - Review and assess the status of the Business Strategy 2020-2023
 - An awareness of and play an active role in the development of the organisations strategic direction
 - Undertake this role under the core LVJB Corporate Governance principles of accountability, transparency and effectiveness & efficiency.

- 2.6 It is proposed that the composition of the GSG should be the Board Convenor as Chair, with single Councillor representation from each of the other three Constituent Authorities (Midlothian, East Lothian and West Lothian). The Assessor and Head of Governance complete the membership with Committee Service representation when required.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Board is asked to note the content of this report.
- 3.2 The Board is asked to approve the terms of reference in appendix 1.
- 3.3 The Board is asked to request membership from 3 other Constituent Authority Councillors.

Gary Elliott
INTERIM ASSESSOR & ERO

Appendices:

Appendix 1: LVJB GSG Terms of Reference

Appendix 1



LVJB Governance & Strategy Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

Ensure consistency in respect of governance and service assurance matters

Overseeing compliance with corporate governance reflecting the principles of the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government framework

Participate in open discussion to help define direction/resolution on current & future organisational objectives and challenges

Membership

- The Governance & Strategy Group (GSG) shall comprise of sole Councillor representation from each Constituent Authority, The Assessor and the Head of Governance.
- Only members of the GSG have the right to attend GSG meetings.
- The Board Convenor will be the GSG chairman. In the absence of the GSG chairman and/or an appointed deputy at a GSG meeting, the remaining members present shall elect one of themselves to chair the meeting.

Role	Name & Position
Chair of GSG	David Key
GSG member	Councillor Mid
GSG member	Councillor West
GSG member	Councillor East
GSG member	Gary Elliott, Interim Assessor
GSG member	Bernie Callaghan, Head of Governance
Committee Services	Rachel Gentleman

Quorum

The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be either the Chair or Councillor representation and the Head of Governance

Frequency of meetings

- The GSG shall convene not less than twice a year and at such other times as required

- The Chair of the GSG, Councillor representation, The Assessor and the Head of Governance may request a meeting if they consider one is necessary
- Meetings may be held using video conferencing facilities

Notice of meetings

- Unless otherwise agreed by the GSG, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, communication method, time and date shall be notified 4 weeks in advance. All supporting papers, shall be issued to each member of the Group no later than one week before the date of the meeting.

Record of meetings

- Committee Services, or their nominee, shall be the secretary of the Group.

Responsibilities

The GSG will provide oversight to the Board on LVJB Governance matters. The GSG shall also play an active role in formulating future strategic programmes and the overarching vision of the LVJB.

In particular, the GSG shall:

- monitor overall compliance with the core LVJB Corporate Governance principles of accountability, transparency and effectiveness & efficiency
- be aware of, and play an active role in, the development of the organisations strategic direction
- review and appraise LVJB governance assurance and activity reports
- provide a focal point for the discussion of LVJB operational and organisational issues
- monitor LVJB performance with regard to Corporate and Service plan targets and objectives
- be aware of future LVJB Governance goals and assess their progress
- review and assess the status of the Business Strategy 2020-2023 to ensure transparency into the status of the phased approach and its associated financial implications.
- ensure that the organisation implements internal and external audit management actions within their identified timescale
- offer, support, advice and guidance to longer term visionary objectives of LVJB
- monitor the progress of the ongoing LVJB transformation programme with particular focus on the key software development projects that underpin organisational and legislative change

Other matters

The GSG shall:

- have access to sufficient resources in order to carry out its duties
- arrange for periodic reviews of its own performance and, at least annually, review its constitution and terms of reference to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the Board.