

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

# Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 16 March 2023

Dear Councillor

## RESOURCES AND EQUALITY SCRUTINY PANEL - THURSDAY, 16 MARCH, 2023

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at Thursday, 16 March, 2023 meeting of the Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel, the following report that was unavailable when the agenda was printed.

<b>Agenda No</b>	<b>Item</b>
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| 10 | <b><u>Review of Council and Staff Subscriptions to other bodies - Governance Directorate (report to follow) (Pages 3 - 18)</u></b> |
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[David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer, to present report]

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

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<b>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</b>	<b>Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel</b> 16 March 2023	Agenda Item No: 10
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<b>Report title</b>	<b>Review of Council and Staff Subscriptions to other bodies – Governance Directorate</b>	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Paula Brookfield Governance and Equalities	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable Director</b>	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
<b>Originating service</b>	Governance Directorate	
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Jin Takhar Tel Email	Head of EDI +44 1902 554650 Jin.takhar@wolverhampton.gov.uk.
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>		

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**Recommendation for decision:**

The Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Note the Governance subscriptions that fall within the remit of the Resources and Equalities Panel.
2. Note the total costs associated to subscriptions for the period 21/22 and 22/23 that fall within the Governance Directorate.
3. Review the proposed revisions following a careful consideration of the Governance directorate subscriptions as indicated in appendix one.
4. Advise on any recommended changes to the Council's approved subscriptions.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Resources and Equality Panel with a list of subscriptions to other bodies currently paid on behalf of the Council and its officers. This is following a request that this matter be added to the agenda of the Panel as part of its work on scrutiny on the expenditure within its remit.
- 1.2 This report provides details of all annual subscriptions that fall within the Governance Directorate.
- 1.3 Officers had already been instructed by the Cabinet to carry out a review of subscriptions within each directorate and this is taking place as part of the efficiency savings built into the budget for 2023/24.
- 1.4 Ultimately authority for expenditure within set budgets is with the relevant Cabinet member with oversight provided by scrutiny. It is anticipated that each scrutiny panel will have a similar report taken to them as part of the budget monitoring process. As part of this process this report also includes potential proposals to reduce the annual costs associated to subscriptions following a detailed review.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Council has a number of subscriptions in place with outside bodies. Subscriptions are paid for via the Subscriptions Budget within the Revenue Budget. Some of these subscriptions are made on behalf of the Council as a corporate body.
- 2.2 A number of these subscriptions are important to the effective functioning of the authority including for example the membership of the Local Government Association and indeed the legal knowledge and databases that provides access to the latest law for the Council's lawyers.

## **3.0 Current Position**

- 3.1 A full list of current subscriptions is attached in Appendix 1 for the panel's consideration. It provides a breakdown of Governance Directorate by service area covering:
  - Business Continuity and Emergency Planning
  - Equality
  - Governance Services (Councillors/ Mayoral services and Electoral Registration)
  - Health and Safety
  - Human Resources
  - Legal Services
  - Organisational Development

#### **4.0 Impact on City of Wolverhampton Council**

- 4.1 The subscriptions in place benefit the Council and its officers in several ways, including:
- National and local representation.
  - Membership of professional bodies.
  - Magazine subscriptions offering up to date information on relevant issues.
  - Access to professional advice, support, and information.

#### **5.0 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The Governance Directorates 2021/22 approved subscriptions budget totalled £278,100.
- 5.2 For 2022/23 the approved subscriptions budget totals £244,740.
- 5.3 A detailed profile of outturn spend for 2021/22 and spend to quarter 3 of 2022/23 are contained within Appendix 1.  
[LD/09032023/O]

#### **6.0 Legal Implications**

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications associated with the report.  
[DP/08032022/A]

#### **7.0 Equalities Implications**

- 7.1 The Council under the Equality Act 2010 has a legal duty to ensure that the authority eliminates unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity & foster good relations. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 7.2 Maintaining its membership with key professional bodies will help the Council to seek professional advice and information as well as work towards meeting its legal obligations.

#### **8.0 Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1: **Governance Subscriptions**

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# Appendix A – Governance Directorate Subscriptions

# Business Continuity & Emergency Planning

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Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Sundry Supplier - General	£183.46		£183.46	Risk Management Guidelines	Business Impact Analysis	
West Midlands Police		£6,125.14	£6,125.14	This is the Councils annual contribution to the West Midlands Local Resilience Forum, in relation to emergency planning. The annual fee is usually half this amount but wasn't paid in 21/22 so double this year.	Partnership working on Emergency Planning and Business Continuity issues across the WM. Access to DHLUC representative. Sharing of Cabinet information. Access to decision makers within the emergency services.	Keep
Kenyon International	£3,322.00	£2,400.00	£5,722.00	Apprise Incident Management system	Appraise system not currently working as well as had been had envisaged following implementation.	Proposed that - do not renew Apprise system at next renewal and consider other more cost effective means of record keeping and communication.
Kenyon International	£1,200.00	£2,185.00	£3,385.00	Kenyon International - Standby for disaster response, generally around mass fatalities	Kenyon International provide a service in the event of mass fatalities, from body recovery, body storage, liaison with relevant bodies and specialist advice. The £2.1k is effectively a standby fee so that in the event of the service being required those elements are covered.	Kenyon International subscription expires 30th June. The need for the service is defined by the Councils Mass fatalities plan, which is currently being reviewed. It is hoped this will be completed by the time of renewal. Keep for now but review 6/2023.
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,705.46</b>	<b>£10,710.14</b>	<b>£15,415.60</b>			





# Equalities

Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Stonewall Equality Limited	£2,500.00	-	£2,500.00	Stonewall Diversity Champion Programme connects to Stonewall and over 800 organisations in supporting CWC in being an LGBT Inclusive Organisation .	Stonewall provide expert advice and guidance channelling over 20 years of experience .they provide access to industry leading tools and resources on workplace inclusion and provide focused 121 guidance and feedback on their Workplace Equality Index which is their annual measure of the UK's top 100 employers for LGBT inclusion .	Proposed approach - Cabinet member clear that should continue to subscribe to Stonewall annual membership- this to ensure continued expert advice on LGBT inclusion in the workplace . And continued expert advice and support to ensure the effective delivery of the Council's Rainbow City Agenda - a key corporate priority .
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,500.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£2,500.00</b>			

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# Governance Services (1 of 3)

## Corporate Subscriptions (1)

Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	£3,000.00		£3,000.00	SIGOMA represent the interests of our members within the Local Government Association. SIGOMA channel their views to Government and other appropriate bodies, providing a forum for discussion at the highest political level.	SIGOMA is used a lot by Finance. It looks at financial information and how we rank from a deprivation perspective and financial impact	Keep.
EMAP Publishing Limited	£10,500.02		£10,500.02	Local Government Chronicle - Council signed a 5 year contract until 2026 CWC get physical and digital copies. Those with physical copies have been asked to confirm if still required	News and keeps Cllrs and Officers up to date.	N/A - mark for review in 2025
Local Government Association	£41,661.34	£45,683.92	£87,345.26	Local Government news and representation of local government and within the sector - keeping officer and Cllrs abreast of news	First magazine Leadership courses Training for Councillors New Councillors induction Events and Conferences	Keep
Local Government Information Unit	£22,661.25	£17,246.25	£39,905.50	Information for Cllrs and Officers	Reduced Training Cost (Reduced fees for Members) Regular updates and LGIU bulletins emails Municipal Journey	Proposed approach – review usage and if not demonstrating sufficient value potentially notify at next break point, May 2023

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# Governance Services (2 of 3)

## Corporate Subscriptions (2)

Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Key Cities (via Salford City Council who host)	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£20,000.00	Membership of Key Cities, a network of medium sized cities akin to the Core Cities	Key Cities provides research on key issues pertinent to medium sized cities, and includes an All Party Parliamentary Group for cross party political engagement activity.	Proposal – carefully review whether providing value for money, and then consider how this could be done through other means.
West Midlands Employers – HR advice/support	£23,946.00	£24,866.00	£48,812.00	WME Subscription	Subscription to regional HR advice/support guidance specifically related to local government and schools. Provides access to regional data on employee issues/concerns and allows us to access shared systems/processes.	Keep

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# Governance Services (3 of 3)

Electoral Registration						
Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Association Of Electoral Administrators	£47.50		£47.50	Association of Electoral Administrators - represent professionals working in electoral administration	Help and Advice from electoral administrator experts Forums to ask questions Training courses and conferences at a reduced cost for members Regional branch meetings to share advice and best practice Weekly newsletter and quarterly magazine	Keep Keep. All members of Electoral Services team are members of the AEA.

Electoral Registration						
Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Sundry Supplier - General	£2,900.00	£2,900.00	£5,800.00	This relates to maintenance of the old Respond database. We paid half towards this- last payment made related to 2021 usage. We currently don't use Respond and haven't done so since April 21.	N/A	Stop

Information Governance						
Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Freedom of Information Case Management System	£10,285.00		£10,285.00	Annual fee to Civica for our lcase management system (FOI/SAR/Disclosures)	Necessary to manage the statutory caseloads for FOI/SAR/Disclosures	Keep - contract renewed for another 5 years - Amount is now £11544 each year
<b>Total</b>	<b>£125,001.11</b>	<b>£100,696.17</b>	<b>£225,697.28</b>			



# Health and Safety

Health and Safety						
Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
eduFOCUS Limited		£4,999.00	£4,999.00	This is the subscription for the Evolve online system for schools to register school trips and provide health and safety documentation for approval to the health and safety team.	<p>A formal process for schools to request permission for off site visits and share the appropriate health and safety documentation. Provides traceability of decision-making process.</p> <p>Cost of this subscription is recouped through the SLA agreement with schools who use it.</p>	Keep
Total	-	£4,999.00	£4,999.00			



# Human Resources

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HR Advice						
Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Recite Me Ltd	£1,990.00		£1,990.00	Accessibility toolbar on the WVJobs website	To ensure information on the WVJobs website is accessible to all that may require reasonable adjustments because of a disability.	Keep
West Midlands Employers – talent link	£28,029.00	£29,613.00	£57,642.00	Talentlink contract including DBS checks through E-Bulk and WMJobs for posting adverts	Recruitment and selection on a regional local government website (WMJobs) Access to an applicant tracking system procured by WMJobs Regional Recruitment and selection support, advice, guidance and updates Access to E-bulk for DBS checks	Keep - required for our advertising platform
<b>Total</b>	<b>£30,019.00</b>	<b>£29,613.00</b>	<b>£59,632.00</b>			



# Legal Services

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Legal Services						
Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
CILEx	£2,331.00	£408.00	£2,739.00	Institute of Legal Executives – regulatory authority for Legal Executives – required to carry out their role	Ensuring suitably qualified staff	Keep
Dx Network Services Limited	£4,278.06	£4,766.91	£9,044.97	Document exchange, to send out post, documents etc	Ensures documents are delivered, particularly in view of postal strikes	Keep
HB Editorial Services LTD	£2,495.00	£3,995.00	£6,490.00	Publisher of and Local Government Lawyer, Public law jobs	Advertisement for jobs	Keep
Lawyers in Local Government	£270.00		£270.00	Professional membership	Training, courses and development in the profession	Keep
Lexis Nexis	£54,986.60	£49,402.00	£104,388.60	On line legal research and practical guidance tool	Used daily by legal staff to research, draft, use precedents etc	Keep
MBL Seminars Limited	£540.00		£540.00	Course supplier	Discounted courses, webinars and on line courses	Keep
Solicitors Regulation Authority		£9,164.00	£9,164.00	Regulatory authority for solicitors	Ensuring suitably qualified staff	Keep
Sundry Supplier - General		£142.00	£142.00	Practising Certificate Regulatory Fee		-
Sweet & Maxwell/Thomson Reuters	£17,015.95	£14,642.00	£31,657.95	Legal Database	Used daily by legal staff	Keep

Legal Services						
Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Local Land Charges Institute	£130.00	£130.00	£260.00	To assist property lawyers in this area of work	Assists with day to day commercial property matters	Keep
<b>Total</b>	<b>£82,046.61</b>	<b>£82,649.91</b>	<b>£164,696.52</b>			



# Organisational Development

## Workforce Development

Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Dartington Hall Trust	£21,334.00	-	£21,334.00	Research In Practice and Research in Practice for Adults and children's services	Provides prescribed number of hours face to face training from professionals and online resources for CPD for Social Workers.	Keep as we monitor the usage to ensure it remains fit for purpose and cost effective.
Sundry Supplier - General	-	£609.25	£609.25	To offer external coaching and mentoring to all employees across the council	Assists with the personal development of individuals	Keep this as it is cost effective and easy to access for employees
The Association of Democratic Services Officers	-	£148.50	£148.50	To access resources for training Democratic Services and government policy updates	Updates the team in real time	Keep

## Business Support Unit

Ap/Ar ID(T)	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total	What Is It For	What are the benefits	Recommendation
Sundry Supplier - General	£3.99	£29.58	£33.57	Research In Practice and Research in Practice for Adults	Supports improving the service provided to vulnerable adults	Keep as we monitor the usage to ensure it remains fit for purpose and cost effective.
<b>Total</b>	<b>£21,337.99</b>	<b>£787.33</b>	<b>£22,125.32</b>			





# In Summary

Area	2021/22 Spend	2022/23 Spend at Q3	Total 2021/22 and 2022/23 at Q3
Business Continuity & Emergency Planning	£4,705.46	£10,710.14	£15,415.60
Equality	£2,500.00	-	£2,500.00
Governance Services	£125,001.11	£100,696.17	£225,697.28
Health and Safety	-	£4,999.00	£4,999.00
Human Resources	£30,019.00	£29,613.00	£59,632.00
Legal Services	£82,046.61	£82,649.91	£164,696.52
Organisational Development	£21,337.99	£787.33	£22,125.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>£265,610.17</b>	<b>£229,455.55</b>	<b>£495,065.72</b>



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