

CHIEF EXECUTIVE ADVICE IN LIGHT OF THE

WOKING FOOTBALL CLUB & ASSOCIATE DEVELOPMENTS TASK GROUP REPORT

Executive Summary

The Chairman of the Task Group advised me that the report was unanimously agreed by the Task Group and I received a final copy of the Part 1 Report on 3 June 2020.

Whilst recognising the efforts that have been made by the Task Group in examining this matter I consider that it is not in the Council's interests for the recommendations to Council, set out in the Part 1 Report, to be approved by the Committee. In my view the recommendations would prejudice the future management of Council Business and potentially undermine the Council's ability to act in the interests of residents. This strikes at the heart of the management of the Council's business for which I am ultimately responsible.

I accept that Members of the Task Group have not been able to satisfy themselves that the due processes of the Council have been followed.

In my view such a challenge to the Governance arrangements of the Council needs to be addressed before it is debated further or the Council is requested to determine anything in respect of the report. Our normal, and good practice, in such circumstances is to commission a review of the Governance process through the Council's Internal Auditor, an independent organisation, Mazars. The Auditors report should then be submitted to the Standards and Audit Committee and the views of that Committee be established and reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee could then properly consider the Task Group Report with the benefit of the Audit Report and the views of the Standards and Audit Committee.

Therefore, at this stage, I propose that:- the Woking Football Club and Associated Developments Task Group Report be noted; the Council's Internal Auditor be requested to undertake a review of the Governance arrangements for the related developments; the Standards and Audit Committee consider the Auditors report and advise the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of its views; and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the Task Group report at a future meeting with the benefit of the Auditor Report and the views of the Standard and Audit Committee.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That

- i. the Woking Football Club and Associated Developments Task Group Report be noted;
- ii. the Council's Internal Auditor be requested to undertake a review of the Governance arrangements for the developments;
- iii. the Standards and Audit Committee consider the Auditors report and advise the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of its views; and

- iv. the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the Task Group report at a future meeting with the benefit of the Auditor Report and the views of the Standard and Audit Committee.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

Background Papers: Leading Counsel's Opinion, circulated 10 March, as Appendix 1.

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REPORT ENDS