

Independent Governance Review - Terms of Reference

Summary of events:

On Friday 13 May 2022 the National Crime Agency (NCA) made a children's safeguarding referral to the Council's LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) informing the Council that a local councillor (Tom Dewey) had been arrested by the Police on 29 April 2022 for the possession of indecent images of children. Cllr Tom Dewey had just been elected ward councillor for De Beauvoir Ward at the local elections on 5 May.

Over the course of that day and over the weekend, this information was then cascaded confidentially to senior officers of the Council, and to the Mayor. The Chief Executive met former Councillor Tom Dewey on Monday 16th May after which he tendered his resignation.

The former Councillor was charged with a number of offences to which he pleaded guilty on 19 July 2023 and was subsequently sentenced on 15 August 2023.

Mayor Glanville was suspended by the Labour Party on 31 August 2023 as a result of an allegation that he lied in public office (as reported [here](#)). He subsequently advised the Interim Chief Executive of his intention to resign and formally resigned on 22 September 2023.

In accordance with paragraph 1(7) of Schedule A1 to the Local Government Act 2000, the statutory Deputy Mayor, Councillor Bramble, has been acting in place of the Elected Mayor since his suspension from the Labour Party and she will continue to do so until the newly Elected Mayor takes office on the fourth day after the election to be held on 9 November 2023 [Regulation 8(1) of the Local Authorities (Elected Mayors)(Elections, Terms of Office and Casual Vacancies)(England) Regulations 2012].

Purpose:

The purpose is to review the appropriateness of the Council's response to receiving notification of the arrest of former Councillor Tom Dewey.

The purpose of the review is not to investigate individual officers or councillors. It is to be noted that this process is completely separate to the Labour Party's own investigations and to the criminal investigation undertaken by the Police.

Aims and Objectives:

The aims and objectives are to:

- Review the decisions and actions taken by the Council following notification from the National Crime Agency of the arrest of former Councillor Tom Dewey
- Review the processes and guidance in place at the time for both Officers and Members.
- Make any recommendations for improving the Council's processes and guidance based on the review's findings.

Of particular interest for this review is whether in making the decisions and taking the actions that it did, the Council met its safeguarding obligations.

The period under review will be time bound from the date that the Council learned of Tom Dewey's arrest on 13 May 2022 to the subsequent sentencing of Mr Dewey on 15 August 2023.

List of persons who hold information relevant to the review:

It is recommended that the following individuals are contacted to inform the review:

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

If following contact with the named persons it becomes apparent that it would be beneficial to the review to speak to other persons, then this should be raised with the Interim Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer.

Time frame:

The review should commence as soon as practicable, with a view to the findings and any recommendations being reported to a meeting of Full Council in early 2024.

[REDACTED]

The timeline for the report to Full Council will be dependent upon whether the Council is in a further pre-election period following the outcome of the election for the new Mayor on 9 November 2023.

However, in the event that scheduled meetings of Council do not neatly align with ending of any pre-election period/readiness of the report, then an extraordinary meeting of the Council could be called.

Documents to review:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[Employee Code of Conduct](#)

[Whistleblowing Policy](#)

Council's Constitution:

The Council recently adopted (24 July 2023) a new edition of its Constitution which came into effect on 4 September 2023. The new edition can be accessed via the Council's website or [here](#). The Councillor Code of Conduct which took effect after the elections in May 2022 can be found at [Part 7A](#).

The [report](#) presented to Full Council on 24 July 2023 explains the changes to the Constitution both in terms of presentation and the main substantive amendments.

For completeness the edition of the Constitution which existed at the time of the main events in question (May 2022) can be viewed [here](#).

Political makeup of the Council:

The Council operates an Elected Mayor and Cabinet form of governance.

In addition to the Elected Mayor, the Council has 57 Councillors.

Immediately preceding the May 2022 elections, the political makeup of the Council was as follows:

- Elected Mayor - Labour
- Labour Group - 52 seats
- Conservative Group - 5 seats

Following the May 2022 elections, the political makeup of Council became

- Elected Mayor - Labour
- Labour Group - 50 seats
- Conservative Group - 5 seats
- Green Group - 2 seats

The political make-up of the Council did not change following the by-election in July 2022.