PRESENT: Councillor Samantha Mearns in the Chair. Councillors Ed Darling, Pauline McHardy, Victoria Oldham, Alex Raubitschek, Matt Scott, Norman Waller and Christine Willoughby.

Late Arrivals: None

Early Departures: None

19/19 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES:
An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Nick Brown.

(5.30 pm)

20/19 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

(5.30 pm)

21/19 – MINUTES: The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 September 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

(Five Members voted for the motion and there were three abstentions.)

(5.31 pm)

22/19 – EXEMPT INFORMATION: There was no exempt information.

(5.32 pm)

23/19 – PUBLIC ARRANGEMENTS – QUESTIONS: There were no questions to consider under Standing Order 27.

(5.33 pm)

MATTERS REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION

24/19 – REVIEW OF COUNCIL AND EXECUTIVE POWERS DELEGATED TO THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND THE RESULTANT CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL’S CONSTITUTION: The Head of Safer Communities and Head of Legal and Governance submitted a joint written report which provided information on a recent review of the Council’s schemes of delegation and to advise of additions to the Council’s Constitution. Periodic reviews of the relevant Schemes of Delegation were undertaken to ensure that the powers and duties enshrined in statutes relevant to Safer Communities were correct. A recent review had revealed a small number of omissions in the Executive Functions Delegated to the Director of Community and
the Council Functions Delegated to the Director of Community and these were listed at paragraph 5.2 of the report and within Appendices 1 and 2.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 created regulations in relation to the licensing of animals, namely regarding Animal Welfare, which came into effect on 1 October 2018. All Council functions pertaining to licensing must be delegated by the Council and in order to regularise any decisions taken by officers under the incorrect scheme of delegation retrospective ratification of all decisions taken under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 was required.

RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That (1) the Committee approve the amendments to the constitution detailed in section 5.2 of this report.

(2) all delegated decisions taken by the Director of Community under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 since the 1 October 2018 are retrospectively ratified by this Authority.

(5.33 pm – 5.34 pm)

25/19 – DRAFT SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS – MAY 2020 TO MAY 2021: The Head of Legal and Governance submitted a written report, attached to which at Appendix A was a draft schedule of meetings from May 2020 to May 2021. As usual and wherever possible, meetings of the North Yorkshire County Council were taken into account to avoid clashes, as were other significant events such as party political conferences and, locally, the Great Yorkshire Show. Group Leaders and Chief Officers had been consulted on the draft schedule. There had been some changes to the schedule this year as 2020 was a leap year and the Great Yorkshire Show had been moved back by one week.

RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That the draft schedule of meetings 2020/21, as detailed as Appendix A, be approved.

(5.35 pm – 5.37 pm)

26/19 – GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY: The Democratic Services Manager submitted a written report the purpose of which was to present revised Guidance for Members on the Acceptance of Gifts and/or Hospitality. In January 2019 the Committee on Standards in Public Life published its review into Local Government Ethical Standards. Whilst there were currently no legal requirements in relation to registering of gifts and hospitality, the Committee recommended that Councillors should be required to record any gifts and hospitality over £50, or totalling £100 over a year from a single source. Whilst there was no requirement to register gifts and hospitality that were refused it was considered good practice to do so and the new guidance encouraged Councillors to declare such items. The Committee also recommended that local
authorities should maintain a separate register which should be published on the website at least once per quarter.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Head of Legal and Governance explained that the Committee on Standards in Public Life advised that it was best practice to register all gifts and/or hospitality even if they had been turned down. The new guidance encouraged Members to declare all such offers, but this would be the responsibility of individual Members and there were no obligations.

RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That  
1. the value at which gifts or hospitality must be declared be increased from £25 to £50;

2. the revised Guidance for Members on the Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality attached at Appendix 1 to the report is approved; and

3. the Head of Legal and Governance be permitted to make any consequential changes to the Constitution.

(5.37 pm – 5.43 pm)