

Revised recommendations for Agenda Item 5 – Independent Investigation by Verita

That Council:

1. Note the contents and findings of the Verita reports appended.
2. Approve the recommendations (R1 – R7) identified within the original Verita report (set out below), and agrees that the Monitoring Officer, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Democracy & Transparency, urgently brings to Cabinet a report that includes a detailed action plan that relates to the following report recommendations:-

R1 In the event that a similar event arises in the future, we consider that anyone from EDDC invited to a LADO meeting should not go unaccompanied and should consult the Safeguarding Lead.

R2 EDDC should revisit its discussions and plans to reform the Honorary Alderman/ Alderwoman process.

R3 EDDC should consider implementing a development programme for members to incorporate regular 1:1s, ongoing training needs assessments, surveys and exit interviews for councillors.

R4 The Safeguarding Lead should consider adding specific procedural guidance to the safeguarding policy to help users understand how, in practice, risk should be assessed and managed.

R5 EDDC should consider designating safeguarding champions from within the councillor body.

R6 Officers, the Chair of Council and group leaders should encourage all councillors to attend the safeguarding training that is available. This should include induction and ongoing refresher training.

R7 The Safeguarding Lead should set up a small working group with councillors to consider what training would be appropriate to improve their understanding of preventative safeguarding practice.

3. Notes that in the “Financial implications” section of this report that an estimated additional expenditure of £8k was incurred in engaging Verita to undertake additional work required to produce the supplementary investigation report, and Council approves of the additional funding that was incurred.

4. Notes with concern some of the conclusions within Verita’s supplementary report, together with matters highlighted regarding both Devon County Council and the Devon & Cornwall Police, and in response Council agrees –

- (i) through the Monitoring Officer, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Democracy & Transparency, to raise and discuss these issues with Devon County Council.

- (ii) through the Monitoring Officer, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Democracy & Transparency, to raise and discuss these issues with the Devon & Cornwall Police.