

REVIEW OF CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CIPFA and SOLACE published a revised Framework for 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' in 2007.

The Framework defined the six principles that should underpin the governance of local authorities and provided a structure to assist authorities with their own approach to governance.

The Council adopted the code in 2010 and this report gives details of the review of the content of the local code undertaken by the Council's Governance Group to ensure that it reflects the position within the Council for 2013/14.

The updated code, the action plan for 14/15 and the draft statement of Governance and Internal Control are included in the report for approval.

The adoption of the code and this annual review allows the Council to include a statement of Governance and Internal Control in the annual accounts.

REVIEW OF CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report details the process by which the Council reviews the content of the local code of corporate governance to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and the content reflects the current position within the Council.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Note the content of the report;
- 3.2 Approve the revised Code of Corporate Governance for 2013/14
- 3.3 Approve the Action Plan for 2014/15
- 3.4 Approve the draft statement of governance and internal control for 2013/14

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 The Framework took the six core principles, from the 'Good Governance Standard for Public Services' (2004), and adapted these principles for local government, identifying eighteen supporting principles.
- 4.2 The Council's Governance Group, chaired by the Executive Director of Customer Services as Monitoring Officer, has responsibility for the preparation of the Local Code of Corporate Governance along with an Action Plan which identifies areas within the Council where work to improve the governance arrangements within the Council is being undertaken or is necessary.

The Governance Group has reviewed the action plan for 2013/14 and taken the view that the actions have either been completed or referred to within the action plan for 2014/15.

The Governance Group includes:

- Head of Strategic Finance (s95 Officer);
- Head of Improvement & HR;
- Head of Governance and Law;
- Governance and Risk Manager;
- Internal Audit Manager.

The Strategic Management Team approved the code, the action plan and the draft statement of governance and internal control on 16 June 2014.

4.3 The six core principles contained in the local code are;

Focussing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.

Members & Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles

Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the value of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk

Developing the capacity and capabilities of members and officers to be effective

Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

4.4 The review of the effectiveness of the system of governance and internal control is informed by the:

- Work of Officers within the Council;
- Work of External and Internal Audit;
- Statements of Governance or Internal Control provided by external bodies;
- External review and inspection reports; and
- Recommendations from the Audit Committee
- Recommendations from the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee.

4.5 It is requested that the revised code (appendix 1), the action plan 14/15 (appendix 2) and the draft statement (appendix 3) are approved by the Audit Committee.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 This review of the content of the local code of corporate governance gives assurance about the robustness of the Council's governance arrangements.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy: In line with SORP and recommended practice

6.2 Financial: None

6.3 Legal: Monitoring Officer statutory role, remit includes governance

6.4 HR: None

6.5 Equalities: None

6.6 Risk: None

6.7 Customer Service: None

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Revised code of Corporate Governance

Appendix 2 – Action Plan for 14/15

Appendix 3 – Draft statement of Governance and Internal Control