

Extract from the draft minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee meeting of 23 November 2021

292. Review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance

Hayley McGrath, Corporate Governance Manager, attended the meeting to present the report and assist the Committee with its enquiries. The Committee heard that the Local Code of Corporate Governance was the overarching document which drew the Council's Governance Policies together, and demonstrated how the Council's structures complied with the recognised principles of good governance.

The principles of good governance were set out by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), in a document published in 2007. This document had been updated in 2016, and set out six principles how local authorities should account to, engage with, and lead their local communities, and covered the actions of both Officers and Members.

The Local Code had been reviewed and demonstrated how the Council was meeting the six principles, and highlighted current or ongoing work in respect of this compliance, which was linked to the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

The Local Code had been reviewed and updated to reflect the strategic priorities for investment and the Covid-19 recovery programme, along with the continued commitment to developing hybrid meeting processes. Apart from these changes, there had been no amendments to the Local Code, and the Committee were advised that it was still fit for purpose.

Councillor Willetts noted that in the past the Committee had debated the wording of core principle two, and had expressed some reservations around the sentiment of 'Councillors working together to achieve a common purpose'. It had been agreed that the wording used by the Council would be amended to show that Councillors were working together to deliver the Council's Strategic Plan, and Councillor Willetts sought assurance that this had been reflected in the Local Code. Hayley McGrath confirmed that although the wording in the report had been drawn directly from the published principles, the Council's own code reflected correctly the previously expressed wishes of the Committee with regard to working together to deliver the Strategic Plan.

RESOLVED that: the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance for 2021/22 had been reviewed, and it was *RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL* that the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance be approved for inclusion in the Council's Policy Framework.