

WIRRAL COUNCIL

COUNCIL EXCELLENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 JULY 2010

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report summarises a review of the Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy. Having such policies documented, up to date and drawn to the attention of all stakeholders is a fundamental requirement of one of the six core principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework.
- 1.2. The revised Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy was endorsed by Cabinet on 15 April 2010. The meeting of this Committee on 1 February 2010 requested that the revised policy be submitted to a future meeting.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. CIPFA and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) have produced the "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework". The purpose is to enable local authorities to maintain a code of governance and to discharge accountability for the proper conduct of public business, through the publication of an annual governance statement that will make the adopted practice open and explicit.
- 2.2. Effective local government relies on public confidence in Councillors and officials. Good corporate governance underpins credibility but the processes involved must be transparent to all stakeholders to be effective and to give a lead in community governance e.g. making potential partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors, as well as local citizens, aware of the concept.
- 2.3. The fundamental principles of governance must be reflected in the core activities of Council business. These are defined in the framework as
 - i. Focussing on the purpose of the Authority and on the outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
 - ii. Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.
 - iii. Promoting values for the Authority and demonstrating the values and good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.
 - iv. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.

- v. Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective.
 - vi. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust accountability.
- 2.4. With regard to the third principle, the Council should have in place formal codes of conduct and protocols defining the standards of personal behaviour to which individual Members, officers and agents of the Authority are required to follow and appropriate systems to ensure they are implemented. Consequently, it is necessary that there is an up to date documented Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.

3. FINDINGS

- 3.1. The Anti Fraud Policy and Corruption Policy has been reviewed by Internal Audit to confirm that it complies with current best practice and CIPFA/SOLACE guidance during an exercise undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the overall arrangements for managing the risk of fraud. This involved undertaking a detailed exercise to examine the counter fraud policies that the Council has in place and an evaluation against current best practice contained in the 'Managing the Risk of Fraud – Actions to Counter Fraud and Corruption' publication produced by CIPFA. A report on this was presented to the Audit and Risk Management Committee on 18 January 2010.
- 3.2. The policy was found to be in need of updating to be compliant with all available best practice and guidance. An updated Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy has been prepared and attached at Appendix A.
- 3.3. It is essential that the Policy is embedded within the culture of the organisation and pro-actively drawn to the attention of all members of staff, officers and Members of the Council. To facilitate this, the Policy will be made available on the Council Intranet and Internet and will be drawn to the attention of all Chief Officers via all available Council communication channels. Awareness training is also scheduled for later in the year including targeted sessions with relevant members of staff and the utilisation of on line training packages.

4. FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are none arising from this report.

5. LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no particular local Member support implications for any particular wards but the Policy is of relevance to all Members.

6. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are none arising from this report.

7. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are none arising from this report.

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1. There are none arising from this report.

9. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are none arising from this report.

10. HUMAN RIGHT IMPLICATIONS

10.1. There are none arising from this report.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1. CIPFA/SOLACE - Delivering Good Governance in Local Government – 2007.

11.2. CIPFA - Managing the Risk of Fraud – Actions to Counter Fraud and Corruption

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1. That the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy be endorsed.

12.2. That the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy be made available to all Members, officers, and citizens by being included on the Council Internet site and that awareness training be scheduled to promote compliance across the Council.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE.