

CONSTITUTION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20 February 2025

REPORT TITLE:	REVISED CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2025
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

The report seeks the Committee's approval of the Council's revised Code of Corporate Governance.

The Council's current Code of Corporate Governance was last reviewed in 2022.

This is not a Key Decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Constitution and Standards Committee is requested to:

1. Approve the revised Code of Corporate Governance at Appendix 1 recognising that work is being undertaken to update a number of elements of the supporting evidence, including the social value policy.
2. Recommend the revised Code of Corporate Governance at Appendix 1 to Council for approval and for the framework detailed therein to be included within the Council's Constitution.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure that the Council's Code of Corporate Governance is compliant with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) / the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) Guidance / Framework for Delivering Good Governance in Local Government and follows best practice.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 There was the option to not review the Code of Corporate Governance however this was not a suitable option as the last review was in 2022 and for good governance it should be regularly reviewed.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Corporate governance is a phrase used to describe how organisations direct and control what they do. For local authorities this also includes how a council relates to the communities that it serves.
- 3.2 The Council's current Code of Corporate Governance was last revised in 2022.
- 3.3 The CIPFA / SOLACE framework applies to annual governance statements prepared for the financial year 2016/17 onwards.
- 3.4 The concept underpinning the framework is that it is helping local government in taking responsibility for developing and shaping an informed approach to governance, aimed at achieving the highest standards in a measured and proportionate way.
- 3.5 By applying the principles in the Code, the Council commits itself to discharging its functions and delivering its services to Wirral residents in a way that demonstrates accountability, transparency, effectiveness, integrity, and inclusivity.
- 3.6 The main changes to the Code are;
- a) The reflection of the new guidance for Local Authority Statutory Officers.
 - b) New Graphics to clearly set out the interconnected nature of the seven Principles.
- 3.7 As with the previous Code, the Council is required to demonstrate through evidence how it meets all aspects of the Code. The revised Code detailed at Appendix 1 sets out the revised Code along with the evidence relied upon to demonstrate compliance.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council is required to ensure it has strong corporate governance arrangements in place so as to be able to effectively meet and discharge its obligations, responsibilities and duties. Inadequate governance arrangements could lead to significant governance issues arising leaving the Council open to challenge.
- 5.2 Reviewing and amending the Code in accordance with the Framework will ensure that the Council's governance arrangements are both fit for purpose and take into account the best practice guidance. An annual governance statement will need to be prepared in accordance with the Framework in order to meet the statutory requirement set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Council is open to challenge should it not have effective corporate governance arrangements in place.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Code of Corporate Governance review has been undertaken in consultation with senior officers and Internal Audit.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no such direct implications arising from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no such direct implications arising from this report.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no such direct implications arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Revised Code of Corporate Governance 2024

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CIPFA / SOLACE Guidance / Framework for Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016)

CIPFA, LLG and SOLACE Code of Practice on Good Governance for Local Authority Statutory Officers

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Constitution and Standards Committee in accordance with Section 11.2 (b) of its Terms of Reference; to oversee and agree such minor and consequential changes to the Council's constitutional arrangements as are recommended by the Monitoring officer from time to time;

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	28 January 2025
COUNCIL	05 December 2022
CONSTITUTION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE	23 November 2022
AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	26 October 2022