

Report of:	Charlotte Benjamin, Director of Legal and Governance Services
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Submitted to:	Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee – 4 February 2021
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Subject:	Annual Review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance
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Summary

Proposed decision(s)

That the Committee notes the outcome of the annual review and endorses the recommendation that the current local Code of Corporate Governance is not amended as a result of this review.
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Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?
Decision	No	No	Not applicable

Contribution to delivery of the 2020-23 Strategic Plan

Business	People	Place
The local code of corporate governance provides a framework, recognised as best practice, that enables the Council to assess its governance arrangements to ensure that good governance practices are in place.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Ward(s) affected

Not applicable

What is the purpose of this report?

1. To report the outcome of the annual review of the local Code of Corporate Governance.

Why does this report require a Member decision?

2. It is within the remit of this Committee to keep 'under review the Council's arrangements for Corporate Governance'. The local Code of Corporate Governance sets the framework against which compliance with corporate governance best practice is assessed on a systematic basis.

Report Background

3. Regular reviews of the code are necessary to ensure that the Council is assessing its governance arrangements against industry best practice as described by CIPFA relevant codes of practice. An annual review schedule was put in place to ensure that changes to relevant codes of practice were quickly reflected within the code. There have been no changes to the relevant CIPFA codes of practice since the current local Code of Corporate Governance was adopted by Council in 2017.

What decision(s) are being asked for?

4. It is recommended that the Committee agrees that no changes to the local Code of Corporate Governance are required as a result of this annual review because there has been no further change to the CIPFA Solace guidance 'Delivering Good Governance' (2016) which was used to inform the current code.

Why is this being recommended?

5. This decision is being recommended because the current local Code of Corporate Governance already reflects recognised best practice and is in line with the Council's commitment to review the local Code in line with best practice as described by CIPFA Solace.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

6. The other potential option would be to review the code of Corporate Governance against another standard, or create a new local standard. This option was not recommended because the CIPFA Solace guidance is recognised as industry best practice and provides a framework to ensure that the Council has appropriate governance practices in place.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

7. If agreed, the draft Annual Governance Statement for the financial year ending in April 2021 will be an assessment against this local Code of Corporate Governance.

Legal

8. Council Members are collectively responsible for the governance of the Council. While it is full Council's responsibility to consider key corporate governance documents; reviewing the Council's arrangements for corporate governance is

within this Committee's remit. The Council is required to have in place a local Code of Corporate Governance.

Financial

9. There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

Policy Framework

10. The power to change the local Code of Corporate Governance is a decision which is reserved for full Council. As the report recommends no changes there are no implications for the policy framework.

Equality and Diversity

11. There are no concerns that the proposals could result in policies and practices that could impact differently on individual or groups because they hold one or more protected characteristics. The framework sets out expected standards for policies and services to ensure that people are treated fairly. These policies are impact assessed as part of their development.

Risk

12. There are a number of entries on the Council's risk registers that set out the potential risks the Council could face as a result of poor corporate governance arrangements. Provision of a local Code of Corporate Governance is a key control measure in managing these risks.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

13. If agreed, copies of the code on the intranet and internet will be updated and the 2019/20 Annual Governance will assess compliance against this code on May 2020.

Appendices

14. The current local Code of Corporate Governance is appended to this report at Appendix 1.

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee	Local Code of Corporate Governance	17 March 2017
Council	Local Code of Corporate Governance	29 March 2017
Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee	Local Code of Corporate Governance	8 February 2018
Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee	Local Code of Corporate Governance	7 March 2019
Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee	Local Code of Corporate Governance	6 February 2020

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