

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Local Code of Corporate Governance

Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Committee – 30th May 2023

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Corporate & Shared Services, Councillor Martin Hassall

Report by: Deborah Moss, Internal Audit Manager

Wards affected: All

Executive Summary:

This Local Code of Corporate Governance is a public statement that sets out the framework through which the Council meets its commitment to good corporate governance.

The Code contains seven principles that underpin the Council's overall governance structure. It sets out the systems and arrangements that we have in place to ensure good governance with the overall aim to ensure that:

- resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities
- there is sound and inclusive decision making
- there is clear accountability for the use of those resources in order to achieve desired outcomes for service users and communities.

Evidence to support the seven principles is reviewed annually and the updated Code is published on the Council's website to support the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

The Code has been reviewed and re-written and is presented at Appendix 1.

There are no changes to the seven principles.

The main changes from the September 2018 Code are:

- Redesign to include the arrangements the Council has in place to demonstrate governance in line with the CIPFA principles.
- Updated and new information/arrangements at 2023 (posts, boards, etc)
- Review of references to documents held on the Council's website.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

Reviews and endorses the new April 2023 Local Code of Corporate Governance.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the new supporting narrative to the Local Code of Corporate Governance (Code).

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Committee has responsibility for reviewing the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance and approving the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 In 2016 changes were made to the 'proper practices' framework (*Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*) that detailed the processes to be followed for preparing the Council's AGS. There were two major changes; the introduction of seven core principles (and further sub-principles) and the ability to remove from the AGS a substantial amount of narrative that described the Council's governance arrangements.
- 3.2 The 2022/23 AGS will be presented to the July Committee for approval. In preparation for this, the Code has been reviewed and re-written.

4. KEY IMPACTS

- 4.1 If the local code is not endorsed, substantial elements of it will need to be included in the AGS. This will make the AGS a long and unwieldy document and move its focus away from the significant governance issues.

5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN

- 5.1 The Code will be uploaded to the Council's website ahead of the Committee's approval of the AGS.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 6.1 Good corporate governance arrangements underpin delivery of all aspects of the Corporate Plan.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 8.1 The Code has been updated/rewritten to reflect governance arrangements in place across the Council. The new Code has been reviewed by SLT to quality check its accuracy and completeness. Committee is responsible for reviewing the Code and approving the AGS. It is appropriate for them to review and endorse [changes to] the Code ahead of its publication.

9. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED / BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Local Code of Corporate Governance (April 2023)

CONTACT OFFICER

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