

**CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK AND  
ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT  
(Report by the Head of Policy & Strategic Services)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is two fold; firstly to seek the Panel's endorsement of an assurance framework to support good governance, particularly the governance statement; and secondly to report on action taken to date in respect of issues identified in the Annual Governance Statement.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In September 2007 the Panel adopted a revised Code of Governance which sets out and describes the way in which the Council carries out its functions and complies with the principles of openness, integrity and accountability. The principles in the Code apply to elected Members and employees alike, and they are reflected in the Council's working procedures and processes in the interests of establishing and maintaining public confidence.

- 2.2 To ensure that the Council is meeting the code and delivering good governance an annual cycle is in place which includes:

- an annual review of governance arrangements;
- preparation of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS);
- implementation of an action plan associated with the AGS;
- a half yearly review of progress against the action plan; and
- continued reference to systems and reporting as necessary to provide assurance and support for good governance.

- 2.3 This cycle is designed to reflect good practice in delivering a framework of assurance for Members and employees in terms of governance arrangements and to help to ensure accountability and transparency for local people and other stakeholders such as the Council's external auditors and Government inspectors.



