

# Report to Council

**12 December 2023**

<b>Subject:</b>	Code of Corporate Governance
<b>Director:</b>	Brendan Arnold – Interim Director of Finance
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Mike Jones Assistant Director – Legal & Assurance, Deputy Monitoring Officer

## 1 Recommendations

That the updated Code of Corporate Governance is approved.

## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

The revised Code of Corporate Governance contributes toward the statutory assurances on the robustness of its governance arrangements.

Approval of the Code is a matter for Council to determine, on the recommendation of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee as the committee with a corporate governance and compliance remit need to be satisfied that arrangements remain robust and recommend adoption of the Code of Corporate Governance to Council. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee considered the Code of Corporate Governance at its meeting on 23 November 2023 and recommended the matter to Full Council for approval.



### 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

		Governance mechanisms underpin all aspects of the Council. The Code of Corporate Governance, as a public statement that demonstrates the Council has the necessary governance arrangements in place to perform effectively, contributes toward achievement of the Corporate Plan in its entirety.
		
		

### 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used efficiently and effectively, and that it has robust and assured governance arrangements in place.
- 4.2 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require a local authority to review at least once a year the effectiveness of its system of internal control. This requirement will be fulfilled if the review is conducted in accordance with the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (2016).
- 4.3 The Council adopted the Local Code of Corporate Governance as a mechanism to demonstrate that its governance structures comply with the principles contained in the framework. The Code is a key component of the Council's governance arrangements and describes the processes and arrangements that the Council has in place to evidence compliance with good governance principles.
- 4.4 As part of its commitment to ensuring that the governance infrastructure remains appropriate, the Council undertakes a regular review of its arrangements and updates the Code to reflect any changes. The Code (attached at appendix 1) captures any revisions to the Councils governance arrangements, and this year incorporates:
- The inclusion of the Councils Corporate Improvement Plan, reflecting the recommendations arising from external reviews, and associated performance monitoring and reporting arrangements;



- Additional detail on the Councils performance management framework and governance arrangements;
- The adoption and embedding of revised corporate values and behaviours
- The outcomes of the governance review including changes to the Council’s constitutional arrangements;
- Revised arrangements following the implementation of recommendations arising from the scrutiny review
- The evolution of the governance framework for Towns Fund programmes;
- Removal of the section relating to the Councils response to the coronavirus pandemic.

## Monitoring Compliance with the Code

The Code reflects a range of corporate governance mechanisms that the council has in place. These are subject to internal monitoring and controls that are specific to the various elements. Lead officers maintain oversight and report on compliance in accordance with established governance reporting structures that include the Council’s improvement board, Scrutiny Boards, ARAC and full Council. Corporate governance arrangements are routinely considered by the Commissioners and has been positively reported to the Secretary of State. The annual review of the Code is reported into the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee for onward recommendation for approval by Council and outcomes of the review are captured in the Annual Governance Statement, that again is submitted for approval by the Committee.

## 5 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	The Code outlines the Council’s systematic and procedural approach to strategic resource management.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	The governance review process ensures that the Council discharges its statutory duties. The adoption of the Code of Corporate Governance demonstrates how the council complies with the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016.



<b>Risk:</b>	The Council is legislatively required to have efficient and effective governance arrangements in place. These are evaluated on an annual basis by the internal and external audit function who provide an opinion on the efficiency and effectiveness of the council's governance arrangements. The code and the arrangements outlined within provides assurances that the Council remains compliant with its obligations
<b>Equality:</b>	There are no equality impact issues associated with this report
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	None associated with this report
<b>Social Value:</b>	The Council's approach to measuring social value is considered as one of the mechanisms of good governance
<b>Climate Change:</b>	None associated with this report
<b>Corporate Parenting:</b>	There are no direct implications in relation to corporate parenting responsibilities

## 6 Appendices

Appendix 1 Code of Corporate Governance

## 7. Background Papers

None

