



ASHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

**Director of Legal and Governance
(Monitoring Officer)**

APPROVED:
Audit Committee - 27 November 2017
Cabinet – 30 November 2017

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Introduction

Governance ensures organisations are doing the right things in the correct manner in an open, honest, inclusive and accountable way. Good governance leads to good management, performance and outcomes. It ensures the Council delivers the visions and priorities set out in its Corporate Plan.

Corporate governance is part of the overall control framework and contributes to the Council's robust governance arrangements.

Ashfield District Council is committed to good corporate governance. The Council has a framework of policies and procedures in place which collectively make up its governance arrangements. This Local Code of Corporate Governance sets out the Council's arrangements and is based on the guidance "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" published by CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and SOLACE (the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) in 2016.

The Guidance assumes that each Council will develop its own approach to governance, ensuring its resources are directed to its individual priorities and in accordance with its own policies.

The fundamental principles of corporate governance are openness, inclusivity, integrity and accountability. The CIPFA/SOLACE guidance identifies seven core principles and various sub principles; the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance is based on these seven core principles.

The seven principles are:

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

The Code sets out the documents, systems, processes and actions the Council undertakes to fulfil its commitment to and compliance with this Code. The Code supports the Council's review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and informs the Annual Governance Statement which accompanies the Annual Statement of Accounts.

The Cabinet in consultation with the Audit Committee is responsible for approving the Code. The Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer are responsible for ensuring the Code is kept up to date and reviewed annually.

The Principles

The Council aims to achieve good standards of governance by:

- A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
- B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits
- D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- F. Managing risks and performance through robust control and strong public financial management
- G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Putting principles into effect

	Principle	This will be achieved by
A	Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan • The Constitution • Member's Code of Conduct • Employees' Code of Conduct • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy & Strategy • Equalities policies • Whistle-blowing Policy • Anti-Bribery Policy Statement and Procedures • Anti-Money Laundering Policy Statement and Procedures • Member/Officer Protocol • Registers of Interests • Registers of Gifts and Hospitality • Officer and Member development strategies • Standards and Personnel Appeals Committee • Corporate Complaints procedures • Overview and Scrutiny function • Audit Committee • Licensing Committee • Planning Committee <p>Each of the statutory officers is able to operate with the appropriate independence; the organisational culture respects and supports their integrity and provides the staffing arrangements to support their work.</p>
B	Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution • Corporate Plan • Community Engagement and Consultation Strategy • Forward Plan • Council Website – includes Meeting agendas and minutes of current and archived meeting and decisions • Publications Scheme • Overview and Scrutiny functions • Council Social Media • Citizens' Panel • Engagement with Youth Forum • Ashfield Community Partnership • Co-location with DWP and Police • Partnership Protocols • Formal shared service arrangements

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External audit assessment of Value for Money • Satisfaction Surveys • Budget consultation/engagement • The Council's booklet "All About Ashfield"
C	Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan • Forward Plan • Corporate report templates including legal, financial, Human Resource and risk appraisal • Corporate Risk Management framework • Audit Committee review of risks • MTFS • Performance management processes • Contract Procedure Rules • Procurement Strategy
D	Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The achievement of its Corporate Plan objectives are planned through a number of Programme Boards, which encompass: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regeneration ○ Commercial Enterprise ○ Organisational Improvement ○ Health and Well Being ○ Place and Communities ○ Housing • Business cases • Project framework • Weighted Benefit Mode • MTFS, capital programme • Budget setting and monitoring processes • Corporate report templates including legal, financial, Human Resource and risk appraisal • Council's website • Overview and Scrutiny functions • Consultation arrangements • Directors Service Plans • Weekly Corporate Leadership Team meetings • Regular Senior Leadership Team Meetings • Directorate Management Team meetings • 1-2-1 meetings • Performance framework and reporting • Value for Money assessment by external auditor

E	Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan • The Constitution • Member's Code of Conduct • Employees' Code of Conduct • Equalities policies • Officer and Member development strategies • Personal Development Reviews • Officer Competency framework • Clearly defined roles – job descriptions, person specifications • Recruitment and selection procedures • Staff surveys • Cross Party Update Group • Peer Challenge
F	Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Risk Register is regularly updated and considered by the Audit Committee • Directorate risk registers • Performance monitoring and reporting • Corporate report templates including legal, financial, Human Resource and risk appraisal • Overview and Scrutiny function • MTFS • Budget reporting and monitoring • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy & Strategy • Equalities policies • Whistle-blowing Policy • Anti-Bribery Policy Statement and Procedures • Anti-Money Laundering Policy Statement and Procedures • Emergency Planning and procedures and Business Continuity Plans • Information management policies and procedures • Publication Scheme • Procurement Strategy • Contract Procedure Rules • Assessment of Value for Money by external auditors

G	<p>Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council’s website and social media channels • Community Engagement and Consultation Strategy • Pay Policy published • Publication Scheme • Local Code of Corporate Governance – updated annually • Annual Governance Statement and Corporate Assurance Checklist are updated annually • Reporting of performance • Publication of Annual Report and Statement of Accounts • External auditors annual audit letter is published • Audit Committee • Peer Challenge <p>Audit recommendations are owned by management and are acted upon in a timely manner. Only a very small number are not implemented at any point in time.</p> <p>The Council welcomes and invites Peer Challenge and has recently received a positive outcome to the 2017 exercise.</p>
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