

LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

**Director of Legal and Governance**

**(Monitoring Officer)**

**APPROVED:**

**Audit Committee – 28 March 2022**

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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 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:

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

# Putting principles into effect

## Principle A

Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

This will be achieved by

Corporate Plan

Strategic Direction

The Constitution

Member’s Code of Conduct

Employees’ Code of Conduct

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy & Strategy

Equalities policies

Whistleblowing Policy

Anti-Bribery Policy Statement and Procedures

Anti-Money Laundering Policy Statement and Procedures

Member/Officer Protocol

Registers of Interests – Members and officers

Registers of Gifts and Hospitality – Members and Officers

Officer and Member development strategies

Corporate Complaints procedures

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Transparency Statement

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy Statement

Member Complaints Process

Annual Governance Statement

Financial Regulations

Contract Procedure Rules

Social Media Policy – Members and officers

Standards and Personnel Appeals Committee

Overview and Scrutiny function

Audit Committee

Licensing Committee

Planning Committee

Report template for decision-making which incorporates financial, legal, HR, equalities and risk appraisal.

Social Media Policies

Equalities Policies

Ashfield 24/7 – resident portal

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.

## Principle B

Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

This will be achieved by:

The Constitution

Corporate Plan

Community Engagement and Consultation Strategy

Forward Plan

Council Website – includes meeting agendas and minutes of current and archived meetings and decisions

Public Questions at Council

Public speaking at Planning Committee

Petition Scheme

Publications Scheme

Overview and Scrutiny functions

Council Social Media

Social Media Policies

Citizens’ Panel

Ashfield Community Partnership

Co-location with DWP and Police

Partnership Protocols

Formal shared service arrangements

External audit assessment of Value for Money

Satisfaction Surveys

Budget consultation/engagement

The Council’s booklet “*Ashfield Matters*”

Ashfield 24/7 – resident portal

People Strategy

## Principle C

Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits

This will be achieved by:

Corporate Plan

Strategic Direction

Forward Plan

Corporate report templates including legal, financial, Human Resource, equalities and risk appraisal

Corporate Risk Management framework

Audit Committee review of risks

MTFS

Capital Programme including Capital Gateway assessment process

Project Management Framework

Business Case development

Weighted Benefit Model

Service Plans

Performance management processes

Contract Procedure Rules

Procurement Strategy

Social Value Policy

Ashfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership

## Principle D

Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

This will be achieved by:

The achievement of its Corporate Plan objectives are planned through a number of Programme Boards, which encompass:

* + Regeneration
	+ Commercial Investment Working Group
	+ Digital and Service Transformation Board
	+ Health and Well Being
	+ Discover Ashfield
	+ Efficiency

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

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

## Principle E

Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

This will be achieved by:

Corporate Plan

The Constitution (including Scheme of Delegation)

Members’ 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

## Principle F

Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

This will be achieved by:

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, equalities and risk appraisal

Overview and Scrutiny function

MTFS

Capital Programme

Financial Regulations

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 including implementation of GDPR

Publication Scheme

Procurement Strategy

Contract Procedure Rules

Assessment of Value for Money by external auditors

Health and Safety Policies and Procedures

Fraud Risk Register

## Principle G

Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

This will be achieved by:

Council’s website and social media channels

Council Website – includes meeting agendas and minutes of current and archived meetings and decisions

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