LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

<mark>Executive Director, Governance</mark> (Monitoring Officer)

APPROVED:
<mark>Audit Committee – 23 November 2023</mark>

REVIEW:
<mark>November 2024</mark>

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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:

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	- 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 ==Select Committees== - Scrutiny function - Audit Committee - Licensing Committee - Planning Committee - Report template for decision-making which incorporates financial, legal, HR, equalities and risk appraisal. ==Ashfield 24/7 – resident portal== ==Domestic Abuse Policy== ==Hate Crime Policy== ==Anti-Social Behaviour Policy== 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.
B	Ensuring openness and comprehensive	- The Constitution - Corporate Plan

	stakeholder engagement	- 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 ==Select Committees== - Scrutiny function - Council Social Media - Social Media Policies - 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 ==Organisational Development Strategy and action plan== ==TU Liaison Meetings and Consultation Policy==
C	Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits	- 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 • Climate Change Strategy, Climate Change Action Plan, Carbon Management Plan

D	Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes	• The achievement of its Corporate Plan objectives are planned through a number of Programme Boards, which encompass:
		  o Regeneration
		  o Commercial Investment Working Group
		  o Digital and Service Transformation Board
		  o Health and Well Being
		  o Discover Ashfield
		  o 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
		• Select Committees - Scrutiny function
		• Consultation arrangements
		• Service Plans
		• Weekly Strategic Leadership Team meetings
		• Regular Corporate 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	• Corporate Plan • The Constitution (including Scheme of Delegation) • Members' Code of Conduct • Employees' Code of Conduct • Equalities policies • Officer and Member development strategies • Organisational Development Strategy and action plan • Personal Development Reviews • Officer Competency framework

		- Clearly defined roles – job descriptions, person specifications - Recruitment and selection procedures <mark>Workforce Planning</mark> - Staff surveys - Workforce Profile Statement - Gender Pay Gap Statement - Cross Party Update Group - Peer Challenge <mark>Decision Making Accountability</mark>
F	Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management	- 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 <mark>Select Committees</mark> - Scrutiny function - MTFS - Capital Programme - Financial Regulations - Budget reporting and monitoring - Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy & Strategy - Equalities policies - Whistleblowing 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 <mark>Data Quality Strategy</mark>
G	Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to	Council's website and social media channels

deliver effective accountability	- 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 ==Data Quality Strategy==