

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Local Code of Governance

**REPORT OF:** Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report asks the Audit and Standards Committee to consider an updated version of the Local Code of Governance.

### **Background**

- 2 The Council has a local code of governance, which was originally presented to the Audit Committee in April 2007. The document was developed from a framework document produced by CIPFA and SOLACE. This has been updated and is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 3 The code defines how the Council complies with the principles of good governance laid down by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services. The principles are:
  - Focusing on the purpose of the Council and on outcomes for the community including citizens and service users and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
  - Councillors and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles
  - Promoting the values of the Council and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour
  - Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk
  - Developing the capacity and capability of Councillors to be effective and ensuring that officers – including the statutory officers - also have the capability and capacity to deliver effectively.
  - Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust local public accountability.
- 4 The Code is essentially based on the Council's existing constitution, protocols and procedures and does not introduce any new policies. The attached code has been updated to include changes to these documents. The Code will be reviewed annually to support the Council's Annual Governance Statement.
- 5 The Committee may recall that it was advised in March 2015 that CIPFA were reviewing their framework document (referred to in paragraph 2 above) to ensure that it remained fit for purpose. Subsequently, in October 2015 the Committee agreed a response to a consultation by a CIPFA/Solace Joint Working Group on their revised draft document Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.

- 6 It is anticipated that the revised framework document and guidance will be issued later this year. This will probably require a fundamental redrafting of the Council's Local Code of Governance. However, in the meantime, the Code has been updated to reflect changes to it during the last 12 months. These principally relate to the refresh of the Council Plan 2015-20 and Vision 2030.

### **Recommendations**

- 7 It is recommended that the Audit and Standards Committee:
- (i) approves the updated Local Code of Governance; and
  - (ii) receives a further report in due course on the updated CIPFA framework document and guidance note.