

Appendix 1

CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The County Council first adopted a Code of Corporate Governance at a meeting of the Cabinet on 13th May 2003. The Code has now been revised in line with the CIPFA/SOLACE document “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government : Framework”.

The revised Code is based on the six core principles taken from The Good Governance Standard for Public Services (2004) developed by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services with support from the Office for Public Management and CIPFA and adapted for local government purposes. The principles are as follows:

- (A) Focussing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
- (B) Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.
- (C) Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.
- (D) Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.
- (E) Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.
- (F) Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

The following identifies the supporting principles for each of the core principles.

Principle A – Community Focus and Vision

The Council will focus on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and create and implement a vision for the local area.

In order to achieve this, the Council will:

- exercise strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating the authority’s purpose and vision and its intended outcomes for citizens and service users

- ensure that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, or in partnership, or by commissioning
- ensure that the authority makes best use of resources and that tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money.

Principle B – Functions and Roles

Members and officers will work together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

In order to achieve this, the Council will:

- ensure effective leadership throughout the authority and be clear about executive and non-executive functions and of the roles and responsibilities of the scrutiny function
- ensure that a constructive working relationship exists between authority members and officers and that the responsibilities of authority members and officers are carried out to a high standard
- ensure relationships between the authority and the public are clear so that each knows what to expect of the other.

Principle C – Values and Standards of Conduct

The Council will promote values for the authority and demonstrate the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

In order to achieve this, the Council will:

- ensure authority members and officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance
- ensure that organisational values are put into practice and are effective.

Principle D – Decision-making

The Council will take informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.

In order to achieve this, the Council will:

- be rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and listen and act on the outcome of constructive scrutiny
- have good quality information, advice and support to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs

- ensure that an effective risk management system is in place
- use their legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in their area.

Principle E – Capacity and Capability

The Council will develop the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.

In order to achieve this, the Council will:

- make sure that members and officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles
- develop the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluate their performance, as individuals and as a group
- encourage new talent for membership of the authority so that best use can be made of individuals' skills and resources in balancing continuity and renewal.

Principal F – Accountability

The Council will engage with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

In order to achieve this, the Council will:

- exercise leadership through a robust scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships, and develops constructive accountability relationships
- take an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery whether directly by the authority, in partnership or by commissioning
- make best use of human resources by taking an active and planned approach to meet responsibility to staff.