Local Code of Corporate Governance

A framework was developed by CIPFA/SOLACE to illustrate best practice for developing local code of governance and making adopted practice open and explicit. (CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Corporate Governance in Local Government: A Keystone for Community Governance.)

The Framework recommends that authorities must be able to demonstrate that they are complying with the principles of good governance. The six core principles defined in the Framework are taken from the Good Governance Standard developed by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services with support from the Office for Public Management (OPM) and CIPFA , in partnership with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and have been adapted for local government purposes.

This document states the Council's approach to achieve compliance with the principles set out in the framework.

Community Focus

In carrying out its duties and responsibilities, the Council will:

1. Work for and with the local community.
2. Exercise leadership, where appropriate, in the local community.
3. Undertake an ambassadorial role to promote the well-being of the borough through maintaining effective arrangements for:

- accountability to stakeholders for its performance and the effectiveness in delivering its services and the sustainable use of resources
- demonstrating integrity in its dealings to build effective relationships and partnerships with other public agencies and the private and voluntary sectors
- demonstrating openness in all its dealings
- demonstrating inclusivity through effective communication and engagement with the local community
- developing a clear vision and corporate strategy in response to corporate needs.

Service Delivery Arrangements

The council will monitor the implementation of its agreed policies and decisions and aim to achieve continuous improvement in the procurement and delivery of services by maintaining arrangements which:

1. Demonstrate accountability for service delivery at a local level.
2. Ensure effectiveness through measurement of performance.
3. Demonstrate integrity in its dealings with service users and partnerships to ensure the "right" provision of services locally.
4. Demonstrate openness and inclusivity through its consultation with key stakeholders, including service users.
5. Are flexible and can be kept up to date, and adapted to accommodate change and meet user wishes.

Structures and Processes

The Council will put into place effective political and managerial structures and processes to govern its decision-making and the exercise of its authority, through:

1. Defining roles and responsibilities of members and officers to ensure accountability, clarity and ordering of its business.
2. Ensuring there is proper scrutiny and review of all aspects of performance and effectiveness.
3. Demonstrating integrity by securing a balance of power and authority.
4. Documenting its structures and procedures and ensuring they are communicated and understood to demonstrate openness and inclusivity.
5. Ensuring these structures and processes are kept up to date and adapted to meet change.

Risk Management and Internal Control

The Council will establish and maintain a systematic strategy, framework and processes for managing risk, which:

1. Include public statements on its risk management strategy, framework and processes to demonstrate accountability.

2. Establish mechanisms to monitor and review effectiveness against agreed standards and targets and the operation of controls in practice.

3. Demonstrate integrity by being based on robust systems for identifying, profiling, controlling and monitoring all significant strategic and operational risks.

4. Display openness and inclusivity through the involvement of those associated with the planning and delivering of services, including partners.

5. Include mechanisms to ensure the risk management and control process is monitored for compliance and that changes are accommodated.

Standards of Conduct

The Council will:

1. Exercise leadership by conducting itself as a role model for others to follow.

2. Define standards of personal behaviour to be expected of members and staff and those involved in service delivery.

3. Put in place arrangements that ensure:

- accountability, through establishing systems for investigating breaches and disciplinary problems, and taking action where appropriate (including arrangements for redress)

- effectiveness, through monitoring compliance

- integrity, by ensuring objectivity and impartiality are maintained in all relationships

- openness and inclusivity, through the documentation of standards, and their regular review.

The Council will deliver these outcomes through:

a) Annually defining a series of local procedures and practices which together create the framework for good corporate governance as described in the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Corporate Governance in Local Government: A Keystone for Community Governance.

b) All Management Team members will complete an annual Service Assurance Statement as evidence of compliance with the principles of the Code

c) The Council will produce an Annual Governance Statement to summarise details of assurances and evidence that is in place to demonstrate compliance with the Code.

The key policy areas and procedures that will compose the core of this process are listed below:

     i.   Effective administration of Financial Affairs (Financial Procedure Rules and associated Guidance)

    ii.   Effective Human Resource Policies

    iii.   Members Code of Conduct and Political Conventions

    iv.   The Council Constitution

    v.   Whistle-Blowing

    vi.   Anti-Fraud and Corruption

    vii.   Risk Management Strategy

    viii.   Corporate Communications Guidelines

    ix.   Partnership Policies

    x.   Community Strategy

    xi.   Performance Management Framework

    xii.   Consultation Processes

    xiii.   Member's Support framework

    xiv.   Code of Conduct (Officers)

    xv.   Contract Procedure Rules

    xvi.   Health and Safety Policy

    xvii.   Information Security Policy

    xviii.   Procurement Strategy.