

**Report for:            GOVERNANCE, AUDIT, RISK  
MANAGEMENT & STANDARDS  
COMMITTEE**

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**Date of Meeting:** 15 July 2024

**Subject:** INFORMATION REPORT - Local Code of Corporate Governance Review

**Responsible Officer:** Jessica Farmer – Monitoring Officer, Strategic Director of Legal & Governance

**Exempt:** No

**Wards affected:** All

**Enclosures:** Appendix 1: Local Code of Corporate Governance

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

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- 1.1 This report sets out an update of the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance. The report is presented to enable the Committee to fulfil the requirements of its Terms of Reference to:
- To review the council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework, including the ethical framework and consider the local code of governance.

**Recommendations:**

- 1.2 The Committee is asked to consider the report and appendix and note its contents.

## Section 2 – Report

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### Background

- 2.1 The *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (CIPFA/Solace, 2016)* set out a revised framework intended to assist local authorities in taking responsibility for developing and shaping an informed approach to governance, aimed at achieving the highest standards in a measured and proportionate way.
- 2.2 Harrow's Local Code of Corporate Governance, included in the Council's Constitution, was last reviewed and updated in 2014. It sets out the arrangements the Council has in place which demonstrate that the principles of good governance are embedded within the way the Council conducted its business.
- 2.3 Due to the revised guidance set out in the Framework issued by CIPFA/SOLACE in 2016 a complete revamp of our local Code has been undertaken. The updated Code has been considered and approved by the Governance Board.

### Local Code of Corporate Governance (See Appendix 1)

- 2.4 The term 'local code' essentially refers to the governance structures in place. It includes all the systems, processes and documents that contribute to the authority's governance. The extent to which they are in place and effective is considered as part of the authority's annual governance review.
- 2.4 The Code outlines the Council's approach to corporate governance and demonstrates our commitment to upholding the highest standards of accountability, leadership, integrity, sustainability and transparency.
- 2.5 The Code is based upon principles designed to achieve the intended outcomes whilst acting in the public interest at all times. It is also compatible with the Committee on Standards in Public Life's *Seven Principles of Public Life* (more commonly known as the Nolan Principles).
- 2.6 The updated Code will be incorporated into the Constitution and will be used by officers as a framework when undertaking the annual review of corporate governance which results in the production of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) that is included in the statement of accounts.
- 2.7 The AGS incorporates the continuous review of the effectiveness of our governance arrangements. It identifies areas where we can and will do more to ensure that we have effective governance arrangements that enable the organisation to deliver on its commitment to restoring pride in Harrow.
- 2.8 The preparation of the 2023/24 AGS has followed the 2016 guidance.

## **Legal Implications**

As covered in the main body of the report.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications to this report.

## **Risk Management Implications**

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

Relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below - **N/A**

This is an information report therefore there are no key risks to be taken into account as there are no recommendations in this report.

## **Equalities Implications / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No (N/A)

## **Council Priorities**

Internal Audit and the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team contribute to all the corporate priorities by enhancing the robustness of the control environment and governance mechanisms that directly or indirectly support the priorities.

## **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

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As this is an information report Legal / Finance / Corporate Director clearances are not necessary.

## **Mandatory Checks**

Ward Councillors notified: No, as it impacts on all Wards

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

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**Contact:** Tracy Barnett,  
Interim Head of Internal Audit & Corporate Anti-Fraud

**Background Papers:** None

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations? **N/A**

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| 1. Consultation | NO |
| 2. Priorities   | NO |