

Part []

Council Bodies

Appendix: Governance Committee

1 Preamble

- 1.1 Part [] (Meeting Rules) sets out the rules and procedures that apply to all of the Council's Bodies and Sub-Bodies.
- 1.2 If there is any conflict between the wording of Part [] and this Appendix, this Appendix will prevail.

2 Scope of Role

- 2.1 The Governance Committee ("the Committee") will support the Council to establish, maintain, and improve effective governance, risk management, and internal controls.
- 2.2 The Committee is responsible for supporting the Council in the areas of governance, risk management, external audit, internal audit, financial reporting, and for managing the risk of the Council's exposure to fraud and corruption.
- 2.3 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 imposes a duty on local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. Section 28 (6) of the same Act requires that arrangements are in place under which allegations can be investigated and arrangements under which decisions on allegations can be made. The Committee will have oversight of these arrangements.

3 Membership

- 3.1 So far as Councillors are concerned, the Committee shall be politically balanced and its membership will be as set out in the Committees List and Meetings Rules Table.
- 3.2 In addition to its Councillor membership, Council will co-opt up to two independent members to the Committee.
- 3.3 Council shall also have the power to co-opt two non-voting Parish Councillors to the Committee.
- 3.4 In undertaking its duties, the Committee may request attendance of the external auditors at its meetings when appropriate.

4 Terms of Reference

- 4.1 The Committee is responsible for:
 - 4.1.1 ensuring that the Council's corporate governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively in practice;
 - 4.1.2 considering the Council's corporate governance arrangements and the Annual Governance Statement;
 - 4.1.3 considering and making recommendations to the Council on proposed changes to the Constitution;
 - 4.1.4 providing effective challenge and independent assurance on the risk management and governance framework;
 - 4.1.5 monitoring the effectiveness of the Council's the internal control environment including arrangements for financial management and ensuring value for money;

- 4.1.6 ensuring that counter fraud and corruption arrangements are appropriate for managing the Council's exposure to the risks of fraud and corruption;
- 4.1.7 endorsing the annual Risk Management Strategy and recommending it to the Executive for adoption;
- 4.1.8 reviewing and approving the Council's Statement of Accounts and review and approve the external auditors' annual audit letter;
- 4.1.9 considering any governance issues emanating from the Government and determine their effect on the Council's business and governance processes;
- 4.1.10 considering any issues brought to the attention of the Committee, by the Chief Internal Auditor at any time during the year; and
- 4.1.11 approving the Internal Audit Strategy and Plan (to ensure adequate coverage) and monitor performance (assessing whether adequate skills and resources are available to provide an effective function).
- 4.2 The Committee will review Partnerships arrangements that the Council has entered into, to ensure that they have robust Governance and Risk Management arrangements and that any risk to the Council from the Partnership is minimised.
- 4.3 With the support of the Monitoring Officer, the Committee will promote and maintain high standards of conduct by all Councillors and co-opted members, including:
 - 4.3.1 assisting Councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
 - 4.3.2 advising the Council on the adoption, or revision of, the Members' Code of Conduct;
 - 4.3.3 monitoring operation of the Code of Conduct;
 - 4.3.4 advising and training councillors and co-opted councillors on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
 - 4.3.5 granting dispensations to Councillors and co-opted members on requirements relating to interests.
- 4.4 The Committee has responsibility for ensuring that arrangements are in place by which allegations against Members and Co-opted Members of the Council, or of Town or Parish Councils, which assert a breach of the relevant Members' Code of Conduct, can be investigated and determined.

5 Advisory Panel

- 5.1 An Advisory Panel (comprising ten Councillors: [two from the Administration, two from the main Opposition Party, two from the Minority Party, two parish/town councillors and two Independent Persons) will be appointed and will be responsible for dealing with any complaints where evidence of a breach of the Code of Conduct has been identified.
- 5.2 In the event that the Advisory Panel finds there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct, it will report its findings to the Governance Committee for a formal decision.
- 5.3 The Advisory Panel will be chaired by an Independent Person.