

Part []

Council Bodies

Appendix: Governance Committee

1 Preamble

- 1.1 Part [] (Meeting Procedure 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 S.27 of the Localism Act 2011 imposes a duty on local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. S.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 The Committee shall consist of nine Councillors reflecting the political balance of the Council, together with up to two co-opted but non-voting Independent Members (Audit), and up to two co-opted but non-voting Parish or Town Councillors.
- 3.2 The membership is set out in the Committees List and Meeting Rules Table.
- 3.3 The Committee shall also have Substitute Members, but to sit a Substitute Member must be a Member of the same political group as the Member they are substituting for.
- 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 reviewing 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 Councillors' Code of Conduct;
 - 4.3.2 advising the Council on the adoption, or revision of, the Councillors' Code of Conduct;
 - 4.3.3 monitoring operation of the Councillors' Code of Conduct;
 - 4.3.4 advising and training councillors and co-opted councillors on matters relating to the Councillors' 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 Councillors and other Members of a Body, or of Town or Parish Councillors, which assert a breach of the relevant Code of Conduct, can be investigated and determined.

5 Advisory Panel

- 5.1 An Advisory Panel comprising of ten Members - two Councillors each from the Administration, the main Opposition Party, and the Minority Party, together with two Independent Members (Standards), and two Parish or Town Councillors - will be appointed and will be responsible for dealing with any complaints where evidence of a breach of the relevant Code of Conduct has been identified.
- 5.2 In the event that the Advisory Panel finds there has been a breach of the relevant 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 (Standards).