

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2021

DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE & TOWN CLERK

REPORT AUTHOR: PAT JUKES, BUSINESS MANAGER CORPORATE POLICY

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Audit Committee of the outcome of the annual review of the Code of Corporate Governance conducted during March and May 2021.

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 City of Lincoln Council adopted a new Code of Corporate Governance in March 2017, agreeing to review this annually to ensure it remains current.
- 2.2 A decision was taken to simplify the format of the code whilst still being able to provide all of the information, but in an easier and accessible format.

3 Main Body of Report

- 3.1 City of Lincoln Council must ensure that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. It also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to secure continuous improvement in the way our functions are exercised, having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 3.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, the council must put in place proper governance arrangements for our affairs.
- 3.3 A new code consistent with the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government was approved by Executive Committee in March 2017, with an agreed annual review.
- 3.4 Internal Audit and Corporate Policy undertook a full assessment of the council's governance framework commencing March 2020/21 through a review of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance (policies and processes) and its use in the review process to develop the AGS to identify any significant issues, or other areas that may require monitoring.

Changes identified this year were:

- A full review of all policy and strategy documents detailed to ensure they have correct titles and have review dates where applicable
- A review of key actions taken to mitigate the effect of COVID-19 whilst maintaining good governance (these are summarised in the AGS)

- A reformat of the Code of Corporate Governance in order to meet web accessibility requirements, and remove duplication whilst improving overall clarity; reducing the original size from 37 to 14 pages
- The inclusion of the new CIPFA Financial Management Code – effective from 21/22 (a separate section is included in the AGS itself)

3.5 These changes have now been incorporated into the code as part of the review (see **Appendix A**). No further changes are recommended at this time and it is proposed the next review should commence in February 2022.

4 **Strategic Priorities**

4.1. Vision 2025 and the vision, priorities and core values contained within it form a part of the Code of Corporate Governance.

5 **Organisational Impacts**

5.1 **Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)**

The Code identifies procedures in place to ensure compliance with legislation and reduce risk as well as adhere to the Financial Management Code.

5.2 **Legal Implications including Procurement Rules**

The Code of Corporate Governance identifies processes in place to ensure compliance with legislation and reduce risk.

5.3 **Equality, Diversity & Human Rights**

The Code of Corporate Governance identifies processes in place to ensure compliance with legislation and reduce risk.

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

6 **Recommendation**

6.1 That Audit Committee notes the amendments made, including the reformatted structure.

Is this a key decision?	No
Do the exempt information categories apply?	No
Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?	No

How many appendices does the report contain?

One – Appendix A

List of Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer:

Pat Jukes, Business Manager, Corporate Policy