

Audit and Corporate Governance Committee Report



Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

AGENDA ITEM NO 12

Author: Kathy Fiander

Tel: 01491 823649

E-mail: kathy.fiander@southoxon.gov.uk

To: Audit and Corporate Governance Committee

DATE: 5 March 2008

Local code of governance

Recommendation

To approve the local code of governance, as attached, for inclusion in the Constitution with effect from 1 April 2008.

Purpose of Report

1. This report asks the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee to approve the local code of governance, as attached, for inclusion in the Constitution with effect from 1 April 2008.

Strategic Objectives

2. The Code seeks to bring together all of the council's strategies, initiatives and work plans into one document. In doing so, it provides a basis from which the Council can fulfil its role as the community leader in South Oxfordshire.

Background

3. In November 2007, council authorised the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee to agree this revised local code of governance and agreed that the head of legal and democratic services could include this revised code of governance in the Constitution.

4. CIPFA/SOLACE (The Chartered Institution of Public Finance and Accountancy/the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) recommend that all authorities adopt a local code of governance. South Oxfordshire District Council adopted its first code of corporate governance at its full council meeting on 17 April 2003.
5. In July 2007 CIPFA/SOLACE published *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*. The publication is intended to be used as best practice for developing and maintaining a locally adopted code of governance.
6. The revised framework builds on recent governance work in both the public and the private sector and in particular *the good governance standard for public services* drawn up by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services established by CIPFA and the Office for Public Management in partnership with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
7. The development of a local code of governance, consistent with the principles and requirements of the framework, will help to ensure proper arrangements to ensure continuing compliance with best practice as set out in the framework.

Financial Implications

8. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

9. The recommendations within this report fulfil the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006.

Conclusion

10. There is no formal legal requirement to adopt a local code of governance, although guidance from CIPFA/SOLACE recommends that local authorities do so. The attached document derives from the *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*. It sets out principles and aims and documents, systems and processes that show we intend to fulfil those aims. The committee is therefore recommended to approve the local code of governance, as attached, for inclusion in the Constitution with effect from 1 April 2008.