

Corporate Governance

SUMMARY

This report provides a review of the Authority's Corporate Governance documents and policies.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Authority is asked to:-

- 1) Approve the changes to the following Corporate Governance documents:
 - Member Code of Conduct
 - Tenders and Contracts Regulations
 - Local Code of Corporate Governance
- 2) Note the approval of minor changes to other governance documents by the Clerk

1. Introduction

The principles of good corporate governance require the Authority to undertake its functions in a way that is completely open and inclusive, demonstrates the utmost integrity in all its dealings and is fully accountable to the public it serves.

A range of policies and documents provide the framework for the application of good governance. It is important to keep the Authority's governance and these documents under constant review, to keep them up to date and to reflect the current legislative position and organisational structure.

2. 2016/17 Review

The latest review has incorporated both legal and procurement advice from Harrow Council and was undertaken by the Clerk, Chief Officers and Senior Managers. The following documents have been reviewed and updated:

- Standing Orders
- Member Code of Conduct
- Scheme of delegation to Officers
- Financial Regulations
- Tender and Contracts Regulations
- Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Protocol on Relationships between Authority Members and Officers
- Access to Information Policy and Procedure Rules

All of these documents will be available from the elected members pages on our intranet. A summary of the purpose of the documents and the key changes can be found in the table in Appendix1.

Most of the documents only required minor changes which do not affect their substance e.g. changes to reflect the new post titles, spelling, cross referencing to other documents etc. The Clerk has delegated authority to approve minor changes to these documents and the table details when these were approved by the Clerk.

Only the Member Code of Conduct, the Tenders and Contracts Regulations and the Local Code of Corporate Governance required changes needing the Authority's approval. These can be found in Appendix 2, Appendix 3 and Appendix 4.

3. Financial Implications – These are no financial implications as a result of this report.

4. Legal Implications – There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

5. Impact on Joint Waste Management Strategy – Good Corporate Governance provides the framework for delivering the objectives of the Joint Waste Management Strategy.

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Appendix 1

Document Title	Purpose	Changes from last version	Approval
Standing Orders.	Essentially provides the rules that define the constitution of the Authority. This includes the composition of its governing body (the constituent boroughs), the manner of conducting business proceedings (meetings and decision making) and standards (personal interest).	Minor changes to reflect updated version of legislation (although worth noting that the requirements are unchanged), cross referencing with the member code of conduct, clearer definition of a related party and tidying of section numbers.	Clerk – June 2016
Member Code of Conduct and Member Complaints Procedure (incorporating terms of reference of Standards Committee).	Identifies the principles/behaviours expected of members in accordance with the Localism Act. It provides the rules around declaring interests and procedure for dealing with standards' allegations and complaints.	This document has been re-structured to improve the flow and previously missing parts have been added. It can be found in Appendix 2. The new draft clarifies which Member interests should be disclosed and when, and how interests impact on involvement in decision making. It sets out a process for dispensations from disclosures and explains the position in relation to sensitive interests. Disclosable pecuniary interest is defined with related rules around participation. The gifts and hospitality part of the document has been updated to provide consistency with requirements for the Authority's employees. The complaints procedure has been updated and now makes clear that the standards committee is an 'as and when' committee and that the capacity of the independent person is advisory / non-voting.	Authority – July 2016 (Appendix 2)
Scheme of Delegation to Officers	For the proper running of a business, powers are delegated from a governing body to management. This document identifies the powers the Authority has delegated to the Managing	Very minor changes to post titles (Managing Director) and to reflect the updated tenders and contract procurement regulations.	Clerk – June 2016

	Director, Clerk and Treasurer and includes Urgency procedures.		
Financial Regulations	Provides the framework for managing finances and safeguarding assets. It details the roles, responsibilities and procedures for each area of financial activity and asset management	Very minor changes to post titles, reference to the appropriate pieces of legislation, consistency with updated policies (tenders and contracts regulations) and clarification around the use of consultants.	Clerk – June 2016
Tenders and Contract Regulations	Specifies the rules and regulations to be followed for procurement activities including authorisation limits and requirements for quotes, tenders and application of OJEU rules. The document contains a helpful table summarising the authorisation rules / limits.	This document has been updated to reflect the latest procurement legislation. In particular the new rules around the advertising of opportunities on the governments “Contracts Finder” portal. Financial control has also been strengthened by including segregation of duties and a hierarchy of approval limits replacing the previous single higher limit. The regulations can be found in Appendix 3 and includes a useful summary table (at the start) defining the requirements and limits.	Authority – July 2016 (Appendix 3)
Audit Committee Terms of Reference	Sets out the role and responsibilities in relation to assurance and the scope of work to be undertaken	Very minor change to clarify the position of the non-voting members and reflect last year’s the change of frequency to 2 meetings year..	Clerk – June 2016
Local Code of Corporate Governance	This document outlines the principles of corporate governance identified within the CIPFA’s local government framework document – delivering good governance. The local code also details the monitoring and reporting arrangements. The principles contained in this document underpin all other corporate governance documents.	The CIPFA Framework and Guidance for Delivering Good Governance were published at the end of April. These introduce new outcome focussed principles for good governance. The Local Code has been re-written to identify the Authority’s activities, structures and documentation which demonstrate compliance with the new code. The local code can be found in Appendix 4.	Authority – July 2016 (Appendix 4)

Protocol of Relationships between Councillors and Officers	This document identifies the roles and responsibilities of Councillors and Officers and the processes to ensure effective running of the Authority	Very minor changes to post titles (Managing Director) and correcting typos.	Clerk – June 2016
Access to Information Policy and Procedure Rules	Sets out the rules that apply to meetings of the Authority and Audit Committee including timescales for publishing papers minutes etc	Very minor change to define the Authority	Clerk – June 2016