

Audit Committee

22 March 2021



Report of: Director Legal and Democratic Services

Title: Code of Corporate Governance

Ward: n/a

Officer Presenting Report: Director Legal and Democratic Services

Recommendation

That the committee approves the Code of Corporate Governance.

Summary

The Council is required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to prepare an Annual Governance Statement to accompany its published financial statements which should incorporate a review of the effectiveness of the Council's own Code of Corporate Governance. This report refreshes the Council's Code of Corporate Governance which was last reviewed in 2018.

The significant issues in the report are:

As set out in the report and the accompanying appendix.



Policy

1. Publication of an Annual Governance Statement is a requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Additionally, the Council's Risk Management Policy requires the Audit Committee to review the Annual Governance Statement to ensure it accurately reflects the internal control, risk management and governance arrangements in place.

Consultation

2. **Internal**
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member, Corporate Leadership Team, Head of Legal
3. **External**
Not applicable

Context

4. The Code of Corporate Governance is intended to support the leadership of the Council with developing and maintaining robust governance arrangements. The Code is based upon the CIPFA/ Solace "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016" which sets out the following seven core principles:
 - Behaving with Integrity;
 - Ensuring Openness;
 - Defining Outcomes;
 - Determining Effective Interventions;
 - Developing Capacity;
 - Managing Risks and Performance; and
 - Transparency and Effective Accountability.
5. The Code provides details of:
 - The purpose and basis of the code;
 - How Bristol ensures good governance;
 - Governance oversight and accountability framework within the Council;
 - How Corporate Governance arrangements are monitored and reported;
 - Responsibilities for maintaining the Code; and
 - How Bristol complies with the seven core principles in the CIPFA Framework.

Proposal

6. That the Committees approves the Code of Corporate Governance.

Risk Assessment

7. The need to maintain a robust risk, governance and control framework environment is pivotal to the effective operations of the Council's functions, a statutory requirement of the Accounts and

Audit Regulations 2015, and an implied requirement of the External Auditor.

Failure to maintain and, where required, improve this environment will not only impact on the proper practices of the Council, but will also be in breach of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and may attract an adverse opinion from the External Auditor.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

As set out in the report.

Financial

(a) Revenue

Not applicable.

(b) Capital

Not applicable.

Land/Property

Not applicable

Human Resources

Not applicable.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Draft Local Code of Corporate Governance

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

“Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework” – CIPFA/Solace 2016