

Committee: **Governance and Audit Committee**
Date of meeting: **26th April 2023**
Report Subject: **Code of Governance**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Steve Thomas – Leader / Cabinet Member
Corporate & Performance**
Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	13.04.23		26.04.23					

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To present to the Governance & Audit Committee the revised Code of Governance (attached at Appendix A) for consideration and approval.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Authority has had a Code of Governance in place since 2010. The Code sets out the Governance Framework for the Authority and is produced in line with the CIPFA / SOLACE document “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (revised 2016)”.
- 2.2 The code is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it reflects the current governance arrangements of the Authority. The Code forms the basis against which the Annual Governance Statement is produced.
- 2.3 The Governance & Audit Committee are responsible for reviewing and approving the code.
- 2.4 The code incorporates the seven core principles of good governance against which the Authority measures its governance arrangements.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Governance & Audit Committee review the Code of Governance and consider whether it:
- (1) Accurately reflects the current governance framework of the Authority; and
 - (2) It is fit for purpose as a basis against which to gather evidence for the production of the Annual Governance Statement
- 3.2 The Governance & Audit Committee may then choose to:
- Option 1
Approve and adopt the revised Code of Governance
- Option 2
Propose amendments / alterations to the revised Code of Governance

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
- 4.1 Production of the Code assists the Authority in achieving its Corporate Plan Priority of, '**An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place**'.
- 4.2 The Code of Governance will also be used as key evidence for the development of the Council's Self-Assessment, required as part of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
5. **Implications Against Each Option**
- 5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short- and long-term impact)***
There are no direct financial implications arising from the production of the Code of Governance.
- 5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***
Failure to review / approve the Code of Governance would result in it being out of date and not reflecting the current governance framework of the Authority. This is mitigated by an annual review and update.
- 5.3 ***Legal***
The Code of Governance sets out the Authority's Governance Framework as prescribed by the CIPFA / Solace Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (2016).
- 5.4 ***Human Resources***
The review of the Code of Governance involves the investment of senior management time. The commitment is met from existing resources.
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***
The Code has been amended / updated to reflect the changes to the governance framework of the Authority over the last year. The changes to the Code this year are minimal, mainly concerning the change from Executive Committee to Cabinet Committee and the formation of the Gwent Public Service Board.
- 6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***
The Code of Governance sets out how the council's governance framework is shaped to ensure engagement with stakeholders and to inform the citizens of Blaenau Gwent as to how the governance arrangements of the Authority operate.
- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
The revision of the Code of Governance has had involvement of Officers from all directorates and has been considered by the Corporate Leadership Team.

- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
The Code of Governance sets out the Governance Framework for the Authority against which the Annual Governance Statement will be produced and will include development activities for future years.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
The Code of Governance includes the risk management and internal control aspects of the Governance Framework.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
The Code of Governance sets out the core governance principles for the Authority including its collaborative approach with the Gwent Public Service Board.
- 6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***
Officers from all directorates have contributed to the review of the Code of Governance.
- 6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***
The production of the Code of Governance has no direct impact on decarbonisation and reducing carbon emissions.
- 6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment (IAA)***
Production of the Code of Governance has a neutral impact against people or groups from the nine protected characteristics.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 An assessment of the Council's performance against the Code is undertaken and reported in the Annual Governance Statement. The Annual Governance Statement will be reported to the Governance & Audit Committee.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix A – Code of Governance