

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 7
AUGUST 2024**



Title of Report	REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE POLICIES	
Presented by	Paul Stone Strategic Director of Resources	
Background Papers	None	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications to be considered.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The policies are reviewed annually to ensure any updates in the law are noted so that the Council acts in accordance with the law.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	The suite of Corporate Governance Policies is regularly reviewed to ensure the Council operates effectively, in line with the appropriate standards.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To receive the Committee's comments on the Council's annual review of the Corporate Governance Policies ahead of Cabinet.	
Recommendations	THAT THE COMMITTEE PROVIDES ANY COMMENTS IT MAY HAVE FOR CONSIDERATION BY CABINET WHEN IT MEETS TO CONSIDER THE POLICIES ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2024.	

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and appropriate standards. In discharging this responsibility, the Council has in place arrangements for the governance of its affairs and staff.

1.2 The following documents constitute the Council's suite of Corporate Policies:

Policy	Last Reviewed
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy	2023

Anti-Money Laundering Policy	2023
Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy	2023
Risk Management Policy	2023
RIPA Policy	2023
Local Code of Corporate Governance	2023
Data Protection Policy	2023
Information Governance Framework	N/a
Information Security Policy	2023 (formerly the ICT and Cyber Security Policy)
Information Rights Policy	2023 (formerly Information Management Policy)
Records Management Policy	2023 (formerly Information Management Policy)

1.3 An annual review of the suite of policies has been undertaken and the revised draft policies are appended to this report. The Committee's views are sought ahead of consideration of the policies at Cabinet on 24 September 2024.

2.0 POLICY REVIEW

2.1 The policies have been reviewed by a team comprising Legal Services, Internal Audit, ICT, the Monitoring Officer, the Data Protection Officer and the Section 151 Officer.

As part of the review process, all policies now incorporate a standardised format which sets out key policy details at the start of the document and ensures that completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is documented at the end of each policy.

There are some policies that authors have not been able to complete the EIA form for yet. Those policies are the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, the Anti-Money Laundering Policy, the Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy and the Local Code of Corporate Governance Policy. Policy authors will ensure that the EIA form is completed in respect of each of these policies prior to them being taken to Cabinet, however, authors have indicated that they do not consider the policies to have a prejudicial impact on equalities and therefore it is unlikely that a full EIA form will be required.

The main changes to each policy are summarised below.

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

There have been no changes in legislation that affect this policy since the previous review. Therefore, only minor amendments have been made including updates to names referenced within the policy.

Anti-Money Laundering Policy

There have been no changes in legislation that affect this policy since the previous review. Therefore, only minor amendments have been made including updates to names, contact details and dates referenced within the policy.

Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing Policy)

There have been no changes in legislation that affect this policy since the previous review. Therefore, only minor amendments have been made including updates to names, contact details and the Council's address. References within the policy to the external audit firm

have also been updated as the Council's external auditor has changed from Mazars to Azets.

Risk Management Policy

The policy has been amended to confirm that the Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing the Corporate Risk Register, as per the Council's Constitution. Further clarity around identifying risks has also been inserted in the appendix.

Minor amendments including renames of groups referenced within the policy, insertion of the role of Members to the appendix and formatting revisions have also been made.

A graphic has also been inserted at Section 4 'Risk Management Policy' to illustrate the objectives of the Council's Risk Management Policy. This involves the process of identifying, assessing, managing and controlling and reviewing and reporting risks.

RIPA Policy

There have been no changes in legislation that affect this policy since the previous review. Therefore, only minor amendments have been made including updating the edition date of the Home Office Code of Practice to reflect the latest publication.

Local Code of Corporate Governance

There have been no changes in legislation that affect this policy since the previous review. Therefore, only minor amendments have been made to the formatting of the document.

Information Governance Framework

The Council has been undertaking a review of information governance, as reported to the Audit and Governance Committee through the Senior Information Risk Officer's Annual Report on 24 April 2024. As part of that review, it was identified that it would be helpful to bring together all of the Information Governance Policies into one single framework.

The Information Governance Framework is, therefore, a new document that sets out the Council's approach to information governance, including four key principles that underpin good information governance – information rights, records management, data protection and information security. To underpin the importance of each of these principles, there is a policy for each that sets out the Council's commitments in each of those areas. Supporting these policies are internal standards, procedures and guidance that officers will keep updated to implement the requirements of the policies.

All the policies have been updated into a streamline format with the aim of making them easy to understand and follow. The new framework is, therefore, a consolidation of existing policies but in a new format and layout, with appropriate cross-referencing and connections between all four policies.

This will be the format of the Information Governance policies going forward and in future years, the Information Governance Framework and the four policies that accompany it will be reviewed as a collective and brought back to the Audit and Governance Committee each year as part of the annual Corporate Governance Policies Review.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	A Well-Run Council.
Policy Considerations:	As detailed within the report.
Safeguarding:	Whistleblowing, surveillance using RIPA and Protecting people's data are all considered to be safeguarding our communities.
Equalities/Diversity:	The opportunity for whistleblowing helps to ensure any risk of inequality or lack of diversity can be highlighted.
Customer Impact:	Anti-fraud, anti-money laundering and corruption will protect the customer from financial impact.
Economic and Social Impact:	Anti-fraud, anti-money laundering and corruption will protect the customer from any negative economic impacts.
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon	N/a
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	N/a
Risks:	As part of its Corporate Governance arrangements, the Council must ensure that risk management is considered and satisfactorily covered in any report put before elected Members for a decision or action. The purpose of this report is to set out the review undertaken by Corporate Governance Policy authors and detail the changes made. As part of this, the Risk Management Policy is reviewed annually.
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