NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2024

Title of Report	REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE POLICIES	
Presented by	Councillor Rushton Corporate Portfolio Holder PH Briefed `X`	
Background Papers	**A&G Agenda and** **Minutes 07/08/2024**	**Public Report:** Yes
		Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	The annual refresh and update of the policies is good practice and will enhance financial management within the Council.	
	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 seek Cabinet's comments on and approval of the Council's updated corporate governance policies, following review and approval by the Audit and Governance Committee.	
Reason for Decision	To ensure that the Council has an up to date suite of governance policies in place reflecting the law and best practice.	
Recommendations	**THAT CABINET:** 1. **APPROVES THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE POLICIES LISTED IN PARAGRAPH 2 OF THE REPORT.**	

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.

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.

All policy authors have completed an EIA for each policy as part of their review.

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 this 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:	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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