

# The Governance, Audit & Scrutiny Committee

## 7.1 Terms of Reference

7.1.1 The Council will appoint the Governance, Audit & Scrutiny Committee set out below to discharge the functions conferred by section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

## 7.2 Specific functions

### *Audit*

7.2.1 The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee will act as the Audit Committee and will approve the Annual Statement of Accounts. It will also carry out the following:

- Monitor and review the Council's Governance arrangements, including the annual Governance Statement and Local Code of Governance;
- Monitor the use (if any) of the Council's powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA); and
- To formally review the Council's RIPA policy.

### *Governance*

7.2.2 The Governance Audit and Scrutiny Committee will promote ethical standards within the Council by:

- Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members;
- Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Councillor Code of Conduct;
- Advising and training councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to ethical governance;
- Receive reports from the Monitoring Officer on any matter relating to ethical standards within the Council; and
- Granting dispensations to District Councillors from requirements relating to disclosable pecuniary interests as set out in the Code of Conduct and as stated in Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

7.2.3 A Governance Sub-Committee will be required from time to time to deal with complaints against councillors and any breaches of the adopted Code of Conduct. The Sub-Committee will consist of 3 Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee members.

### *Scrutiny*

7.2.4 The Governance, Audit & Scrutiny Committee may:

- (i) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Cabinet and/or committees and Council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
- (ii) review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
- (iii) question members of the Cabinet and/or committees and chief officers about their decisions and performance;
- (iv) make recommendations to the Cabinet and/or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- (v) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee and local people about their activities and performance; and
- (vi) exercise the right to call-in decisions made but not yet implemented by the Cabinet and to recommend that the decision be reconsidered.

### *Policy development and review*

#### 7.2.5 The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee may:

- (i) assist the Council and the Cabinet in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues;
- (ii) conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
- (iii) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
- (iv) question members of the Cabinet and/or committees and chief officers about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area; and
- (v) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.

### **7.3 How the Committee operates:**

7.3.1 The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee shall consist of 14 councillors, one of whom shall be appointed annually by the Leader of the Council to be the Chairman.

- 7.3.2 The committee shall be quorate where 7 councillors are present.
- 7.3.3 The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee will report annually to full Council on its workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.
- 7.3.4 The Chairman shall receive prospective agenda items and it will be for the Chairman to determine the reasonable timescale in which those items can be considered by the Committee.