

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
<b>Relevant Members:</b>	Councillor Paul Galley, Chair of the Audit Committee Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	29 September 2021

## CODE OF GOVERNANCE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the Audit Committee’s recommendation that Council adopts the local Code of Governance and that this forms part of the Council’s Constitution.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To adopt the attached Code of Governance and that it forms part of the Council’s Constitution.

2.2 To agree that the Audit Committee be authorised to update the ‘Blackpool Governance Framework’ section at the end of the Code (specifically the supporting evidence for each of the thematic strands) each year when it produces the Annual Governance Statement, but that any changes to the content of the Code be referred to full Council (not including changes in legislation or decisions made from time to time by or on behalf of the authority).

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Annual Governance Statement action plan agreed by the Audit Committee in November 2020 identified that in terms of good practice the adoption of a local Code of Governance was recommended. The mechanics of the code were already in place as the Council utilised the principles in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Delivering Good Governance publication (2016) when undertaking its Annual Governance Statement Self-Assessment, the adoption of a code with that at its heart would clearly evidence how governance is monitored in Blackpool.

3.2 A draft Code of Governance was subsequently presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting on 29 April 2021 who resolved to recommend to Council the adoption of the proposed Code. This is the first ordinary Council meeting since that date.

3.3 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.4 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

**4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:**

4.1 An amended version of the attached Code, although it should reflect the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Delivering Good Governance publication (2016).

**5.0 Council priority:**

5.1 The proposed Code of Governance is relevant to all Council priorities.

**6.0 Background information**

6.1 Blackpool Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards. It needs to ensure that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

6.2 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Delivering Good Governance publication (2016) defines the various principles of good governance in the public sector and how they relate to each other and are defined as:

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law.
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
- Developing the Council's capacity, including its leadership and the individuals within it.
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

6.3 The governance framework at Blackpool Council comprises the systems and processes, culture and values which the Council has adopted in order to deliver on the above principles. These principles have been used in recent years to compile the Annual Governance Statement and form the heart of the proposed Code of Governance. The Blackpool approach has taken the form of using 16 thematic strands to document its assessment against the principles. This has been informally recognised as the 'Blackpool Governance Framework' and

is appended to the end of the Code. In the boxes underneath the thematic headings, there are examples of supporting evidence which were identified when the last review of the Annual Governance Statement was undertaken and considered by the Audit Committee last November. This supporting evidence will be updated by the Audit Committee each year when it produces the Annual Governance Statement, although any changes to the content of the Code will be referred to full Council.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 7a – proposed Code of Governance.

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 There are no specific financial considerations in the report although financial management is a key strand of the proposed Governance Framework.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 There is no legal requirement to have a local Code of Governance but it is recognised as good practice and will evidence and help state the Council's Governance Framework.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 Risk management and the control environment are key components of the proposed Code of Governance and accompanying Governance Framework.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 Ethical and responsible governance is a thematic area contained in the framework and the recognition of the climate change emergency is also referenced in the narrative.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 In October 2016 a Good Governance Group was formed at the Council. One of the roles of the group is to prepare the Annual Governance Statement and oversee the delivery of the identified actions. This is chaired by the Director of Governance and Partnerships. A Sub Group of this group has been consulted on this proposed code. Consultation has also taken place with the Council's Corporate Leadership Team, the Leader and Deputy Leader of the

Council and the Audit Committee.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.