



SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (FROM 1ST JULY 2012)

GENERAL

- a. This Committee is a committee of the Council appointed by the Council under the Local Government Act 1972
- b. Certain functions are delegated by this Committee to Officers. Full details may be found in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution
- c. Where a function or matter within the Committee's competence has been delegated to an officer, the Committee may exercise that function/matter concurrently with the officer to whom it has been delegated.
- d. The exercise of any function or matter within the Committee's competence is always subject to any relevant requirement of the Council's Constitution including any Special Procedure and Protocol drawn up and approved by the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services in pursuance of Council Procedure Rule 26.2.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Standards, ethics and probity

1. To lead on the Council's duties under Chapter 7 Localism Act 2011 and to design, implement, monitor, approve and review the standards of ethics and probity of the Council, both for Councillors and employees. The Committee's powers shall include responding to consultation documents and the promulgation of Codes of Conduct but the adoption and revisions to the local Members Code of Conduct shall be reserved to the Council.
2. To promote a culture of openness, ready accountability and probity in order to ensure the highest standards of conduct of Councillors and employees.
3. To lead on all aspects of Corporate Governance by promoting the values of putting people first, valuing public service and creating a norm of the highest standards of personal conduct.
4. To oversee and manage programmes of guidance, advice and training on ethics, standards and probity for Councillors and employees and on the Members Code of Conduct.
5. To be responsible for the Council's register of Members' interests and to receive reports from the Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services on the operation of the register from time to time.
6. To be responsible for written guidance and advice on the operation of the system of declarations of Members' Interests and to receive reports from the Monitoring Officer on the operation of the system of declarations from time to time.
7. To establish, monitor, approve and issue advice and guidance to Councillors on a system of dispensations to speak on, or participate in, matters in which they have interests and give dispensation in appropriate cases.

8. To exercise the functions of the Council in relation to the ethical framework, corporate governance and standards of conduct of Joint Committees and other bodies.
9. To establish a Standards Sub-Committee to investigate and determine appropriate action in respect of alleged breaches of the Members Code of Conduct.
10. To support the Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer in their statutory roles and the issuing of guidance on them from time to time.
11. To receive regular reports on the performance of the Corporate Complaints process, Local Government Ombudsman referrals, Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance and to recommend revisions to related policies and procedures as appropriate.

Audit role

12. To provide independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control and reporting environment, including (but not limited to) the reliability of the financial reporting process and the annual governance statement.
13. To be satisfied and provide assurance that appropriate action is being taken on risk and internal control related issues identified by the internal and external auditors and other review and inspection bodies.
14. To receive, and make recommendations on, such reports as are required in relation to all audit matters including the Annual Audit Plan.
15. The Committee shall specifically have responsibility for oversight of and provision of assurance on the following functions:
 - ensuring that Council assets are safeguarded;
 - maintaining proper accounting records;
 - ensuring the independence, objectivity and effectiveness of internal and external audit;
 - the arrangements made for cooperation between internal and external audit and other review bodies;
 - considering the reports of internal and external audit and other review and inspection bodies;
 - the scope and effectiveness of the internal control systems established by management to identify, assess, manage and monitor financial and nonfinancial risks (including measures to protect against, detect and respond to fraud).