



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Item 17/34

MEETING	Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority
DATE OF MEETING	27 June 2017
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Policy amendments
STATUS OF REPORT	Open publication
PURPOSE OF REPORT	To approve amendments to the Corporate Governance and Health and Safety policies
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	As Members are aware, the Authority has previously agreed a number of key policies covering key areas of responsibilities expected of it. This report outlines suggested policy amendments to both the Corporate Governance and Health and Safety policies.
RISK ASSESSMENT	Failure to ensure that policies are regularly reviewed and aligned to new or emerging expectations may undermine the wider governance arrangements of the Authority.
COMMUNITY IMPACT	None for the purpose of this report
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	None with this report
RECOMMENDATIONS	It is recommended that Members: 1. Consider and approve the amended Corporate Governance and Health and Safety policies.
APPENDICES	A: Proposed Corporate Governance policy B: Proposed Health and Safety Policy
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (CIPFA/SOLACE, 2016)
REPORT ORIGINATOR	Derek James, Director of Corporate Services Email derek.james@dwfire.org.uk Tel 01722 691072

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of the combination process, the shadow Authority agreed a number of policies covering the key areas of responsibilities and expectations placed upon it. Amongst these, are the Corporate Governance policy and Health and Safety policy. In response to changing circumstances and improvement recommendations, Officers have proposed amendments to these particular policies. This paper sets out the rationale and benefits of making these changes.

2. Corporate governance Policy

- 2.1 As Members would support, good governance is crucial as it supports the delivery of effective leadership/management, robust performance management arrangement, sound stewardship of public money, purposeful public engagement and ultimately good outcomes for communities.
- 2.2 Previously the Authority has adopted a Code of Corporate Governance based upon the CIPFA/ SOLACE¹ document entitled 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework' issued in 2007. At the end of April 2016, a revised Framework was published together with guidance notes for English Authorities including Fire and Rescue Authorities. The revised framework contains a number of key changes to the six core principles previously used to determine the Authority's governance arrangements. There are now seven principles within the 2016 framework. A summary of these changes is set out below in table 1:

2007 principles	2016 principles
Focusing on the purposes of the Authority and on outcomes for communities and creating and implementing a vision	Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law
Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles	Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
Promoting values for the Authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour	Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk	Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective	Developing the Authorities capacity, including the capability of its leadership and individuals within it
Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability	Managing risks and performance through robust internal controls and strong public finance management

¹ Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE)

Implement good practice in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability	
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Table 1: Changes to the principles in the code of governance

2.3 Following an update to this framework it is necessary to review and amend the Authority's Corporate Governance policy and its associated Local Code of Corporate Governance to ensure it reflects the new requirements. Contained within the detailed guidance notes which accompanies the revised framework are sub criteria for each of the seven core principles designed to assist authorities in:

- developing and reviewing governance arrangements
- developing and updating their own local codes of governance
- demonstrating compliance with principles of good governance

2.4 Officers are currently developing the local code of corporate governance in line with this guidance. This will be considered alongside the Statement of Assurance and the Annual Governance Statement required under the Fire and Rescue national framework 2012 and the financial regulations 2016 respectively. These documents will be tabled at Finance, Governance and Audit meeting in September along with the financial statement of accounts.

3. **Health and safety policy**

3.1 During 2016 auditors associated with our compliance requirements for maintaining the British Standard Occupational Health and Safety Assessment 18001, in the geographical area previously served by the former Dorset Fire Authority, visited². As part of their findings, they suggested that we may wish to further simplify our policy.

3.2 In addition to considering this and, as Members may be aware, during the past few months Officers have refined and strengthened the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE). The KLOEs pose specific questions against which performance is appraised using performance indicators and commentary provided by senior officers. To ensure that the current performance position is well understood, each KLOE has a baseline assessment against three levels – *Developing, Established and Advanced*. Progression to the next level within these categories is indicated in the Service delivery plan that underpins the Community Safety Plan.

3.3 We have aligned the statements within the revised Health and Safety policy to the KLOEs and their associated baseline assessment. This will help to provide both a mechanism to continuously assess our performance in the area of health and safety and reduce the administration associated with developing an assurance statement required under the BSI standard. This arrangement coupled with the

² It should be noted that the Authority is seeking to secure BSI 18001 across all parts of the new Service by 2019

more detailed technical assurances secured by the Health, safety and welfare committee will help to ensure sound management practices in this important area.

4. **Summary and key points**

- 4.1 The Authority has a sound set of policies to underpin its governance arrangements. In response to changing frameworks and positive suggestions by specialist auditors, policy amendments are proposed to the Corporate Governance Policy and the Health and Safety Policy. These changes maintain the currency and effectiveness of our overall governance and assurance arrangements. These policy amendments will also support both the Statement of Assurance and Annual Governance Statement will be considered by the Finance, Governance and Audit Committee at its meeting in September.

Derek James

Director of Corporate Services

June 2017