

WARWICKSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Introduction

1.1 Governance is about how police authorities ensure that they are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open and accountable manner. It comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which organisations are directed and controlled, and through which they account to, engage with and, where appropriate, lead their communities.

1.2 This Code of Corporate Governance describes how Warwickshire Police Authority discharges its responsibilities in this respect, and particularly its two overarching statutory responsibilities:

- To secure an efficient and effective local police service;
- To hold to account the Chief Constable of Warwickshire Police Force for the exercise of his functions and those of persons under his direction and control.

The Chief Constable has a statutory responsibility for the control, direction and delivery of operational policing services.

1.3 The CIPFA/SOLACE Framework *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* sets out six core principles on which effective governance should be built:

- Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area
- Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles
- Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour
- Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk
- Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective
- Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

1.4 To achieve this a framework has been formulated locally which ensures that these principles are fully integrated in the conduct of the authority's business as well as establishing a means of demonstrating compliance.

1.5 The authority can also demonstrate that the systems and processes in place are:

- Monitored for their effectiveness in practice
- Subject to annual review to ensure they remain up to date

The Code of Corporate Governance

2.1 The authority has developed a Code of Corporate Governance which incorporates the core good governance principles, develops these in a local context, and sets out the arrangements for reviewing their effectiveness.

2.2 The way in which each of the core principles of good governance is put into practice by the authority is set out below:

2.2.1 The authority aims to focus on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community to create and implement a vision for the local area.

To achieve this the authority will:

- Ensure that partnerships are underpinned by a common vision of their work that is understood and agreed by all parties
- Decide how the quality of service for users is to be measured and make sure that the information needed to review service quality effectively and regularly is available.
- Ensure that the vision and priorities are developed through robust mechanisms underpinned by informed consultation, are a basis for corporate and service planning, and link to local area or performance agreements.
- Communicate the authority's activities and achievements, financial position and performance.

2.2.2 The authority aims to ensure members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

To achieve this the authority will:

- Set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the authority and its members individually and the authority's approach towards putting this into practice
- Determine a scheme of delegation and reserve powers within the constitution, including a formal schedule of those matters specifically reserved for collective decision of the authority taking account of relevant legislation and ensure that it is monitored and updated when required.
- Maintain protocols to ensure effective communication between officers and members.
- Ensure clarity of the legal status of partnerships and the roles and responsibilities of members and officers both collectively and individually in relation to the partnership and the authority.

2.2.3 The authority aims to promote the values of the authority and demonstrate the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

To achieve this the authority will:

- Ensure that the authority's leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect
- Put in place arrangements to ensure that systems and processes are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards, and monitor their continuing effectiveness in practice.
- Ensure that standards of behaviour and personal conduct are defined and communicated through codes of conduct and protocols, and are monitored by an effective standards committee.
- Ensure that equalities issues are incorporated into planning, consultation and service delivery processes.

2.2.4 The authority aims to take informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and risk management arrangements.

To achieve this the authority will:

- Develop and maintain effective arrangements to challenge and scrutinise force performance and compliance with other requirements
- Ensure that effective, transparent and accessible arrangements are in place for dealing with complaints.
- Maintain open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based.
- Maintain an effective audit committee.
- Ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the organisation.

2.2.5 The authority aims to develop the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective in their roles.

To achieve this the authority will:

- Assess the skills required by members and officers and make a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively.
- Ensure that statutory officers have the resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles.
- Maintain effective arrangements for reviewing performance of the organisation as a whole and of individual members and officers.
- Ensure that effective arrangements are in place to encourage individuals from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the authority.

2.2.6 The authority aims to engage with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

To achieve this the authority will:

- Make clear to themselves, all staff, the community and stakeholders, what they are accountable for and to whom
- Ensure arrangements are in place to enable the authority to engage with all sections of the community effectively. These arrangements should recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish explicit processes for dealing with these competing demands.
- Publish annual plans and achievement reports in a timely fashion.
- Ensure the authority is open and accessible to the community and to service users.

Arrangements for Review of Governance

3.1 The authority has put in place the following arrangements to review the effectiveness of the Code of Corporate Governance:

- Each year, the Police Authority will review governance arrangements to ensure compliance with this Code and will consider whether changes to the Code need to be made to reflect best practice and changing circumstances. The review will provide assurance that governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively and will identify actions required to improve effective governance.
- The Police Authority will report annually on the outcome. In this task, the Authority will be assisted by reports and advice from the Standards Committee, Monitoring Officer, Treasurer, legal advisors, internal audit, the police force, officers of the Authority, external audit and HMIC.
- An annual governance statement will be prepared as an outcome of the review.
- An action plan with timed actions and clear monitoring and reporting requirements will be produced in relation to any areas of governance requiring further development. The action plan will be reviewed on a regular basis.