

## **Audit and Governance Committee**

11<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Report of the Director of Customer & Business Support Services  
(Portfolio of the Leader of the Council)

### **Update on implementation of revised Transparency Code**

#### **Summary**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on progress on the implementation of the revised Local Government Transparency Code.

#### **Background**

- 2 In January 2011, the Council began to publish data on spend and salaries in order to meet the requirements of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) as part of its efforts to improve local transparency and accountability across Whitehall and local government.
- 3 In April 2014, officers brought a report to the Audit & Governance Committee to advise them of a consultation being carried out by the DCLG proposing to make it mandatory for all Local Authorities to publish additional new transparency information;
- 4 Following this consultation, DCLG issued a revised Local Government Transparency Code in October 2014 which set out details of the information which must be published by all Local Authorities by 2 February 2015.

#### **Analysis**

- 5 The revised Code included some new information the Council was required to publish including;
  - details of Trade Union facility time
  - grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations

- income and expenditure relating to parking, including details of how any surplus on the account has been spent
  - information on fraud investigations
  - details of waste collection contracts
  - Procurement Card Expenditure
- 6 As well as these entirely new requirements, a number of existing obligations were increased with extra information that needed to be published.
- 7 The Council already exceeds the requirements in many areas. For example, all spend information is published on a monthly basis despite the requirement being that only spend over £500 is published on a quarterly basis. In other areas, some of the required information was already published but not necessarily in the format now required.
- 8 All of the new requirements of the Code have now been met and links to the information can be found on the Council's Transparency page.
- 9 The Council will keep the Transparency web page under review and continue to make improvements and add additional information beyond the minimum requirements set out in the Transparency code where possible.

### **Consultation**

- 10 Not relevant for the purposes of this report

### **Options**

- 11 Not relevant for the purpose of the report.

### **Corporate Priorities**

- 12 This report contributes to the council's overall aims and priorities by helping to ensure probity, integrity and honesty in everything it does and the corporate objective of making the Council an effective organisation.

## Implications

13 The implications are;

- (a) **Financial** – There are no specific financial implications
- (b) **Human Resources (HR)** – there are implications in terms of the increasing staff resource required to prepare the information in the appropriate format. Wherever possible information is being captured directly from the relevant systems to minimise the staff time required to produce the data.
- (c) **Equalities** - there are no specific equalities implications to this report.
- (d) **Legal** - compliance with the Transparency Code is a legal requirement.
- (e) **Crime and Disorder** – there are no crime and disorder implications to this report.
- (f) **Information Technology (IT)** - there are no immediate IT implications to this report. In future, the requirements of the Code will be incorporate into any system replacements.
- (g) **Property** - there are no property implications to this report.

## Risk Management Assessment

14 There would be risks to the Council if it failed to comply with the Transparency Code. These risks are managed by regular monitoring and reporting.

## Recommendation

15 Members are asked to note the progress made in ensuring compliance with the revised Transparency Code.

### Reason

*To provide assurance to members that the Council is meeting the legal requirements of the Transparency Code.*

## Contact Details

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Report  
Approved



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## Specialist Implications Officers

Not applicable

### Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

## Background Papers

*DCLG Local Government Transparency Code 2014*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-transparency-code-2014>

## Annexes

None

## Abbreviations

DCLG – Department for Communities and Local Government