



# CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

## HARINGEY STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

### 1. Introduction and background

- (a) Corporate Governance is the system by which organisations are directed and controlled. The Committee on Standards in Public Life (the “Nolan Committee”) concluded that there was a need for comprehensive framework of principles and standards to guide the conduct of councillors & community representatives, local authorities and public bodies such as strategic partnerships.
- (b) The Local Authority Model Code of Conduct issued in 2001 contained national mandatory provisions governing the conduct of Councillors.
- (c) In 2001 CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and SOLACE (the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers), in association with the Local Government Association and the Audit Commission, published a Guidance Note and Framework entitled “Corporate Governance in Local Government – A Keystone for Community Governance”. This defined corporate governance in public bodies as “the system by which public bodies direct and control their functions and relate to their communities.” All public bodies including local strategic partnerships were recommended to draw up a Code of Corporate Governance based on the CIPFA/SOLACE Guidance.
- (d) Since then Local Government and public bodies has been subject to continued reform intended to improve local accountability and engagement. Greater emphasis on effective corporate governance within local strategic partnerships has been incorporated in the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) for the CAA for 2008/9. A revised framework has been issued entitled “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government”. This adapts for local authorities, public bodies and local strategic partnerships the six core principles, from the Nolan Committee, which should underpin the governance arrangements of all public bodies. These are:

- (1) a clear definition of the organisation's purpose and desired outcomes;
  - (2) well-defined functions and responsibilities;
  - (3) an appropriate corporate culture;
  - (4) transparent decision making;
  - (5) a strong governance team; and
  - (6) real accountability to stakeholders.
- (e) Under each of the six core principles there are several supporting principles which exemplify important aspects of the core principles. Each of the supporting principles in turn gives rise to a range of specific practical requirements which should be reflected in a Code of Corporate Governance for the Haringey Strategic Partnership (HSP).
- (f) This Code of Corporate Governance includes ethical and governance standards applicable to all HSP and Theme Board members. It is not intended to interfere with the necessarily distinct roles of each organisation which forms the HSP nor to restrict robust political debate which is an essential part of a healthy local democracy.
- (g) The HSP is committed to the principles of good corporate governance identified in the CIPFA/SOLACE Guidance and confirms its on-going intentions through the adoption and monitoring and development of the HSP's own Code of Corporate Governance. The HSP recognises that achieving high standards of corporate governance will encourage stakeholders to have confidence in us and will allow the HSP Board and Theme Boards to undertake their community leadership role effectively.
- (h) The HSP would identify a lead officer for the Code. The lead officer will be given responsibility for: -
- Overseeing the implementation and monitoring the operation of the Code
  - Reviewing the operation of the Code in practice on an annual basis
  - Reporting annually to the HSP Performance Management Group (PMG) and the HSP Board on compliance with the Code and any changes that may be needed to ensure its effectiveness in practice
  - Reporting any significant revisions of the Code to stakeholders.
- (i) The HSP PMG will make an Annual Statement of Assurance, following the annual report to the HSP giving their position on whether the corporate governance arrangements are operating effectively.

- (j) This document sets out the HSP's Code of Corporate Governance and the processes for monitoring its effectiveness. The Code provides the framework for the HSP to achieve its aims and objectives.
  - (k) It should be noted that all references to "officers" in the Code are those of the participating partner organisations.
  - (l) It should be noted that all references to "Members" in the Code are the representatives nominated and/or appointed by participating partner organisations to the Haringey Strategic Partnership forums i.e. HSP Board, HSP Theme Boards, HSP PMG.
  - (m) The Code of Corporate Governance for Haringey's Strategic Partnership can be found:
    - On the Haringey Strategic Partnership web pages
    - On Partner agencies own intranet and web sites as required
    - By contacting the Head of Local Democracy & Member Services on 020 8489-2623.
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**Core Principle 1:**

**Focussing on the purpose of the Haringey Strategic Partnership, outcomes for the Community and creating and implementing a vision for the area**

- (a) To exercise strategic leadership by developing and communicating clearly the Haringey Strategic Partnership's purpose and vision, and its intended outcomes for citizens and service users, we will:
  - Develop and promote the Haringey Strategic Partnership's purpose and vision
  - Review on a regular basis the Haringey Strategic Partnership's vision for its area and its implications for the Haringey Strategic Partnership's governance arrangements
  - Ensure that partnerships are underpinned by a common vision of their work that is understood and agreed by all partners
  - Publish an annual report on a timely basis to communicate the Haringey Strategic Partnership's activities and achievements and its financial position and performance.

- (b) To ensure that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, or in partnership, or by commissioning, we will:
- Decide how the quality of service for users is to be measured and make sure that the necessary information is available to review service quality effectively and regularly
  - Put in place effective arrangements to identify and deal with failure in service delivery.
- (c) To ensure that the Haringey Strategic Partnership makes the best use of resources and that tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money, we will:
- Decide how value for money is to be measured and make sure that the Haringey Strategic Partnership has the information needed to review value for money and performance effectively
  - Measure the sustainability impact of policies, plans and decisions.

## **Core Principle 2**

**Haringey Strategic Partnership members working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles**

- (a) To ensure effective leadership throughout the Haringey Strategic Partnership and to be clear about the role and functions of the Haringey Strategic Partnership & Theme Boards, the Haringey Strategic Partnership Performance Management Group and engagement with Haringey's scrutiny processes we will:
- Set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Haringey Strategic Partnership, Theme Boards, Haringey Strategic Partnership Performance Management Group and individual members of these bodies including the Haringey Strategic Partnership's approach towards putting this into practice
  - Set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of HSP and Theme Board Members generally and the role of the senior officers assigned to each Theme Board
- (b) To ensure that a constructive working relationship exists between Haringey Strategic Partnership Members and officers and that their respective responsibilities are carried out to a high standard, we will:
- Determine clear terms of reference for the HSP, Theme Boards and HSP PMG and update this as required

- That a lead officer is identified as being responsible and accountable to the Haringey Strategic Partnership for all aspects of operational management
  - Develop Protocols to ensure that HSP & Theme Board Chairs and Haringey Strategic Partnership Performance Management Group members have a shared understanding of their respective roles and objectives
  - That a lead officer is identified as being responsible and accountable to the Haringey Strategic Partnership for ensuring that appropriate financial advice is given and for maintaining proper records and an effective system of internal financial control
  - That a lead officer is identified as being responsible to the Haringey Strategic Partnership for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all legislation is complied with
- (c) To ensure relationships between the Haringey Strategic Partnership, its members and the public are clear so that each knows what to expect of the other, we will:
- Develop Protocols to ensure effective communication between Haringey Strategic Partnership Members and officers in their respective roles
  - Ensure that effective mechanisms exist to monitor service delivery
  - Ensure that the Haringey Strategic Partnership's vision, strategic plans, priorities and targets are developed robustly in consultation with the local communities and key stakeholders and that they are clearly expressed and publicised
  - Ensure that Members working in partnership are clear about their roles and responsibilities, individually and collectively, both to the partnership and to the Haringey Strategic Partnership
  - Ensure that all those working in partnership understand clearly the legal basis of the partnership and the extent of each representative's authority to commit their parent organisation to partnership decisions

### **Core Principle 3**

**Promoting Values for the Haringey Strategic Partnership and demonstrating the values of Good Governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour**

- (a) To ensure Haringey Strategic Partnership and Theme Board Members and officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance, we will:

- Ensure that the Haringey Strategic Partnership's leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect
  - Define and publicise the standards expected in the conduct of Haringey Strategic Partnership and Theme Board Members in the work of the Haringey Strategic Partnership including work with external agencies and the local communities
  - Put in place and maintain in operation arrangements to ensure that Haringey Strategic Partnership and Theme Board Members and officers are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest when dealing with different stakeholders
  - Put in place and maintain in operation arrangements to ensure that Haringey Strategic Partnership and Theme Board Members and officers declare any interest when making commissioning decisions and ensure that these are appropriately recorded.
- (b) To ensure that the Haringey Strategic Partnership's values are put into practice and remain effective, we will:
- Develop and maintain shared values, including leadership values, for both the Haringey Strategic Partnership and its staff which reflect public expectations and communicate these to Members, staff, the community and partners
  - Put in place arrangements to ensure that systems and processes reflect appropriate ethical standards and to monitor their continuing effectiveness in practice
  - Use the Haringey Strategic Partnership's shared values as a guide for decision-making and a basis for developing positive and trusting relationships within the Haringey Strategic Partnership
  - Pursue a partnership vision with an agreed set of values for assessing decision-making and actions which must be demonstrated by the partners' individual and collective behaviour

#### **Core Principle 4**

#### **Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective Overview & Scrutiny and Risk Management**

- (a) To be rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and to listen and act on the outcomes of constructive overview & scrutiny, we will:
- Develop and maintain an effective relationship with Haringey's Overview & Scrutiny function which encourages effective challenge

and which enhances the Haringey Strategic Partnership's performance overall including delivery of LAA targets

- Develop and maintain open and effective mechanisms for documenting the evidence for decisions and for recording the criteria, rationale and considerations behind decisions
  - Put in place arrangements to safeguard Haringey Strategic Partnership and Theme Board Members and staff against conflicts of interest together with appropriate processes to maintain them in practice
  - That an HSP Forum separate of the HSP and Theme Boards maintains an effective overview of audit and governance issues
  - Make sure that effective, transparent and accessible arrangements are in place for dealing with complaints
- (b) To have good quality information, advice and support which ensure that the services wanted and needed by the community are delivered effectively, we will:
- Ensure that decision-makers in the Haringey Strategic Partnership have information that is fit for purpose i.e. relevant, timely and with clear explanations of the technical issues
  - Ensure that proper professional advice, on matters with financial or legal implications, is available, recorded well in advance of decision-making and used appropriately
- (c) To ensure that an effective risk management system is in place, we will:
- Ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the Haringey Strategic Partnership with Members and managers recognising this is part of their respective roles
  - Ensure that effective arrangements for whistle-blowing are in place with access for Members, staff and those contracting with, or appointed by, the Haringey Strategic Partnership
- (d) To use the legal powers of each partner organisation of the HSP to the benefit of citizens and communities in the Borough, we will:
- Recognise the limits of lawful action while striving to use Haringey Strategic Partnership powers for the full benefit of the community
  - Comply with the specific requirements of legislation and the general duties placed on Haringey Strategic Partnership by public law
  - Integrate the key principles of administrative law - rationality, legality and natural justice – into the Haringey Strategic Partnership's procedures and decision-making processes

**Core Principle 5**

**Developing the capacity and capability of Haringey Strategic Partnership Members and Officers to be effective**

- (a) To make sure that Haringey Strategic Partnership Members and officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles, we will:
- Provide induction programmes tailored to individual needs and also opportunities for HSP and Theme Board Members and officers to update their knowledge regularly
  - Ensure that the lead officers have the necessary skills, resources and support to perform effectively
  - Ensure that the roles of the lead officers are properly understood by all in the Haringey Strategic Partnership
- (b) To develop the capability of those with governance responsibilities and to evaluate their performance individually and collectively, we will:
- Assess the skills required by Haringey Strategic Partnership Members and officers and develop those skills to enable their roles to be performed effectively
  - Develop skills on a continuing basis to improve performance including the ability to respond to Overview & Scrutiny and challenge and to recognise when outside expert advice is needed
  - Ensure that effective arrangements are in place for reviewing the performance of the Haringey Strategic Partnership and Theme Boards and for agreeing action plans to address training or development needs
- (c) To encourage new talent for membership of the Haringey Strategic Partnership so best use can be made of individuals' skills and resources in balancing continuity and renewal, we will:
- 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 Haringey Strategic Partnership's work
  - Ensure that career structures are in place for Haringey Strategic Partnership Members and officers to encourage participation and development

## **Core Principle 6**

### **Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability**

- (a) To exercise leadership through engagement with Haringey's Overview & Scrutiny function, local people and all local stakeholders and partnerships and which develops constructive and accountable relationships, we will:
- Make clear to all Haringey Strategic Partnership Members and the community that we are democratically accountable body and that structures are in place to support this
  - Consider those institutional stakeholders to whom the Haringey Strategic Partnership is accountable and assess the effectiveness of the relationships and any changes required
  - Produce an annual report on the activities and performance of the HSP and its Theme Boards
- (b) To take an effective and planned approach to dialogue with, and accountability to, the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery whether directly by the Haringey Strategic Partnership, in partnership or by commissioning, we will:
- Ensure that clear channels of communication are in place with all sections of the community and other stakeholders and put in place monitoring arrangements to ensure that they operate effectively
  - Hold meetings in public unless there are good reasons for confidentiality
  - Ensure that arrangements are in place to enable the Haringey Strategic Partnership to engage with all sections of the community effectively.
  - The above arrangements will recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and will establish processes for dealing with these competing demands
  - Establish a clear policy on the types of issues where we will consult, or engage the public and service users, including a feedback mechanism to demonstrate to consultees what has changed as a result of consultation
  - Publish an annual performance plan with information on the Haringey Strategic Partnership's vision, strategy, plans and financial statements as well as information about its outcomes, achievements and service user satisfaction in the previous year
  - Ensure that the Haringey Strategic Partnership is open and accessible to the community, service users and its own staff and committed to openness and transparency in its dealings including partnerships

subject to the protection of confidentiality where necessary and appropriate

- (c) To make the best use of human resources by taking an active and planned approach to meet the Haringey Strategic Partnership's responsibility to its staff, we will:
- Develop and maintain a clear policy on the means for consulting and involving staff and their representatives in decision-making as appropriate.

Ends.