

**COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL - AUDIT SERVICES REPORT
APPENDIX 1**

**COMPLIANCE WITH THE GOOD GOVERNANCE STANDARD FOR PUBLIC SERVICES IN
2006/07**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council adopted the Good Governance Standard for Public Services on 28 July 2005. The Standard provides a national framework for assessing good governance practice. Full Council, as the governing body, has overall responsibility for implementing the Standard and approved an action plan to improve compliance with the requirements of the Standard. Corporate Team monitors the operation of the Standard, ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place. In addition, internal audit carries out an independent review annually, to provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of corporate governance arrangements and the extent of compliance with the approved Standard.
- 1.2 The scope of the audit covered monitoring compliance with the Standard and reporting on the progress of the action plan.

2.0 KEY FINDINGS

- 2.1 Detailed comments are given in Appendix A, which shows the full Good Governance Standard for Public Services and how this is being applied. Appendix B shows any new actions required.
- 2.2 We found that the Code was generally effective and being complied with.
- 2.3 A number of items had been progressed since the previous year. These included: -
- approving a revised Corporate Plan
 - reviewing the Constitution
 - approving revised Financial Regulations
 - implementing a training plan for Members and maintaining training records for each Member
 - approving job profiles for Members
 - updating Audit Commission pro formas on Direction of Travel, Value for Money and the Use of Resources to evaluate performance
 - introducing computerized performance management software
 - implementing a corporate management training programme
 - implementing a programme of work by the Process Improvement Team
 - approving the Communications Strategy
 - approving a Partnership Protocol
 - regularly updating operational risk registers
 - the monitoring officer presenting a formal review of risks to Corporate Team
 - carrying out some independent spot checks of performance data
 - approving revised guidance for Members appointed to Outside Bodies
 - developing an Equality and Diversity action plan

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- carrying out training for Members and Management on Equality and Diversity
 - developing an Ethical Governance Framework
 - approving a Procurement Strategy
 - considering a review of Members Allowances
- 2.4 A number of actions were still outstanding from the 2005/06 Corporate Governance action plan. These related to: -
- Linking performance to budgets within Service Plans and Performance Monitoring reports [progressing this through 2007/08 Service Plans and the Covalent performance monitoring system]
 - Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviewing the effectiveness of the organisational restructure implemented in 2005
 - Making all job profiles available on the intranet
 - Opening a debate on innovative, possibly unconventional, ways of working for Members, which might open up membership to a broader range of candidates.
 - Reviewing membership and attendance at Joint Neighbourhood Forums
 - Organising systematic 360 degree feedback from a sample of stakeholders
- 2.5 Progress on these outstanding issues is monitored quarterly.
- 2.6 It should be noted that, in 2006, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) issued a consultation draft – “Good Governance in Local Government: A Framework”. As at 17 April 2007, the Framework was being amended and new guidance notes were still to be issued. Once this is issued, the Council will need to consider whether revisions are needed to the existing Standard.
- 3.0 **CONCLUSION**
- 3.1 Overall the Council’s corporate governance arrangements are in line with the Good Governance Standard for Public Services and the Standard is being complied with.
- 3.2 Continued progress has been made in developing and updating the arrangements and actions have been identified to address the outstanding issues.

Marilyn Robinson

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Audit Services Manager

25 May 2007

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