Public Document Pack

Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board

Monday, 13th July, 2026
at 2.30 pm
Hosted by Southampton City Council in
Conference Room 3 and 4 - Civic Centre
Civic Centre Rd, Southampton SO14 7LY

Agenda

Item	Description	Page
1	**Appointment of Members**	(1 - 4)
	To receive appointments from each Constituent Council to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority.	
2	**Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair**	(5 - 6)
	To appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board for the ensuing year.	
3	**Apologies for Absence**	
	To receive any apologies for absence.	
4	**Declarations of Interest**	
	To receive declarations by members of any disclosable pecuniary interests, personal interests, other registrable interests or any other interests in respect of items on the agenda.	
5	**Exclusion of Press and Public**	
	To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the	

	meeting during consideration of any item on the agenda.	
6	**Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Governance Arrangements**	(7 - 398)
	To approve the following documents: • Constitution of the Authority • Local Assurance Framework • Initial Policies To delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, to: • set up the Independent Remuneration Panel • recruit the Independent Persons • recruit the independent member of the Audit and Governance Committee To delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, to recruit the independent person to Chair of the Business Advisory Board.	
7	**Establishment of Regulatory Committees, Composition and Political Proportionality**	(399 - 404)
	To establish the Regulatory Committees, agree their composition and their political proportionality.	
8	**Appointment of Statutory Officers**	(405 - 410)
	To confirm the appointment of fixed term, interim and future permanent statutory officer appointments to ensure that the Authority has the legally required officers in place to operate effectively and within the law.	
9	**Budget 2026-27**	(411 - 428)
	To approve the Authority's financial plan for the immediate future.	
10	**Responding to the Young People and Work Report**	(429 - 436)
	A discussion on the findings of the report and exploration of next steps for the region.	
11	**Calendar of Meetings**	(437 - 440)
	To confirm the schedule of meetings.	

Information

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Meeting:			**Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board**
Date:			13 July 2026
Report Title:			**Appointment of Members to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board**
Chief Officer:			Susan Zeiss, Interim Monitoring Officer
Key decision:			No
Exempt Report:	YES ☐	NO ☒	
Voting arrangements:			The Board will work to progress decisions via consensus, if a vote is required then it is by simple majority.
Recommendation(s): The authority is recommended to;			
A			Note the Members of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority appointed by each Constituent Council as set out in paragraph 3.2.1

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to receive the appointments to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) Board by the Constituent Councils of Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council and the Isle of Wight Council as required under the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 (the HSCCA Regulations).

2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report presents the formal appointments made to date by the Councils of Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council and the Isle of Wight Council to the HSCCA Board as required under the HSCCA Regulations 2026.

2.2 Each Constituent Council has or is in the process of completing its internal democratic processes to confirm its nominated members. By receiving and recording these appointments, the Authority can move forward with its initial decision-making, governance, and operational responsibilities.

2.3 The appointment of members provides the foundation for effective joint working, ensures the Authority is properly constituted from its inception, can hold meetings lawfully, and begin delivering its functions.

3 Main Discussion

3.1 <u>Appointments to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority</u>

3.1.1 The HSCCA came into being on 4 June 2026. The HSCCA Regulations 2026 sets out the requirements for membership of the HSCCA Boad in its Schedule titled Constitution.

3.1.2 The Schedule to the Regulations states the following in Part 1. Membership:

- Each constituent council must appoint one of its elected members to be a member of the Combined County Authority.
- Hampshire County Council must appoint one further elected member to be a member of the Combined County Authority

3.2 Appointments by the Constituent Councils

3.2.1 The following appointments have been made to the Combined County Authority:

Constituent Authority	Lead Appointment	Appointment
Hampshire County Council	Councillor Nick Adams-King	Councillor George Madgwick
Southampton City Council	Councillor Sarah Bogle	N/A
Portsmouth City Council	Councillor Steve Pitt	N/A
Isle of Wight Council	Councillor Jonathan Bacon	N/A

3.2.2 The Board is asked to receive these appointments.

3.2.3 Under Schedule 1 of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 and the Articles in the HSCCA constitution, the Authority is required to appoint a named substitute member for each member of the Board. These appointments will be brought to the next meeting of the Board for approval.

4 Partnership & Engagement

4.1 The process for confirming appointments to the HSCCA has been shaped by close collaboration between the Constituent Councils and the programme governance arrangements supporting the establishment of the new Authority.

4.2 Engagement has taken place through regular programme-level coordination meetings, supported by the Governance and Assurance workstream, which has provided advice, clarification, and consistency throughout the appointment process.

5 Appendices

5.1 None

Board is required to consider the following identified implications;

6 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations contained within the report.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 This report complies with the provisions set out in The Hampshire and the Solent Combine County Authority Regulations 2026

8 Equality & Diversity Implications

8.1 There are no negative equality or diversity implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

9 Other Significant Implications

Risk	☐	Assurance Framework	☒	Procurement	☐
Improvement	☐	Environment	☐	HR & IT	☐

Meeting:			**Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board**
Date:			13 July 2026
Report Title:			**Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board**
Chief Officer:			Susan Zeiss, Interim Monitoring Officer
Key decision:			No
Exempt Report:	YES ☐	NO ☒	
Voting arrangements:			The Board will work to progress decisions via consensus, if a vote is required then it is by simple majority.
Recommendation(s): The authority is recommended to;			
A			Appoint Councillor Nick Adams-King (lead appointment of Hampshire County Council) as the Chair of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority
B			Appoint Councillor Jonathan Bacon (lead appointment of Isle of Wight Council) as Vice-Chair of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) as required under the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 (HSCCA Regulations).

2 Executive Summary

2.1 The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 states that before the election of the Mayor, the Combined County Authority must appoint a Chair and a Vice-Chair from amongst its members and these appointments are to be the first business transacted after the appointment of members of the Combined County Authority, at the first meeting of the Combined County Authority. This report sets out the proposed appointments to the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair of the HSCCA.

3. Main Discussion

3.1 The Regulations require the Authority to appoint a Chair and at least one Vice-Chair from among its members at its first formal meeting, prior to the election of the Mayor.

3.2 Following engagement with the Constituent Councils, formal nominations have been brought forward for these key leadership roles.

The recommended appointments are:

- Councillor Nick Adams-King as Chair
- Councillor Jonathan Bacon as Vice-Chair

3.3 These appointments form a critical early step in establishing the governance and leadership arrangements of the new Authority, ensuring that it is properly constituted and able to discharge its statutory and strategic responsibilities from inception. The Chair and Vice-Chair will play a central role in guiding the Authority's early decision making, shaping its programme of work, and representing the organisation within the region and at a national level.

4 Partnership & Engagement

4.1 The process for confirming appointments to the HSCCA has been shaped by close collaboration between the Constituent Councils and the programme governance arrangements supporting the establishment of the new Authority.

4.2 Engagement has taken place through regular programme-level coordination meetings, supported by the Governance and Assurance workstream, which has provided advice, clarification, and consistency throughout the appointment process.

5 Appendices

5.1 None

Board is required to consider the following identified implications;

6 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendation in the report.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 states the following:

A person ceases to be Chair or Vice-Chair of the Combined County Authority if they cease to be a member of the Combined County Authority

8 Equality & Diversity Implications

8.1 There are no known negative equality or diversity implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

9 Other Significant Implications

Risk	☐	Assurance Framework	☐	Procurement	☐
Improvement	☐	Environment	☐	HR & IT	☐

Meeting:			**Hampshire and Solent Combined County Authority Board**
Date:			13 July 2026
Report Title:			**Governance Arrangements**
Chief Officer:			Susan Zeiss, Interim Monitoring Officer
Key decision:			No
Exempt Report:	YES ☐	NO ☒	
Voting arrangements:			The Board will work to progress decisions via consensus, if a vote is required then it is by simple majority.

Recommendation(s): The Board is recommended to;	
A	Approve and adopt the Constitution at Appendix A as the Constitution of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA).
B	Approve the Local Assurance Framework at Appendix B.
C	Designate the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association as the Nominating Body for the two initial Non-Constituent Members of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board and delegate authority to the Chief Executive to write to the Nominating Body and seek their consent to the nomination.
D	Approve the Policies of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority listed in paragraph 3.4 of this Report.
E	Delegate to the Interim Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair and the Vice Chair, the authority to: 1. Establish and convene an independent remuneration panel, including agreeing the terms of reference and reasonable allowances for that panel, so that the independent remuneration panel can, at the earliest opportunity, undertake a review and make recommendations regarding a scheme of allowances for the Combined County Authority to consider at a future meeting of this Board. 2. Advertise and make recommendations to a future meeting of this Board for the appointment of the independent member on the Audit and Governance Committee, having first consulted with the Chair and Vice Chair about the recruitment and interview processes to be followed. 3. Advertise and make recommendations to a future meeting of this Board for the appointment of two Independent Persons for standards under S28 of the Localism Act 2011, having first consulted with the Chair and Vice Chair about the recruitment and interview processes to be followed. 4. To take such steps (in consultation with the Chief Executive, Interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) and Chair of the Board) including entering into any agreements with the Constituent Councils as may be required to

	ensure that the HSCCA can compliantly operate economically, efficiently, and effectively.
F	Delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, establishing the process to be followed for the authority to commence the recruitment process for the Independent Chair of the Business Advisory Board and make recommendations for appointment at a future meeting of this Board.

1. Purpose

1.1 This report sets out recommendations for decisions on procedural and governance matters that are required at the first meeting of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) Board. It seeks approval for the key governance documents needed to enable the HSCCA to operate effectively from its inception and meet its legal, financial and governance obligations from the outset.

1.2 In addition, the report asks the HSCCA Board to designate a Nominating Body as provided for in s11 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

1.3 The report also asks the Board to make certain delegations to the Interim Monitoring Officer and the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair and Board.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report presents a number of core documents for approval:

- The draft initial Constitution
- The initial Local Assurance Framework
- The policies listed in paragraph 3.4 below

2.2 Together, these documents explain how the HSCCA will make decisions, demonstrate transparency, manage risk, and ensure accountability in line with expected public standards. They provide the legal, governance, and decision-making foundations the Authority needs. Without them, the Authority would not have the statutory framework, processes, or assurance arrangements required to make decisions, manage resources, or discharge its responsibilities.

2.3 The HSCCA Board is required to designate a Nominating Body as provided for in s11 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA 2023) to nominate a representative/s as non-constituent members of the HSCCA Board and agree the Non-Constituent members put forward by that Body.

2.4 The Board are asked to delegate to the Interim Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive, the ability to put in place processes for the recruitment of the required independent roles for remuneration, audit, governance, and standards, establishing an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) and beginning recruitment processes for Independent

Persons who will support the Audit & Governance Committee and the Authority's standards arrangements.

3 Main Discussion

3.1 The Constitution

3.1.1 The Constitution sets out how the Combined County Authority will operate. It brings together the key rules, procedures, and decision-making arrangements that guide how the organisation conducts its business. In simple terms, it explains who can make which decisions, how meetings will work, how transparency will be maintained, and the standards the HSCCA must follow in carrying out its duties.

3.1.2 The draft Constitution has been developed using recognised best practice from across local government and from existing combined authorities. The approach has been to ensure the document is clear, consistent, and aligned with statutory requirements, while remaining practical for day today use. The drafting has also been informed by engagement with Monitoring Officers from the constituent councils. Their input has helped ensure the Constitution reflects local needs, supports effective joint working, and provides an appropriate governance framework for the early stages of operation.

3.1.3 The Constitution describe the powers the HSCCA must have to be legally established and begin operating and also recognises the powers the Combined County Authority will have once a mayor is in place following the first mayoral election in May 2028. A Mayor brings additional, directly conferred functions, often including leadership of the strategic vision, chairing of the authority, certain transport and housing powers, and decision-making responsibilities that differ from those held by a non-mayoral Combined Authority.

3.1.4 The constitution is a "living document" however and there will be areas which the Authority may wish to amend once it has been tested in practical usage.

3.2 The Local Assurance Framework

3.2.1 The Local Assurance Framework (LAF) sets out how the Strategic Authority will manage public money, make investment decisions, and ensure strong standards of transparency, accountability, and value for money. It has been developed using national guidance. It provides the operational arrangements required along with the checks and balances used to give government, partners, and the public confidence that decisions are made in a clear, consistent and well governed way and that funding is used responsibly.

3.2.2 The Local Assurance Framework will be reviewed annually; it will be agreed in draft by the HSCCA Board before submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and

Local Government (MHCLG) who will co-ordinate reviews with other departments as appropriate. The framework may be amended and re-published before the annual review date if improvements are needed, or significant changes are made to the HSCCA or its governance and assurance structures and processes, or if new guidance is received from the Government.

3.3 Non-Constituent Members

3.3.1 The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 provide that the HSCCA may appoint up to five non-constituent or associate members.

3.3.2 The HSCCA must designate one or more Nominating Bodies for the purpose of nominating any non-constituent member/s and that Nominating Body must consent to the nomination.

3.3.3 Non-constituent members do not have the right to vote unless this had been expressly agreed by resolution of the HSCCA Board.

3.4 Policies

3.4.1 The HSCCA will over time develop its policies and procedures. The first tranche of policies are attached to this report for approval at Appendix C, with the exception of the Whistleblowing Policy which is incorporated within the constitution.

- Data Protection Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Privacy Notice
- Counter-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy
- Anti-Money Laundering Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Complaints Policy

These policies are essential for the proper functioning of the Authority from its inception.

3.4.2 A Treasury Management Policy and Pay Policy will be brought to a future meeting of the Board, setting out the organisation's approach to governance, accountability, risk management, controls, decision-making and oversight in relation to treasury and remuneration activities.

3.5 Independent Remuneration Panel

3.5.1 The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 establish the statutory framework for the remuneration of Members and the payment of allowances; it provides the authority for the Board to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to determine recommendations for its Member Allowances Scheme.

3.5.2 The regulations state that no remuneration or allowances are to be payable by the Strategic Authority to its members, other than allowances for travel and subsistence paid in accordance with a scheme approved by the Strategic Authority. It also states that an allowance is only payable to:

- Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Members of the Audit and Governance Committee

3.5.3 If the delegation in Recommendation E above is provided, the Interim Monitoring Officer will (after consulting the Chair and Vice Chair):

- Set up the Panel, terms of reference for their review including a member expenses scheme, allowances for the Business Board Chair and members, allowances for Independent Persons for standards matters and allowances for Independent Person of the Audit and Governance Committee.
- Look to establish an independent IRP commissioned from a suitable and experienced external provider.
- Agree an allowance for IRP members for undertaking the review in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Board.
- Seek to convene the Panel at the earliest opportunity to support its work in reporting to the Board.

3.6 Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee

3.6.1 CIPFA guidance states that audit committees of local authorities should include co-opted independent members in accordance with the appropriate legislation. Where there is no legislative direction to include co-opted independent members, CIPFA recommends that each authority audit committee should include at least two co-opted independent members to provide appropriate technical expertise.

3.6.2 Independent members are not elected councillors. Their presence helps to ensure a more impartial approach to governance, risk management, and audit matters. They can also strengthen the audit, governance, risk, and financial oversight of a council by bringing expertise, neutrality, and continuity.

3.6.3 Paragraph 14 of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 (as amended) states that the HSCCA must appoint to its Audit & Governance Committee at least one independent member and that such persons can only be appointed after the vacancy has been advertised in such manner as the Strategic Authority considers is likely to bring to the attention of the public and that person's appointment has been approved by a majority of the members of the Authority.

3.6.4 Subject to the agreement of the delegation to the Interim Monitoring Officer requested in this report, they will:

- Create a role profile for the roles, using best practice comparison
- Advertise for the roles, utilising Constituent Council approaches
- Undertake interviews and make a recommendation to the Board on appointment at the earliest opportunity

3.7 Independent Person under s28 of the Localism Act 2011 for standards

3.7.1 The Localism Act 2011 provides that an Authority must have at least one Independent Person who has a statutory duty to be consulted when complaints against councillors are made (best practice is to have two or more Independent Persons to ensure enough capacity to deal with potential conflicts or absences, etc).

3.7.2 Independent Persons must be appointed after the vacancy has been advertised in such manner as the Authority considers is likely to bring it to the attention of the public. Therefore, it is recommended that delegation is given to the Interim Monitoring Officer to publicise two vacancies for Independent Persons and to make a recommendation for appointment at a future Board meeting.

4 Partnership & Engagement

4.1 The governance documents have been developed working closely with the Constituent Authorities' Chief Executives, Leader and Monitoring Officers and in conjunction with relevant Government Departments.

5 Alternative Options Considered

Option	Summary	Why not recommended
None		

6 Appendices

Appendix A – The Constitution
Appendix B – The Local Assurance Framework
Appendix C – Policies;

- Data Protection Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Privacy Notice
- Counter-Fraud, Bribery, and Corruption Strategy
- Anti-Money Laundering Policy
- Complaints Policy

Board is required to consider the following identified implications;

7 Financial Implications

7.1 Critical steps to demonstrating its duty of Best Value are the Combined County Authority's approval of the Constitution, which includes Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules for the Strategic Authority, and of the Local Assurance Framework, which provides a robust process to prioritise and deliver projects.

7.2 The proposed budget for 2026-27 which is being considered elsewhere on this meeting's agenda includes a contingency sum which will cover any costs arising from the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 This report outlines the decisions required by the Authority at its inaugural meeting to comply with the legislative requirements of the 2026 Regulations that brought the Combined County Authority into being.

8.2 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 provides at section 11 that:

- A CCA may designate a body other than a constituent council as a nominating body for the purposes of this Chapter.
- A nominating body may be designated under subsection only if the body consents to the designation.
- A nominating body of a CCA may nominate a representative of the body for appointment by the CCA as a member (a "non-constituent member").
- The non-constituent members of a CCA are to be non-voting members of that authority unless the voting members resolve otherwise.

9 Equality & Diversity Implications

9.1 The Authority will consider its obligations under the Equalities legislation as a result of the decision made in this report, particularly during the appointment of Independent Persons and Independent Members.

10 Other Significant Implications

Risk The Authority risk management framework is in development for discussion with the HSCCA Audit & Governance Committee when established	☒	**Assurance Framework** It is a requirement of Government that this core document is approved	☒	Procurement	☐
Improvement	☐	Environment	☐	**HR & IT** Employment policies have been developed in conjunction with and independent expert and comply with recent changes in legislation	☒

CONSTITUTION OF THE HAMPSHIRE AND THE SOLENT COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY

Part 1 - Introduction

Background

1.1 The Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) is a UK Government initiative designed to accelerate the transfer of powers and funding from central government to local areas. Its purpose is to fast-track the creation of devolved governance structures, such as Combined County Authorities, to enable selected regions to take greater control over key policy areas including transport, housing, skills, and economic development, in line with the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026. The Combined County Authority was established for the combined authority's area, which is the area consisting of the areas of the constituent councils.

1.2 The constituent councils of the Combined County Authority are:

- Hampshire County Council;
- Portsmouth City Council;
- Southampton City Council; and
- Isle of Wight Council

1.3 The Combined County Authority may have up to five non constituent/associate members which represent the wider priorities of the combined county authority area. These members may be appointed at any time by the HSCCA Board

1.4 The HSCCA was established pursuant to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026, which were made on 3 June 2026 and came into force on 4 June 2026.

1.5 The Mayor is directly elected by the local government electors across the combined county authority area, with the first election to be held on 8 May 2028.

1.6 With some powers reserved solely for the Mayor, the Combined County Authority will operate with reduced powers until a Mayor has been elected. The full list of powers which the Combined County Authority has from May 2026, along with the additional powers which come into effect once a Mayor has been elected are detailed within Part 3.4 of this constitution.

1.7 The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act details the following areas of competency for the Combined County Authority:

- **Transport**
- **Public Safety**
- **Devolved adults' skills and supported employment funding and functions**

- **Housing and Strategic Planning**
- **Economic development and regeneration**
- **Health, Wellbeing and Public Service Reform**
- **Environment and climate change**

1.8 The functions of the Combined County Authority are:

- **Non-Mayoral Functions** (functions which are not the responsibility of the Mayor) which are exercisable by the Combined County Authority, or

- **Mayoral Functions** (functions which are the responsibility of the Mayor and to come into effect upon the election of the first Mayor in May 2028).

The Constitution

1.9 This Constitution sets out the governance arrangements for the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority, including for non-mayoral and mayoral functions. It sets out how decisions are made and the procedures that are followed to ensure that the combined authority operates efficiently, effectively and is transparent and accountable.

1.10 The Constitution has seven parts:

Part 1: **Introduction** to the combined authority and the combined authority's constitution.

Part 2: **Articles** of the constitution which set out the underpinning legal framework of the combined authority.

Part 3: **Responsibility for Functions** setting out who is responsible for exercising each function of the combined authority.

Part 4: **Terms of Reference for Committees** which govern how the combined authority, and its decision-makers operate.

Part 5: **Procedure Rules** which govern how the combined authority, and its decision-makers operate.

Part 6: **Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Chief Officers and Schedule of Proper Officers**

Part 7: **Codes and Protocols** including the codes of conduct for Members and officers of the combined authority, along with the members' scheme of allowances and protocols relating to conduct, conflicts of interest and relationships between officers and members.

1.11 The purpose of the Constitution is to:

- enable the Combined County Authority to provide leadership to the community in partnership with councils, citizens, businesses, and other organisations.
- support the involvement of citizens in the process of local decision-making.
- enable decisions to be taken efficiently and effectively.
- provide ways to hold decision-makers to public account.
- ensure that no one reviews or scrutinises a decision in which they have been directly involved.
- clarify who takes decisions and ensure that decision-makers explain the reasons for decision, and
- help deliver the Combined County Authority's vision of a more prosperous Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority area.

1.12 The Monitoring Officer will regularly monitor and review the operation of the Constitution; this will include an annual review to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

1.13 The Monitoring Officer is authorised to make the following changes to the Constitution:

(a) a minor variation
(b) legal or technical amendments that do not materially affect the Constitution
(c) required to be made to remove any inconsistency, ambiguity, or typographical error
(d) required to be made so as to put into effect any decision of the Combined County Authority, Mayor or Committee, Sub-Committee or officer exercising delegated powers; or
(e) required to reflect any changes to job or role titles.

Any such amendments must be reported retrospectively to the Combined County Authority for noting.

1.14 A majority of the Combined County Authority Constituent representatives can propose a review of the Constitution, without the majority needing to include the Mayor.

1.15 Any amendments or changes proposed by such a review require a unanimous vote which includes the Mayor, once elected, in order to be accepted.

1.16 Until such time as the first mayor's term of office begins, a unanimous vote of the HSCCA Board constituent members is required.

1.17 The Chief Finance Officer (Section 73 Officer) shall be responsible for monitoring and keeping under review the Financial Regulations set out in the Constitution.

1.18 The Monitoring Officer shall make any final decision regarding the application of the Constitution.

Definitions

1.19 Throughout the Constitution, unless otherwise expressly stated, the following definitions shall apply:

'the 2023 act'	the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023
'the 2026 act'	The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026
'the Combined County Authority or HSCCA'	The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority
'the constituent councils'	Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and the Isle of Wight Council
'the Deputy Mayor'	the member of the HSCCA appointed by the Mayor to be the Mayor's deputy pursuant to section 29(1) of the 2023 Act
'The HSCCA Regulations'	(a) The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 (b) Such other secondary legislation made by the Secretary of State in relation to the HSCCA pursuant to the 2023 and 2026 Acts
'the Mayor'	the person elected as Mayor by the local government electors for the Combined County Authority Area

‘Mayoral functions’	any function of the HSCCA which is exercisable only by the Mayor (or the Mayor’s delegate) by virtue of the HSCCA Regulations or any other enactment (whenever passed or made)
‘Nominating body’	a body designated by the HSCCA under section 11(1) of the 2023 Act
‘Non-Constituent Member’	A non-constituent member is an individual nominated as a representative by a nominating body designated as such by the CCA in accordance with section 11 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023
‘Associate Member’	An associate member is an individual appointed to be a member of the CCA in accordance with section 12 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023
‘concurrent function’	Any function of the Combined County Authority (including a function exercisable by the Mayor) conferred by the 2026 Order which is exercisable concurrently with the Constituent and/or the District and Borough/ Councils of the HSCCA area. That is, both the HSCCA and Constituent and/or District and Borough Councils of the HSCCA may exercise the function independently of one another.

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Part 2 - Articles

Article 1 - The Combined County Authority

2.1 The HSCCA was established pursuant to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026, which were made on 3 June 2026 and came into force on 4 June 2026.

2.2 The Mayor, once elected, and the Combined County Authority Board will work together in collaboration, in the interests of the people of the Hampshire and the Solent area. This Constitution sets out arrangements to ensure the effective conduct of the Combined County Authority's business, in the spirit of collaboration, mutual respect and transparency.

2.3 All members will strive to work on the basis of consensus, taking decisions through agreement wherever possible. These principles shall apply irrespective of the statutory basis for the exercise of those powers, whether through the powers and responsibilities of the Mayor, once elected, or the Combined County Authority.

2.4 Upon their election, the powers of the Mayor are to be exercised through collaboration within the Combined County Authority Board, and in partnership with all relevant stakeholders wherever possible.

Membership of HSCCA

2.5 The Combined County Authority comprises five Constituent members in addition to the Mayor, once elected. Once elected, the Mayor, will be the Chair of the Combined County Authority by virtue of that office. Until such time as the first Mayor's term of office begins, the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair will be occupied by Constituent members of the board and voted in to those positions by the board at its first meeting of each municipal year.

2.6 (a) Each of the four Constituent Councils will appoint one of its elected members to be a Member of the Combined County Authority.

(b) Hampshire County Council will appoint one further elected member to be a Member of the Combined County Authority.

2.7 In addition, each Constituent Council will appoint one named elected member ('Substitute Member') for each member appointed under Article 2.6 above, who will act as a Member of the Combined County Authority in the absence of a member appointed under Article 2.6. Either of the Substitute Members appointed by Hampshire County Council may act as a

Member of the Combined County Authority in the absence of a Member appointed by the County Council under Article 2.6.

2.8 The Mayor, once elected, must appoint one of the members of the Combined County Authority Board to be the Deputy Mayor.

2.9 Except to the extent that various functions are to be exercised only by the Mayor (or may be exercised by the Mayor's delegate) all Members will:

(a) collectively be the ultimate policy makers of the Combined County Authority; and

(b) bring views of their communities into the Combined County Authority decision-making process.

2.10 All Members (including Non-Constituent, Associate and Co-opted Members) will at all times maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics, observing the Member Code of Conduct set out in Part 7 of this Constitution.

2.11 A person will cease to be a Member or a Substitute Member of the Combined County Authority if they cease to be a Member of the Constituent Council that appointed them or if the relevant Constituent Council terminates their appointment.

2.12 A person may resign as a member or substitute member of the Combined County Authority by written notice served on the proper officer of the constituent council that appointed them, and the resignation takes effect on receipt of the notice by the proper officer of the council.

2.13 Where a member or substitute member of the Combined County Authority's appointment ceases by virtue of 2.11 or 2.12 above the constituent council that made the appointment must, as soon as practicable, give written notice of that fact to the Combined County Authority and appoint another of its elected members in that person's place.

2.14 A new appointment under Article 2.13 above takes effect and the previous appointment terminates at the end of one week from the date on which the notice is given or such longer period not exceeding one month as is specified in the notice (the identity of whom should be included in the notice).

2.15 The Combined County Authority Board may also appoint up to five Non-Constituent Members and/or Associate Members.

2.16 Constituent or Associate Members should be appointed to best represent the wider interests of the Combined County Authority area.

2.17 Each nominating body of the Combined County Authority must nominate another person to act as the Non-Constituent Member of the Combined County Authority Board in the absence of the member appointed under section 11(3) of the 2023 Act (non-constituent members of a CCA).

2.18 An Associate Member appointed under section 12(1) of the 2023 Act (associate members of a CCA) must nominate another person to act as a member of the Combined County Authority in their absence.

Membership of HSCCA Board

2.19 The HSCCA Board will have up to 11 Members as shown below. Prior to the election of the Mayor, the CCA will appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair from amongst its constituent members. From May 2028 the membership is made up of the Mayor and representatives from a number of different organisations and will form the HSCCA Board.

Member	Post	Membership type
Hampshire and the Solent CCA	Mayor	Chair (from May 2028)
Hampshire County Council		Constituent
Hampshire County Council		Constituent
Isle of Wight Council		Constituent
Portsmouth City Council		Constituent
Southampton City Council		Constituent
District/Borough Council	Nominated representative	Non-constituent
Business Advisory Board	Chair	Associate
TBC		Non-constituent/Associate
TBC		Non-constituent/Associate

District/Borough representation

2.20 The Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Government Association shall be asked to nominate District/Borough Council to be a nominating body for a Non-Constituent Member of the Board to represent all District and Borough Councils within the area of the HSCCA.

Business interests

2.21 A key area of focus for the CCA will be the economy, industry and business, as such the voice of business will be an important factor. The CCA will also establish a Business Advisory Board that will be part of the formal governance arrangements and will provide advice to the CCA on all relevant issues of business and economy. The CCA will appoint the Chair of that Advisory Group to the CCA as an Associate Member to represent the views of Business Advisory Board.

Other membership

2.22 The remaining Non-Constituent or Associate Members will not be nominated / appointed initially. It will be for the Combined County Authority to determine what interests those Memberships should seek to represent on the HSCCA Board.

Chair of HSCCA

2.23 The Mayor is the Chair of the Combined County Authority. Prior to the first mayoral election, a Chair is to be appointed by the members present at the first meeting of the Combined County Authority who will remain in post until the end of the day before the first Mayor's term of office begins.

Meetings and Procedure

2.24 The Combined County Authority will usually meet bi-monthly *(once every 2 months*), but additional meetings may take place within the monthly period should the need arise. For the first six months it is anticipated that the Combined County Authority will meet on a monthly basis.

2.25 There are three types of Combined County Authority meeting:

(a) the annual meeting;

(b) ordinary meetings; and

(c) extraordinary meetings.

All meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Combined County Authority Procedure Rules set out in Part 5 of this Constitution.

Responsibility for Functions

2.26 Only the Combined County Authority will exercise HSCCA functions set out in Part 3 of this Constitution.

2.27 Only the Mayor (once elected) will exercise mayoral functions set out in Part 3 of this Constitution.

2.28 The Combined County Authority may delegate the discharge of its functions which are not reserved to the Combined County Authority to committees, sub-committees, officers, joint committees or other local authorities, pursuant to Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.

2.29 Once elected, the Mayor may delegate the discharge of mayoral general functions (which are not reserved to the Mayor) to the Deputy Mayor or any member or officer of the Combined County Authority. The Mayor may also enter arrangements jointly with the Combined County Authority, the Constituent Councils and other local authorities for the discharge of the mayoral general functions.

2.30 The Combined County Authority delegates the discharge of the Combined County Authority functions to committees and officers in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation contained within Parts 4 and 6 of this Constitution.

2.31 Once elected, this constitution may be amended to contain a scheme of delegation concerning the discharge of mayoral general functions.

2.32 The Combined County Authority and the Mayor, once elected, will review their scheme of delegations regularly.

2.33 The Combined County Authority Board may permit members of the public to address the Board in relation to items on the agenda. The number of speakers, arrangements for participation, and time allowed shall be determined at the discretion of the Mayor, or the Chair until a Mayor is elected. In exercising this discretion, the Mayor (or Chair, as applicable) shall have regard to the efficient conduct of business, the relevance of the representations to the matter under consideration, and the principles of openness and transparency. The Mayor (or Chair, as applicable) may decline to hear representations or curtail a speaker where this is reasonable in the interests of the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Committees of the Combined County Authority

2.34 The Combined County Authority is required to appoint an audit committee and one or more overview and scrutiny committee(s). These are statutory

committees – see Part 4 and Part 5 for further information and the rules of procedure.

2.35 The Combined County Authority may establish such other committees and advisory boards as it thinks fit to discharge its functions.

2.36 The Combined County Authority may appoint a committee or advisory board to advise the Combined County Authority on any matter relating to the exercise of functions of the Combined County Authority.

2.37 The functions which a committee or advisory board may exercise are set out in the committee's terms of reference.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 2 - Articles
Article 2 – The Mayor

Election of the Mayor

2.1 The Mayor is elected by the local government electors for the Combined County Authority's Area.

2.2. Following the first election of the Mayor in May 2028, the election of the Mayor will take place every fourth year thereafter on the same day as the ordinary day of election.

2.3 Once elected, the Mayor's term of office:

- begins with the fourth day after the day of the poll at an election of the Mayor; and
- ends with the third day after the day of the poll at the next election for the return of the Mayor.
- Where the fourth day would otherwise be a Saturday, Sunday, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Good Friday, a bank holiday under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971(a) in England and Wales or a day appointed as a day of public thanksgiving or mourning, the fourth day is instead deemed to be the first day thereafter which is not one of those specified days.

General

2.4 Upon election, the Mayor shall serve as Chair of the Combined County Authority. Until the first mayor's term of office begins, the Combined County Authority shall, at its first meeting of each municipal year, elect a constituent council member to serve as Chair and another to serve as Vice-Chair.

Deputy Mayor - Appointment and Term of Office

2.5 Upon election, the Mayor must appoint one of the Combined County Authority Members to be the Mayor's deputy (the Deputy Mayor). For this purpose, a Combined County Authority Member does not include a non-constituent or associate member.

2.6 The Mayor must notify the Monitoring Officer of any such appointment in writing. The Monitoring Officer shall report the appointment to the next meeting of the Combined Authority.

2.7 A person appointed as Deputy Mayor holds the office until the end of the Mayor's term of office, unless:

- the Mayor removes the person from office,
- the person resigns as Deputy Mayor, or
- the person ceases to be a Combined County Authority Member.

2.8 The Mayor may remove a person from the office of Deputy Mayor at any time, subject to 2.10 below.

2.9 If a vacancy occurs in the office of Deputy Mayor, the Mayor must appoint another Combined County Authority Member to be Deputy Mayor.

2.10 The Mayor must give written notice to the Monitoring Officer of any removal.

Incapacity or Vacancy in the Office of the Mayor (once elected)

2.11 Once a Mayor has been elected and a Deputy Mayor appointed, the Deputy Mayor must act in place of the Mayor if for any reason the Mayor is unable to act, or the office of Mayor is vacant.

2.12 If for any reason:

- the Mayor is unable to act, or the office of Mayor is vacant, and
- the Deputy Mayor is unable to act or the office of Deputy Mayor is vacant,

the other Combined County Authority Members must act together in place of the Mayor, taking decisions by a simple majority.

Mayoral Functions

2.13 The Mayoral Functions of the Combined Authority are functions of the Combined County Authority exercisable only by the Mayor, once elected.

Mayoral General Functions – Mayor's Arrangements

2.14 Mayoral General Functions of the Combined County Authority are exercised by the Mayor acting individually, or in accordance with arrangements made by the Mayor.

2.15 With the exception of any function reserved by law to the Mayor, the Mayor may arrange for any of the following to exercise any Mayoral General Function:

- the Deputy Mayor,
- another Combined County Authority Member (not including a non-constituent or associate member), or
- an officer of the Combined County Authority.

2.16 The Mayor may enter arrangements jointly with the Combined County Authority, the Constituent Councils and other local authorities for the discharge of the Mayoral General Functions.

2.17 Part 3 of the Constitution sets out the arrangements made by the Mayor in relation to Mayoral General Functions.

2.18 The Mayor may make or amend the Mayor's arrangements for Mayoral General Functions at any time. The Mayor must notify the Monitoring Officer

of any arrangements or amendment in writing. The Monitoring Officer shall report any amendment to the next meeting of the Combined County Authority.

Mayoral Decision-Making

2.19 The Mayor must comply with the Mayoral Procedure Rules in Part 5 of the Constitution and make decisions in accordance with the principles of decision-making set out in Article 6 (Decision-making).

2.20 Combined County Authority Members and officers may assist the Mayor in the exercise of specified Mayoral General Functions.

Working Groups

2.21 The Mayor may appoint a working group to inform the development of strategic and policy matters which relate to any Mayoral General Function. The Mayor cannot delegate authority to any working group to act on behalf of the Mayor nor on behalf of the Combined County Authority.

2.22 The Mayor must provide details of the membership and terms of reference of any working group set up by the Mayor to the Monitoring Officer.

Conduct

2.23 The Mayor, once elected, must comply with any applicable Code or Protocol set out in Part 7 of the Constitution, including the Members' Code of Conduct.

Remuneration

2.24 Any allowance payable to the Mayor, once elected, shall not exceed a sum determined by the Independent Remuneration Panel. The Mayor's allowance, once agreed, will be set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme in Part 7 of this Constitution.

Budget and Finance

2.25 The Mayor, once elected, must comply with the Part 5 of this Constitution including Budget and Policy Procedure Rules, Contracts Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations; see further also Article 7 (Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters).

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	

To be of effect from:	

Part 2 - Articles

Article 3 – Residents and the Combined County Authority

Voting

3.1 Local government electors for the Combined County Authority's Area have the right to vote directly for the Mayor on the ordinary polling day every fourth year from 2028.

Information

3.2 The Access to Information Rules in Part 5 of the Constitution set out the public's rights to information held by the Combined County Authority, including:

- in relation to meetings of the Combined County Authority, formal committees and member advisory boards (subject to exceptions including in relation to confidential or exempt information), rights:
    - to attend meetings,
    - to inspect agendas of and reports to meetings and background documents,
    - to access documents after a meeting including minutes, and to report on and record a meeting.
- to inspect the Forward Plan, including to find out about:
    - any Key Decision to be made by the Combined Authority, the Mayor, or an officer of the Combined Authority, and
    - any request to be made by a constituent council for a Statutory Consent to exercise a concurrent function or in respect of a decision of the Mayor which gives rise to a financial liability.
- to inspect written records of decisions made by the HSCCA,
- to access information generally held by the Combined County Authority[1], and
- to inspect a list of Combined County Authority Members.

[1] The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) apply to the Combined Authority.

3.3 Anyone has the right to inspect and make copies of the Combined County Authority's accounting records and related records, and local government electors for the Combined County Authority's Area may question or make objections to the Local Auditor.

Consultation

3.4 The Combined County Authority must consult with residents in accordance with any statutory requirement to do so.

Petitions

3.5 The Combined County Authority does not operate a Petitions Scheme.

Complaints

3.6 There is the right to complain to the Combined County Authority under its complaints scheme, or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (after using the Combined Authority's complaints scheme).

3.7 There is the right to submit any complaint about the conduct of a Combined County Authority Member to the Combined County Authority's Monitoring Officer in writing, in accordance with the Procedure for considering complaints alleging a failure to comply with the Members Code of Conduct in Part 7 of this Constitution. This includes complaints about the conduct of the Mayor.

Responsibilities of the Public

3.8 Members of the public must not be violent, abusive or threatening to Combined County Authority Members, Co-optees or officers, and must not wilfully harm the property of the Combined County Authority, any Combined County Authority Member, Co-optee or officer.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 2 - Articles

Article 4 – Joint arrangements and Partnership working

Joint arrangements – Non-Mayoral Functions and Mayoral General Functions

4.1 The Combined County Authority has power pursuant to Section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements with other local authorities to discharge their functions jointly.

4.2 Such arrangements may involve the discharge of those functions by a joint committee of such authorities or by an officer of one of them.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 2 - Articles

Article 5 – Officers

Statutory Officers

5.1 The Combined County Authority is required to appoint or designate the following statutory officers:

- Head of Paid Service
- Monitoring Officer
- Section 73 Chief Finance Officer
- Data Protection Officer
- Returning Officer
- Statutory Scrutiny Officer

5.2 By law, some functions of the Monitoring Officer and Section 73 Chief Finance Officer (apart from the administration of the financial affairs of the Combined County Authority) must be carried out personally or carried out by a deputy nominated by them in cases of absence or illness.

5.2A The Section 73 Officer shall establish and maintain an appropriate scheme of financial delegation, including sub-delegation to Directors and officers, ensuring clarity of accountability, defined limits and regular review (see also Part 5H – Financial Procedure Rules).

5.2B The Section 73 Officer may authorise sub-delegation of financial responsibilities to officers, subject to written records and oversight, and such arrangements shall not reduce the statutory accountability of the Section 73 Officer (see also Part 5H – Financial Procedure Rules).

Chief Officers

5.3 Chief Officers for the purposes of Part 6 (Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Chief Officers) of this Constitution means the statutory chief officers, namely the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer (Section 73 Officer).

<u>Head of Paid Service – Statutory Functions</u>

5.4 The Head of Paid Service, where they consider it appropriate, must prepare a report to the Combined County Authority setting out their proposals in relation to:

- the manner in which the discharge by the Combined County Authority of its different functions is coordinated,
- the number and grades of staff required by the Combined County Authority for discharging its functions,

- the organisation of the Combined County Authority's staff, and
- the appointment and proper management of the Combined County Authority's staff.

5.5 The Combined County Authority must consider any such report at a meeting within three months of the report first being sent to the Combined County Authority Members.

5.6 The Head of Paid Service must consider any application for exemption from political restriction in respect of any post in the Combined County Authority by the holder for the time being of that post and may give directions to the Combined County Authority to include a post in the list of politically restricted posts in accordance with section 3A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Monitoring Officer – Statutory Functions

5.7 In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the Combined County Authority must promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its members and it must adopt a Code of Conduct consistent with the Seven Principles of Public Life. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this code, advising councillors on its application, and managing the process for investigating alleged breaches.

5.8 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring that the Combined County Authority, its members, and officers act lawfully and in accordance with the authority's constitution. If it appears to the Monitoring Officer that any proposal, decision, or omission by the Combined County Authority has given rise to or is likely to or would give rise to unlawfulness or to maladministration, the Monitoring Officer must send a report to each Combined County Authority Member (after consulting so far as practicable with the Head of Paid Service and Section 73 Chief Finance Officer). The Combined County Authority must consider any such report at a meeting not more than 21 days after copies of the report are first sent to the Combined County Authority Members. The Combined County Authority must ensure that the implementation of the proposal or decision must be suspended until the report has been considered.

Section 73 Officer – Statutory Functions

5.9 The Section 73 Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the administration of the financial affairs of the Combined County Authority, in accordance with Section 73 of the Local Government Act 1985.

5.10 After consulting so far as practicable with the Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer, the Section 73 Chief Finance Officer must prepare a report if it appears to the Section 73 Chief Finance Officer that the Combined County Authority:

- has made or is about to make a decision which involves or will involve incurring unlawful expenditure, or

- has taken or is about to take a course of action which would be unlawful and likely to cause a loss or deficiency on the part of the authority, or
- is about to enter an item of account unlawfully.

5.11 The Section 73 Chief Finance Officer must also make such a report if it appears that the expenditure of the Combined County Authority incurred in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources available to the Combined County Authority.

5.11A The Section 73 Officer shall ensure appropriate resilience arrangements are in place, including business continuity, access to systems and succession planning, in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules in Part 5H.

5.11B The Section 73 Officer shall designate a Deputy Section 73 Officer, suitably qualified and experienced, to act in their absence, with such arrangements recorded and aligned to Part 5H – Financial Procedure Rules.

5.12 The Section 73 Chief Finance Officer must send a copy of any such report to the Local Auditor and to each Combined County Authority Member. The Combined County Authority must consider the report at a meeting not later than 21 days after the report has been sent to Combined County Authority Members and decide whether to agree or disagree with the views contained in it, and what action it proposes to take. The Local Auditor must be notified of the meeting and as soon as practicable, any decision taken at the meeting.

5.12A The Deputy Section 73 Officer may exercise the statutory functions of the Section 73 Officer in circumstances of absence, incapacity or conflict, in accordance with relevant legislation and Part 5H – Financial Procedure Rules.

5.12B The Section 73 Officer shall ensure appropriate handover, continuity and decision-making arrangements are maintained, including urgent decisions, consistent with the Authority's Financial Procedure Rules (Part 5H).

Statutory Scrutiny Officer

5.13 The Combined County Authority must designate one of its officers as the Statutory Scrutiny Officer of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, whose responsibilities and functions are set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedural Rules of this constitution. They may not be an officer of a constituent council.

Data Protection Officer

5.14 The Combined County Authority must appoint a Data Protection Officer in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

Head of Internal Audit

5.15 The Combined County Authority must appoint a Head of Internal Audit in order to comply with its internal audit obligations contained in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

General

5.16 The Combined County Authority may engage such staff (referred to as officers), as it considers necessary to carry out its functions.

5.17 Officers will comply with the Officer Code of Conduct.

5.18 Arrangements must be in place for arrangements for the retention of financial and personnel records in accordance with the Authorities Document Retention Policy and in compliance with GDPR.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 2 - Articles

Article 6 – Decision making

Responsibility for Decision-Making

6.1 The Combined County Authority will issue and keep up to date a record of what part of the Combined County Authority or which individual has responsibility for particular types of decisions or decisions relating to particular functions.

Principles of Decision-Making

6.2 All decisions of the Combined County Authority should be made in accordance with the following principles:

- due regard to all relevant and material considerations. Material considerations to include legal implications, financial implications and risk management;
- where appropriate, the realistic evaluation of alternatives;
- proportionality (i.e., the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation with officers and all other relevant stakeholders taking into account professional advice from officers;
- respect for human rights and equalities;
- a presumption in favour of openness;
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes; and
- reasons being given for the decision, as appropriate.

Key Decisions

6.3 A Key Decision means a decision of a decision maker, which in the view of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Combined County Authority is likely to:

(i) result in the authority or the Mayor (once elected) incurring significant expenditure, or the making of significant savings, having regard to the Combined County Authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

(ii) be significant in terms of its effects on persons living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the Combined County Authority.

When assessing whether or not a decision is a Key Decision, Members must consider all the circumstances of the case. However, a decision which results in a significant amount spent or saved will not generally be considered to be a Key Decision if that amount is less than £1,000,000.

A decision-maker may only make a Key Decision in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Access to Information Procedure Rules, and
- Combined County Authority Procedure Standing Orders

6.4 Any decision may be reviewed or scrutinised by an overview and scrutiny committee.

Types of Decisions

6.5 Decisions reserved to the Combined County Authority

Decisions relating to the functions listed in Part 3.5 of this Constitution will be made by the Combined County Authority and not delegated. The Combined County Authority meeting will follow the Rules of Procedure set out in Part 5 of this Constitution when considering any matter.

6.6 Decisions Reserved to the Mayor

Only the Mayor (once elected) will exercise mayoral functions to be set out in Part 3.2 of this Constitution (section 3.2 to be added upon election of the Mayor).

6.7 Decision making by Committees and Joint Committees established by the Combined County Authority

Committees, sub-committees and advisory boards established by the Combined County Authority will follow the relevant Rules of Procedure as set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

It is unanimously agreed that political balance won't apply under section 17 of the 1989 Act and pursuant to the notification requirements under regulation 20 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

A committee may propose additional Non-Voting Membership from partner and stakeholder bodies relevant to the remit of the committee subject to approval by the HSCCA Board.

6.8 Decision making by Officers

Officers will exercise their delegated authority in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation to Officers set out in Part 6 of this Constitution and other provisions of this Constitution.

6.9 Recording Decisions

Any decision taken at a meeting of the Combined County Authority or one of its committees or subcommittees will be recorded in the decision record/minutes of the meeting. Any other decision will be recorded in accordance with Access to

Information Procedure Rules in Part 5 of this Constitution and the HSCCA's Retention Schedule.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 2 - Articles

Article 7 – Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters

Financial Management

7.1 The management of the Combined County Authority's financial affairs will be conducted in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules set out in Part 5 of the Constitution.

Legal Proceedings

7.2 A duly qualified legal professional designated by the Combined County Authority, such as the Director of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer), if so qualified, is authorised to institute, settle, defend or participate in any legal proceedings in any case where such action is necessary to give effect to decisions of the Combined County Authority or in any case where the Monitoring Officer considers that such action is necessary to protect the Combined County Authority interests.

Authentication of Documents

7.3 Where any document is necessary to any legal procedure or proceedings on behalf of the Combined County Authority, it will be signed by a duly qualified legal professional.

7.4 Any contract with a value exceeding £1,000,000 entered into by the Combined County Authority must be signed electronically by a duly authorised officer of the Combined County Authority and made under Docusign, attested by an authorised officer.

Common Seal of the Combined County Authority

7.5 The Common Seal of the Combined County Authority will be kept in a safe place in the custody of the Monitoring Officer. A decision of the Combined County Authority, or any part of it, will be sufficient authority for sealing any document necessary to give effect to the decision. The Common Seal will be affixed to those documents which in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer should be sealed. The affixing of the Common Seal will be attested by the Monitoring Officer, or some other person authorised by the Monitoring Officer.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 3.1 - Responsibility for Functions

Combined County Authority (CCA) Functions

3.1.1 CCA functions are functions of the Combined County Authority which are not exercisable by the Mayor (once elected). Part 3 - Section 2 sets out an overview of the CCA Functions, including those conferred by the HSCCA Regulations.

3.1.2 CCA functions are exercised by the Combined County Authority at a meeting of the CCA or in accordance with arrangements agreed by the CCA.

3.1.3 The CCA may make arrangements for any CCA function, except those reserved to the CCA, to be exercised:

- by a committee or sub-committee of the CCA,
- by an officer of the CCA,
- by another local authority, or
- under joint arrangements with one or more other local authorities.

3.1.4 Where a CCA function has been delegated under arrangements, this does not prevent the CCA exercising the function.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 3.2 - Responsibility for Functions

Mayoral Functions (effective upon the election of the Mayor)

To be updated

Part 3.3 - Responsibility for Functions

Statutory Consents

3.3.1 The protocol for the exercise of statutory consents shall be followed in respect of:

- CCA Functions that can only be exercised with the consent of a relevant local authority or national park authority.
- Mayoral functions that can only be exercised with the statutory consent of a constituent council combined authority member (or substitute member) to be provided at a meeting of the Combined County Authority.
- Mayoral Functions that can only be exercised with the consent of a relevant local council or national park authority.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 3.4 - Responsibility for Functions
Combined County Authority Functions.

***Functions which are greyed out are mayoral functions and therefore cannot be exercised until a Mayor is elected.**

Function	Legislation	Order Reference	Concurrent with Constituent Council	Consent of Constituent Council(s) Required?	Decision Maker	Non-Constituent Vote
Transport						
Development of Local Transport Plans	(s108, 109 and 112 of the Transport Act 2000))		Yes, during transition period	Yes	Combined County Authority	N
Local Transport Authority Functions, including powers and duties to prepare a bus strategy for carrying out their bus functions, enter into partnerships with bus operators, enter into franchising schemes, and manage travel concessions.	Bus Services Act 2017 Bus Services Act 2025 Concessionary bus travel act 2007 Transport Act 1985 Transport Act 2000		Mandatory travel concessions (section 146 Transport Act 2000) will be exercisable concurrently with constituent authorities but then only by the Mayor after the transition period ends		Combined County Authority	N

Transport Levy	Local Government Act 1988 The Transport Levying Bodies Regulations 1992 The Transport Levying Bodies (Amendment) Regulations 2017		N	N	Combined County Authority	N
Agreements between authorities and strategic highways companies	Highways Act 1980 Infrastructure Act 2015 Levelling up and regeneration Act 2023				Combined County Authority	N
Civil enforcement of road traffic contraventions	Traffic Management Act 2004		Y	Y	Constituent Councils	N
Transfer of duty of principal councils to make reports on Key Route Network roads	Highways Act 1980 Infrastructure Act 2015 Levelling up and regeneration Act 2023				Combined County Authority	N

Road User Charging	Chapter I of Part III of the Transport Act 2000		Yes	Yes	Combined County Authority	N
On-Street Micromobility Schemes	Electric Scooter Trials and Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles (Amendment) Regulations 2015				Combined County Authority	N
Secure socially necessary bus services	Transport Act 1985, s63(1)		Yes	Yes	Combined County Authority	N
Formulate policies for subsidised services	Transport Act 1985, s63(2)(b)		Yes	Yes	Combined County Authority	N
Consider needs of elderly and disabled passengers	Transport Act 1985, s63(8)		Yes	Yes	Combined County Authority	N

Enter agreements for service subsidies	Transport Act 1985, s63(5)		Yes	Yes	Combined County Authority	N
Monitor and review provision of services	Transport Act 1985, s63(7)		Yes	Yes	Combined County Authority	N
Key Route Network power of direction to constituent highway authorities in the use of their highway, traffic, street and permit authority powers on key route network roads.	Highways Act 1980 Infrastructure Act 2015 Levelling up and regeneration Act 2023				Combined County Authority, however the consent of the Mayor is required (s24(1)(b) LURA 2023)	N
Function	**Legislation**	**Order Reference**	**Concurrent with Constituent Council**	**Consent of Constituent Council(s) Required?**	**Decision Maker**	**Non-Constituent Vote**
Power to pay grant						
Receive and administer Section 31 grants for devolved functions	Local Government Act 2003, s31		N/A	N/A	Combined County Authority	N
Ensure compliance with grant conditions and assurance frameworks	Local Government Act 2003, s31		N/A	N/A	Combined County Authority	N

Report on use of grants and provide assurance to Government	Local Government Act 2003, s31		N/A	N/A	Combined County Authority	N
Function	**Legislation**	**Order Reference**	**Concurrent with Constituent Council**	**Consent of Constituent Council(s) Required?**	**Decision Maker**	**Non-Constituent Vote**
Skills & Employment Support – this section to be further reviewed and updated if required.						
Adult Skills & Training Functions	Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016; Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act		Yes – Local authorities retain statutory duties for education and training	Yes – Transfer of AEB requires formal agreement	Combined County Authority	
Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)	English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026; *Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022*		Yes – CCA convenes employers, education providers, partners; integrates LSIPs into regional plans	No – CCA statutory duty	Combined County Authority	N

Employment Support Integration	English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026; *Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023*		CCAs can coordinate employment support services with DWP and local agencies, aiming to reduce duplication and improve outcomes for jobseekers.	No	Combined County Authority	N
Function	**Legislation**	**Order Reference**	**Concurrent with Constituent Council**	**Consent of Constituent Council(s) Required?**	**Decision Maker**	**Non-Constituent Vote**
Housing & Strategic Planning						
Development of a Spatial Development Strategy (SDS)	Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026		**Yes** – SDS complements local plans; councils retain local planning powers	No	Combined County Authority/Mayor	N
Duty to consider housing conditions and needs in the area	Housing Act 1985, s.8		**Yes**		Combined County Authority	
Mayoral Call-in of Strategic Applications	English Devolution and Community Empowerment		**Yes** – Local planning authorities still handle		Mayor	N

	Act 2026		most applications			
Mayoral Development Corporations (MDCs)	English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026		**No**, but LPAs retain development managemen t for non-MDC areas	**Yes** – LPA consent required for MDC Order; if refused, SoS can approve after inquiry	Mayor	N
Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy (MCIL)	English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026		**Yes** – LPAS can raise non-mayoral CIL	**Yes** – Requires combined authority approval for implementation	Combined County Authority	N
Housing Strategy & Warm Homes Duty	English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026		**Yes**	**No**	Combined County Authority	N
Function	**Legislation**	**Order Reference**	**Concurrent with Constituent Council**	**Consent of Constituent Council(s) Required?**	**Decision Maker**	**Non-Constituent Vote**
Economic Development & Regeneration						
Duty to prepare an assessment of economic conditions			**Yes**		Combined County Authority	
Powers to encourage visitors and provide entertainment					Combined County Authority	

Power to place staff at the disposal of other authorities					Combined County Authority	
Economic development and regeneration power of competence	s1 of Localism Act 2011 to the extent that those functions are exercisable for the purpose of economic development and regeneration) - also clause 20 and schedule 4 (not limited to economic development and regeneration)					
Local Growth Plans			**Yes** – Councils retain local economic development duties	**No** – Strategic Authority duty to prepare plan; councils consulted	Combined County Authority	
Regeneration & Investment Zones			**Yes** – Councils still deliver some regeneration schemes	**No** – Strategic Authority allocates devolved regeneration funds	Combined County Authority	

Function	Legislation	Order Reference	Concurrent with Constituent Council	Consent of Constituent Council(s) Required?	Decision Maker	Non-Constituent Vote
The Environment & Climate Change						
Environmental Competence (Strategic Authority)			**Yes** – Councils retain statutory environmental duties under existing law	**No** – Competence granted directly to Strategic Authority	Combined County Authority	N
Energy Efficiency & Warm Homes Strategy			**Yes** – Councils retain housing delivery duties	Yes	Combined County Authority	N
Function	**Legislation**	**Order Reference**	**Concurrent with Constituent Council**	**Consent of Constituent Council(s) Required?**	**Decision Maker**	**Non-Constituent Vote**
Health & Wellbeing						
Duty to Improve Health & Reduce Health Inequalities			**Yes** – Councils retain public health duties under Health and Social Care Act	**No** – Strategic Authority duty applies automatically	Combined County Authority	

Integration with Local Growth Plan			**Yes** – Councils still lead local health initiatives	**No** – Growth plan must include health objectives	Combined County Authority	
Function	**Legislation**	**Order Reference**	**Concurrent with Constituent Council**	**Consent of Constituent Council(s) Required?**	**Decision Maker**	**Non-Constituent Vote**
Public Safety						
Duty to Collaborate with Local Public Service Partners			**Yes** – Councils retain statutory duties for community safety	**No** – Strategic Authority duty applies automatically	Combined County Authority	
Sharing of information in relation to crime and disorder					Combined County Authority	
Police & Crime Commissioner functions including the appointment of a person as the deputy mayor for policing and crime for the area, and arrange for the deputy mayor for policing and crime to exercise one or more of the mayor's					Mayor	

PCC functions						
Discharging Fire & Rescue Authority Functions					Mayor	
Function	**Legislation**	**Order Reference**	**Concurrent with Constituent Council**	**Consent of Constituent Council(s) Required?**	**Decision Maker**	**Non-Constituent Vote**
Miscellaneous Functions						
The General Power of Competence						
Data sharing	(s17A Crime and Disorder Act 1998)					
Incidental provisions	(s142(2) and s222 of the Local Government Act 1972)					

Part 3.5 - Responsibility for Functions

The Combined County Authority Board (Reserved Functions)

3.5.1 The Combined County Authority Board has collective responsibility for decision-making, acting in the best interests of the Combined County Authority area.

3.5.2 The following key functions sit within the responsibility of the Combined Authority Board:

a) To set, review, keep up to date and revise the long-term vision of the Combined County Authority.

b) To agree, review, keep up to date and revise the strategic objectives for the Combined County Authority.

c) To agree, adopt, amend or withdraw key strategy and policy for the Combined County Authority.

d) To adopt, amend or withdraw any major strategy or policy, noting that this function relates to plans and strategies other than those that fall within Mayoral Functions.

e) To ensure the Combined County Authority undertakes statutory and appropriate communication and consultation in the setting of the budget and policy framework.

f) Overall responsibility for the implementation and delivery of strategic plans.

g) To drive future devolution and lobbying of Government.

h) To agree prioritisation and re-purposing of funds.

i) To agree approval of projects and programmes in line with the Scheme of Delegations.

j) To exercise general powers of the Combined County Authority.

k) Consenting to proposals from government for changing existing arrangements relating to the CCA.

l) All other matters which, by law, must be reserved to CCA.

3.5.3 The following functions are reserved to the Combined County Authority Board:

3.5.4 Strategy and Policy

The adoption of, and any amendment to or withdrawal of any major strategy or policy of the Combined County Authority.

3.5.5 Frameworks

The adoption of, and any amendment to or withdrawal of the following framework documents:

i. Assurance Framework;
ii. Monitoring & Evaluation Framework;
iii. Performance Management Framework;
iv. Risk Management Framework

3.5.6 Financial Matters

a) Approving the Combined County Authority budget.

b) Approving the borrowing limits of the Combined County Authority, including determining the borrowing limits of the Combined County Authority in relation to transport matters pursuant to section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003.

c) Approving the Treasury Management Strategy and the Investment Strategy of the Combined County Authority.

d) Approving the capital programme.

3.5.7 People

a) Approving the appointment of the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and S73 Officer.

b) Approving the appointment of the Returning Officer.

c) Chief Officer appointments and dismissals are reserved to the Combined County Authority Board, further details of which can be found in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules at Part 5g of this constitution.

3.5.8 Governance

Decisions related to:

a) Adoption and amendment of the Constitution (other than changes delegated to the Monitoring Officer).

b) Establishment and membership of Advisory Boards, Committees and Sub-Committees.

c) Establishment and membership of Joint Committees and Commissions.

d) Approve the nomination of the membership and chairs of advisory boards committees (until the election of the Mayor).

e) Approval of any allowance schemes, having regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel.

f) Appointment of an Independent Person of the Governance and Audit Committee.

g) Appointment of the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

h) Delegation of functions to third parties.

i) Establishment of Trading Companies.

j) Any other matters reserved to the Board.

3.5.9 The Combined County Authority may do anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of the carrying out of any of its functions (its functional purposes) after having due regard to the advice of the Monitoring Officer and S73 Officer.

3.5.10 Voting

Voting arrangements are set out in the Combined County Authority Procedure Rules in Part 5 of the constitution.

3.5.11 Membership

a) The Combined County Authority Board membership consists of the following:

i. The Mayor (once elected).
ii. One elected member appointed by each constituent authority, with the exception of Hampshire County Council which must appoint two.
iii. Up to a maximum of five non-constituent/associate members.

a) Further details regarding membership are set out in Article 1 of this constitution.

3.5.12 Designation of a Nominating-Body

a) The Combined County Authority can:

i. Agree the designation of a nominating body or the removal of such a designation.
ii. Agree the number of nominating bodies that may be designated by the Combined County Authority.
iii. Agree the number of non-constituent members that may be appointed by a nominating body of the Combined County Authority.
iv. Agree the process for the appointment, disqualification, resignation or removal of a non-aligned member or substitute member.
v. Approve the appointment or removal of non-constituent members and substitute members.
vi. Agree the process for the appointment, disqualification, resignation or removal of an associate member or substitute member.
vii. Approve the appointment or removal of associate members or substitute members.

3.5.13 Executive Bodies

The Combined County Authority Board has the power to delegate its functions, which are not reserved to it, to Committees, Sub-Committees, Officers, Joint Committees or other Local Authorities. The Board cannot delegate its functions to individual members of the Board.

3.5.14 Quorum

The Quorum details are set out in the Combined County Authority Procedure Rules.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 4.1 - Terms of Reference

Transport Committee

4.1.1 The Transport Committee will exercise those non-mayoral functions that the HSCCA Board may delegate to it in relation to its transport function.

The Constituent Authorities shall remain Local Transport Authorities until 8th May 2028 and will remain Highways Authorities even when the HSCCA is the sole Local Transport Authority for the region.

The Transport Committee does not exercise the functions of a Constituent Council, it is not a joint Committee of the Constituent Councils and it does not act on behalf of nor exercise any functions of Constituent Councils. Any statutory requirement for the consent of a Constituent Council to the exercise of a transport function shall be fulfilled by that council separately, and not by participation in the Transport Committee.

The Transport Committee may exercise such non-Mayoral transport functions of the HSCCA as are delegated to it by the HSCCA Board.

4.1.2 The Transport Committee will seek to act in a regional capacity to develop the transport vision for the Combined County Authority area and, amongst other things, will provide advice to the HSCCA Board and the Mayor (once elected) where relevant on matters related to the HSCCAs transport responsibilities as set out in paragraph 4.1.8 of this terms of reference.

4.1.3 <u>Membership</u>

The Committee shall comprise of members appointed by the HSCCA Board, including members of Constituent Councils and such other members as the HSCCA Board determines in accordance with the HSCCA Constitution and these terms of reference.

The Transport Committee's membership shall include 5 voting members (comprised of one voting member from each constituent authority with the exception of Hampshire County Council, which shall have two voting members) who is:

- The Cabinet Member with the responsibility for Transport, or, in the case of the Isle of Wight Council, the Chair of the committee with responsibility for Transport, provided that the Chair of the Committee is a member of the ruling group of that council. Where the Chair is not a member of the ruling group, a member of the ruling group who is a

member of the committee with responsibility for Transport should be appointed instead

- in the case of Hampshire County Council one other member.

Appointment to the Transport Committee does not in and of itself confer any voting rights. Voting rights are conferred only upon constituent members in accordance with paragraph 4.1.6 below and the HSCCA Constitution.

4.1.4 Chairing the Committee

The Chair of the Transport Committee shall be appointed by the HCSSA Board and shall be one of the constituent members of HSCCA Board and is in substitution for that authority's other appointed Committee member (and in the case of Hampshire County Council it shall replace one of its representatives).

A Vice-Chair will be appointed by the Transport Committee from the Transport Joint Committee voting membership.

4.1.5 Quorum

The quorum will be 4 voting members including the Chair (or Vice Chair) in attendance. When exercising delegated decision making functions, at least one voting member drawn from each constituent council must be present and voting and this must include the Chair (or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair).

4.1.6 Voting

Any matters that are to be decided by the committee are to be decided by consensus of the committee where possible.

Where the Transport Committee is exercising decision-making functions delegated to it by the HSCCA Board, decisions shall be taken by a majority of voting members present and voting.
A person may vote at a meeting of the Transport Committee only if:

(a) they are a Councillor of a Constituent Council; or

(b) they are a non-constituent member who has been given voting rights by virtue of s11 Levelling Act 2023.

The Chair does not have a casting vote.

4.1.7 Frequency

The committee will meet upon the required members and officers being in post, and within the financial year in which the HSCCA is constituted.

Transport Committee meetings shall be held in public with provision for public forum.

4.1.8 Functions

The Transport Committee will provide advice to the HSCCA and the Mayor (once elected and where required in relation to mayoral functions) on matters related to transport for the region. In doing so, the Transport Committee shall oversee and may advise on:

Strategy and Policy

- Development, review and monitoring of the regional Local Transport Plan and supporting evidence base.

- The development of the proposed transport budget including, but not confined to the allocation of Government transport funding i.e. Integrated Transport funding, Bus Services funding and Highway Maintenance, including the passporting of funds to the Highways Authorities;

- Development and delivery of regional transport policies and guidance to inform and influence delivery by constituent authorities.

- Development and review of a regional bus strategy (excluding decisions reserved to the Mayor).

- Development and review of a regional traffic management policy such as, moving traffic offences, lane rental, parking policy, and similar with the aim of improving consistency, delivering transport plans and alignment across the HSCCA area.

- Input into, and shaping of, the HSCCA Growth Strategy, ensuring transport priorities support economic growth, regeneration and productivity.

- Input into, and shaping of, the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS), to ensure alignment between transport investment, land use planning and spatial growth.

Bus and Public Transport (non-mayoral functions)

Preparation and oversight of analytical, evidential and programme development work to support future bus reform decisions reserved to the Mayor.

Concessionary Travel

Oversight of transition planning for the HSCCA's future concessionary fares responsibilities.

4.1.10 Sub Groups

The Transport Committee may establish advisory sub-groups, including stakeholder groups, as the committee considers appropriate to support the effective discharge of its functions.

4.1.11 Delegations

The Transport Committee shall have responsibility for the discharge of any specified non-mayoral transport functions that may have been delegated to it by the HSCCA.

In the first year of the HSCC it is likely that such delegations may include the agreement and monitoring of annual transport work programmes.

4.1.12 Accountability and Scrutiny

The Transport Committee is accountable to the HSCCA Board and shall report decisions and recommendations in accordance with the HSCCA Constitution.

Overview and Scrutiny arrangements for transport matters shall be exercised through the HSCCA's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with statutory requirements.

4.1.13 Review

The terms of reference of the Transport Committee will be reviewed annually by the Combined County Authority.

Document Version Control

Municipal Year:	
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Part 4.2 - Terms of Reference

Governance & Audit Committee

4.2.1 This is a regulatory committee to the Combined County Authority. These are Committees that the Combined County Authority must have by law.

4.2.2 The function of the Governance & Audit Committee is to:

- review and scrutinise the Combined County Authority's financial affairs.
- review and assess the Combined County Authority's risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements.
- review and assess the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which resources have been used in discharging the Combined County Authority's functions.
- make reports and recommendations to the Combined County Authority in relation to reviews conducted under the bullets above.
- implement the obligation to ensure high standards of conduct of and amongst Members.

4.2.3 The Combined County Authority must appoint an Audit Committee whose proceedings shall operate in accordance with these terms of reference and the procedure rules detailed in Part 5 of the Constitution**.**

<u>Membership</u>

4.2.4 The membership of the Governance & Audit Committee shall consist of:

<u>Voting Membership:</u>

- two representatives from each constituent council apart from Hampshire County Council who will appoint four, who should not be members of HSCCA Board.

Non-Voting Membership

- At least one independent person.

4.2.5 When appointing members to the Governance & Audit Committee, the Combined County Authority must abide by its duties pursuant to The Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 requires that a Combined County Authority must, as far as reasonably possible, make sure that the committee's overall membership reflects the political balance that currently exists across all the Constituent Councils combined.

Chairing the Committee

4.2.6 The Chair of the committee should be a member from one of the constituent councils who does not sit as a member of the Combined County Authority Board.

4.2.7 In the absence of the appointed Chair, the committee will appoint a Chair for the meeting.

Quorum

4.2.8 The quorum will be seven voting members.

Voting

4.2.9 Any matters that are to be decided by the committee are to be decided by consensus of the committee where possible.

4.2.10 When a vote is required, only voting members of the committee will be entitled to vote at meetings, and the Chair will not exercise a casting vote if they are a non-voting member of the committee.

Frequency

4.2.11 The committee will meet upon the required members and officers being in post, and within the financial year in which the HSCCA is constituted. Meetings shall be held in public with provision for public participation.

Governance & Audit Committee Sub-Committee for Code of Conduct Matters

4.2.12 To consider and determine any allegation of failing to comply with the code in accordance with the arrangements for investigating and making decisions about allegations of failing to comply with the code.

Functions

4.2.13 The Governance & Audit Committee shall undertake the following for the Combined County Authority:

Accounts

- Approve the annual statement of accounts.
- Approve the Annual Governance Statement, ensuring it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances.

Governance

- Review corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework.
- Review the Annual Governance Statement prior to approval to ensure it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances.
- Annually review the assurance framework to ensure it adequately addresses risks and priorities including governance arrangements of significant partnerships.
- Monitor the Combined County Authority's overall risk management framework, including the effectiveness of risk identification, assessment and mitigation processes.
- Review the corporate risk register, including key strategic and emerging risks, and progress with mitigating actions.
- Seek assurance that risk management is embedded across the organisation and aligned with decision-making, financial planning and performance management.
- Review the effectiveness of arrangements for managing partnership and programme risks, including those arising from major projects and delivery vehicles.
- Provide independent assurance to the Combined County Authority Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of the risk management framework.
- Monitor the Combined County Authority's risk and performance management arrangements including reviewing the risk register, progress with mitigating actions and assurances.

- Monitor the anti-fraud and whistle blowing policies and the complaint process.

Internal Audit

- The Combined County Authority must appoint a Local Auditor to audit its accounts for a financial year not later than 31 December in the preceding financial year.
- Provide assurances over the effectiveness of internal audit functions and assuring the internal control environments of key partners.
- Review internal audit requirements undertaken by the Combined County Authority
- Approve the internal audit plan.
- Consider reports and assurances from the Chief Finance Officer in relation to:
    i) Internal Audit performance;
    ii) Annual Assurance Opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control;
    iii) Risk management and assurance mapping arrangement;
    iv) Progress to implement recommendations including concerns or where officers have accepted risks that the Authority may find unacceptable.

External Audit

- Review the annual accounts.
- Consider the annual external audit of the Combined County Authority's accounts, including the annual audit letter and assessing the implications and monitoring officer response to concerns.

Financial Reporting

- Consider whether accounting policies were appropriately followed and any need to report concerns to the Combined County Authority Board.

- Consider any issues arising from External Auditor's audit of the account.
- Ensure there is effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice.
- Approve the Treasury Management Strategy, including the annual Treasury Management Plan, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, prior to recommendation to the Combined County Authority where required.
- Maintain an overview of the Combined County Authority's Constitution in respect of contract procedure rules, financial regulations and standards of members conduct and make recommendations to the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer where necessary.

Code of Conduct

- Ensure the Combined County Authority has effective policies and processes in place to ensure high standards of conduct by its members, including non-voting members.
- Advising the Combined County Authority on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct and monitor its operation.
- Advising on training and overseeing the effectiveness of any training for members and non-voting members on matters relating to the Code of Conduct.

General

- To review any issue referred to the Committee by the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Chief Finance Officer (s73 Officer), the Monitoring Officer, any other senior officer or any Combined County Authority Member.
- Report and make recommendations to the Combined County Authority in relation to the above.
- To have responsibility for the delivery and effectiveness of member training.

4.2.15 The committee may appoint one or more sub-committees for the purpose of discharging any of the committee's functions.

Review

4.2.16 The terms of reference of the will be reviewed annually by the Combined County Authority.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
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Part 4.3 - Terms of Reference

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

4.3.1 This is the scrutiny committee of the Combined County Authority. This is a committee that the Combined County Authority must have by law.

4.3.2 The function of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is to:

- review or scrutinise any decision made, or other action taken, in connection with any function which is the responsibility of the Combined County Authority.
- make reports or recommendations to the Combined County Authority, with respect to any function which is the responsibility of the Combined Authority.
- make reports or recommendations to the Combined County Authority on any matter that affects the Combined County Authority's Area or the inhabitants of the Combined County Authority's Area.

Once the first Mayor's term of office begins, the function of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will include:

- to review or scrutinise any decision made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the Mayor of any general functions.
- to make reports or recommendations to the Mayor, with respect to the discharge of any general functions.
- to make reports or recommendations to the Mayor on any matter that affects the Combined County Authority's Area or the inhabitants of the Combined County Authority's Area.

4.3.3 The Combined County Authority must appoint one or more overview and scrutiny committees whose proceedings shall operate in accordance with these terms of reference and the Procedure Rules detailed in Part 5 of the Constitution**.**

4.3.4 The Committee may appoint one or more sub-committees for the purpose of discharging any of the Committee's functions.

Membership

4.3.5 The membership of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee shall consist of:

- two representatives from each constituent council apart from Hampshire County Council who will appoint four.
- At least two co-opted member, whilst ensuring that the majority of members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are members of the constituent councils.

4.3.6 In appointing constituent council members to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the Combined County Authority must, as far as reasonably possible, make sure that the committee's overall membership reflects the political balance that currently exists across all the Constituent Councils combined.

4.3.7 Members of the HSCCA Board, including the Mayor (once elected) and Deputy Mayor (once appointed), may not be members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Chairing the Committee

4.3.8 The Combined County Authority will appoint the Chair of the committee.

4.3.9 The Chair shall not be a member of the same political party as the Chair of the HSCCA Board in line with regulation 5 of the amended Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

4.3.10 In the absence of the appointed Chair, the committee will appoint a Chair for the meeting who is not of the same political party as the Chair of the HSCCA Board.

Quorum

4.3.11 The quorum will be seven voting members of the Committee.

Frequency

4.3.12 The committee will meet upon the required members and officers being in post, and within the financial year in which the HSCCA is constituted. Meetings shall be held in public with provision for public participation.

Functions

4.3.13 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has the following key tasks to deliver in fulfilling its functions:

- hold the Mayor (once elected) and the Combined County Authority to account.
- undertake pre-scrutiny of Board decision-making.
- utilise the power of call-in if there is the belief that a decision made but not yet implemented has not been made in accordance with the principles of decision-making set out in the Constitution.
- undertake policy review when approached to undertake or if gap/ issue identified through performance review and decision-making accountability.
- undertake strategic performance review of corporate key performance indicators.
- hold focused meetings on cross- cutting matters and/or issues of significant concern.
- undertake focused budget scrutiny on medium term financial plan alignment, delivery and consultation.
- undertake scrutiny reviews as and when required.

Review

4.3.14 The terms of reference of the will be reviewed annually by the Combined County Authority.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 4.4 - Terms of Reference

Business Advisory Board

4.4.1 The Business Advisory Board is a business-led body, evolving from the Solent Growth Partnership Business Board and the Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Business Board. It seeks to ensure that the Hampshire & Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) is guided by a strong, independent and diverse local business voice.

Membership

4.4.2 The membership of the Business Advisory Board shall consist of between 10 and 20 members. All members are voting, with any recommendations to be agreed by majority vote.

Voting Membership:

4.4.3 The membership will be determined following further to engagement with the business community, the constituent councils and the HSCCA.

Chairing the Committee

4.4.4 The Business Advisory Board Chair will be a business representative, recruited through an open recruitment process, and confirmed by the Combined County Authority.

4.4.5 In the absence of the appointed Chair, the Business Advisory Board will appoint a Chair for the meeting.

4.4.6 The Chair of the Business Advisory Board will be an associate member of the Combined County Authority Board.

Representing the Business Voice

4.4.7 The Business Advisory Board will nominate a representative to sit as an embedded non-voting member of the following Combined County Authority governance bodies:

i. Skills & Employment Support Advisory Board
ii. Economic Growth & Regeneration Advisory Board

Quorum

4.4.8 The quorum will be half the membership of the board.

Frequency

4.4.9 The board will meet once the Chair of the Business Advisory Board is in post and within the financial year in which the HSCCA is constituted. Meetings are not required to be held in public or have provision for public participation.

Functions

4.4.10 The Business Advisory Board will have a strong, independent and diverse local business voice. It will represent key sectors across Hampshire & the Solent, the different geographies and the different types of enterprises across the region.

4.4.11 The role of the BAB will be to provide advice and recommendations to the HSCCA Board, representing the perspective of business across the region.

4.4.12 The focus of the BAB will be to inform HSCCA decisions and priorities by developing and shaping strategy on a range of topics relevant to the regions business base and its economic growth. The BAB will also play a role in sharing business intelligence to inform the HSCCA approach to relevant activity, including business support, skills development and delivery of digital and physical infrastructure. The BAB will also provide a forum for debate, highlighting issues affecting the business community that the HSCCA and in time the Mayor may need to address. The BAB may also be asked to comment on aspects of policy developed through other forums in the HSCCA.

4.4.13 To facilitate effective stakeholder engagement, the Business Advisory Board may engage with relevant business sectors, representative bodies and wider stakeholder networks, as required, to inform its advice to the Combined County Authority, including providing sector-specific insight, guidance and coordinated responses to consultations.

Review

4.4.15 The terms of reference of the will be reviewed annually by the Combined County Authority.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
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Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 4.5 - Terms of Reference

Planning Advisory Board

4.5.1 The Planning Advisory Board will provide non-binding strategic advice on housing policy, spatial planning, and infrastructure development across the Hampshire and Solent region for the purpose of informing the HSCCA Board in the exercise of its statutory functions, including in relation to the delivery of regional housing and planning priorities.

The Planning Advisory Board shall not make decisions and shall operate within the remit approved by the HSCCA.

4.5.2 Membership

The membership of the Planning Advisory Board shall consist of:

- An elected member from each constituent council (with two members for Hampshire County Council), not to include any member who is also a member of the HSCCA Board; and

- A member from each of the local planning authorities and elected members appointed to national park authorities within, or partly within, the area of the CCA, each as put forward by that body in accordance with its own procedures.

Where a member of the Planning Advisory Board is also involved, whether beforehand or afterwards, in decision-making on a related matter in another capacity, that member must have regard to the risks of conflict of interest, predetermination or apparent bias.

4.5.3 Chairing the Planning Advisory Board

The Chair of the Planning Advisory Board shall be appointed annually and shall be a member of the Planning Advisory Board who is also a member of one of the HSCCA's constituent councils.

The Chair shall have no casting vote.

Quorum

4.5.4 The quorum will be 9 members.

Procedure

4.5.5 The Planning Advisory Board is not a decision-making body. Any advice to be given by the Planning Advisory Board shall be arrived at by consensus

where possible. If the members of the Planning Advisory Board cannot reach a consensus in respect of any particular matter, the range of views expressed by the Planning Advisory Board's members shall be summarised for the HSCCA Board.

4.5.6 Frequency

The board will first meet upon the required members and officers being in post, and within the financial year in which the HSCCA is constituted.

Planning Advisory Board meetings shall be held in public with arrangements for public participation to be determined by the Combined County Authority.

4.5.7 Functions

The Planning Advisory Board will provide advice to the Combined County Authority on matters relating to strategic planning, housing and infrastructure for the region, including matters relevant to the preparation or review of a Spatial Development Strategy as appropriate.

In doing so, the Planning Advisory Board may take into account the following considerations, as far as relevant and appropriate:

- Increasing the supply, diversity, and affordability of housing across the region;
- the contribution of strategic planning to sustainable and inclusive communities;
- the alignment of housing delivery with transport, employment, and environmental objectives; and
- Promoting innovation in housing design, construction, and energy efficiency.
- Facilitating collaboration between local authorities, developers, and housing providers.

4.5.8 Review

The terms of reference of the Planning Advisory Board will be reviewed annually by the Combined County Authority.

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Part 4.5(ii) - Planning Advisory Board Protocol for Collaborative Plan Making

Purpose

This protocol sets out the framework by which the CCA will support and collaborate with Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in the development of the Spatial Development Strategy and Local Plans. It aims to ensure that the evidence base underpinning plan-making is consistent, collaborative, and robust across the region.

This evidence base will include that required under the statutory duties of s8 Housing Act 1985 and Part 4 Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009; and any other evidence that is considered to be reasonably necessary for the production of a Spatial Development Strategy.

For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in the protocol is intended to attempt to override any legislative requirement, whether deriving from primary or secondary legislation, and whether made or not yet made, that deals with the preparation and process of producing or adopting a Spatial Development Strategy or that is otherwise relevant to the Spatial Development Strategy process.

1. Collaboration

1.1. The HSCCA and Constituent Councils will seek to work together and with each other and the other Local Planning Authorities within the region in a spirit of openness and cooperation to support effective plan-making.

1.2. Collaboration will be focused on the development and sharing of evidence, methodologies, and data to ensure alignment and consistency across local and regional planning documents, where in the view of the HSCCA this would be appropriate

1.3 The CCA and Constituent members will produce a Memorandum of Understanding ('The MoU') agreeing the areas of collaboration and cooperation in evidence gathering and maintenance. All other LPAs, including the National Park Authorities, will be invited to be signatories to this Memorandum and the CCA commits to all reasonable endeavours to secure this agreement.

2. Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Evidence

2.1 The MoU will include, but may not be limited to:

- 2.1.1 An agreement of shared methodology for the preparation of technical evidence. This methodology will be designed to ensure compatibility across different Local Plans and the Spatial Development Strategy (where applicable).
- 2.1.2 An agreement on a standardised approach to data sources and data gathering techniques. This will include the use of common datasets,

definitions, and assumptions to ensure comparability and reduce duplication

2.1.3 An agreement to seek and take opportunities to jointly commission collaborative studies and evidence. This will include an agreement that where bespoke data or evidence is required, authorities will share specifications and outputs to maintain transparency and consistency.

3. General principles

3.1 Any methodology or approach agreed as part of the MoU will be reviewed periodically to reflect changes in national policy, best practice, and local circumstances.

3.2. Authorities will work together to interpret and apply shared evidence in a way that reflects local context while supporting regional objectives

3.3. The protocol recognises that different authorities may be at different stages of plan-making and may require evidence covering varying time periods and geographies. Collaborative studies will be designed to accommodate these differences while maintaining overall coherence.

Part 4.6 - Terms of Reference

Investment Board

4.6.1 This is an officer advisory board to the Combined County Authority and the Mayor, once elected. Its purpose is to make recommendations to the Combined County Authority on investment decisions that do not fall within the terms of reference of any other committee or advisory board.

Membership

4.6.2 The membership of the Investment Board shall include the Chief Executive of the HSCCA and the Section 73 Officer and the HSCCA Executive Leadership Team.

4.6.3 The Investment Board may also include an independent representative of the Business Advisory Board (Chair or Vice Chair of Business Advisory Board).

Chairing the Committee

4.6.4 The HSCCA's Chief Executive will Chair the Investment Board.

4.6.5 In the absence of the appointed Chair, the Investment Board will appoint a Chair for the meeting.

Quorum

4.6.6 The quorum will be 50% of the membership of the Board at any given time.

Voting

4.6.7 Any matters that are to be recommended by the Investment Board are to be decided by consensus where possible.

4.6.8 When a vote is required, only voting members of the Investment Board will be entitled to vote at meetings, the Chair does not exercise a casting vote.

The Investment Board

4.6.9 The Investment Board will ensure any statutory requirements are met when considering proposals and recommending or making decisions. It will also ensure that these decisions are made/recommended with appropriate checks and balances particularly when assessing the merits of (potentially competing) business cases.

4.6.10 Investment decisions must be informed by and made within the strategic decision-making framework for investment, particularly the Local Growth Plan which will set out the Combined County Authority's investment priorities for the region and the benefits sought from them, against which investment impact will be measured. It is an objective of the Combined County Authority to develop its Local Growth Plan within year one, 2026/27, to provide the strategic framework for investment decisions.

Review

4.6.11 The terms of reference of the will be reviewed annually by the Combined County Authority.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
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Date:	
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Part 4.7 - Terms of Reference

Skills & Employment Support Advisory Board

4.7.1 This is an advisory board to the Combined County Authority. It seeks to provide strategy advice and guidance on skills and employment support matters in support of the exercise of Combined County Authority function.

4.7.2 The Skills & Employment Support Advisory Board will engage and seek advice from a range of key stakeholders including Combined County Authority area local authorities, FE colleges and independent training providers, key government agencies such as the Department for Work and Pensions, as well as employers in relation to developing funding priorities for the consolidated Adult Skills Funding (ASF) devolution.

4.7.3 The Board will:

- Develop for CCA Board consideration the emerging consolidated ASF priorities and advise on future ASF priorities through engagement with key stakeholders. Accountable for monitoring of eligibility criteria for ASF and achievement of all requirements within the prescribed timescales from DfE/DWP.

- Develop for CCA Board consideration, thematic strategy and key policy, engaging key stakeholders and partners to develop proposals to assist delivery of the Combined County Authority's strategic objectives.

- To act in a regional capacity to support the development of the skills and employment vision for the Combined County Authority area.

- Monitor the development of a regional skill strategy once the Local Growth Plan has been agreed, aligned to the LGP and other key strategic plans.

- Accountability for taking on strategic ownership of a single regional Get Britain Working plan, in conjunction with the DWP and the ICB.

- Accountability for and monitoring of future employment support schemes, subject to government or other funding.

Membership

4.7.4 The membership of the Skills & Employment Support Advisory Committee shall consist of:

- A member from each constituent authority (two for Hampshire County Council)
- Representatives from skills providers (FE Colleges, Independent Training Providers and unemployment support providers) can be invited.
- A member of the Business Advisory Board in a non-voting capacity.

4.7.5 The board may appoint non-voting members from partner or stakeholder organisations relevant to its remit, including representatives from district and borough councils. With the approval of the CCA Board, representatives from skills providers, such as FE colleges, independent training providers, and unemployment support organisations, may also be invited to participate. A member of the Business Advisory Board will sit as an embedded non-voting member.

Chairing the Board

4.7.6 The Chair of the Skills & Employment Support Advisory Board shall be one of the constituent members of HSCCA Board and replaces that authority's representative.

4.7.7 A Vice-Chair will be appointed by the Skills & Employment Support Advisory Board from amongst the constituent authority membership.

Quorum

4.7.8 The quorum will be 4 voting members including the Chair (or Deputy Chair).

Voting

4.7.9 Any matters that are to be recommended by the board are to be decided by consensus of the committee where possible.

4.7.10 The Chair does not exercise a casting vote.

Frequency

4.7.11 The board will first meet upon the required members and officers being in post, and within the financial year in which the HSCCA is constituted.

4.7.12 Skills & Employment Support Advisory Board meetings shall be held in public with provision for public participation.

Functions

4.7.13 To make recommendations to the Combined County Authority in relation to:

- Approval and review of the ASF Assurance Framework;
- Approval of ASF programme plan each year and monitoring of its implementation;
- Employment Strategy
- Consolidated Adult Skills Fund Strategy;
- Commissioning Strategy;
- Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP);
- Relevant governance and decision-making arrangements;
- allocation the consolidated Adult Skills Fund including the main budget categories, including Grant, procured provision and associated costs for the consolidated Adult Skills Fund;
- ASF commissioning strategy, including ‘indicative’ and ‘final’ provider allocations;
- In-year budget changes where funding is transferred between the main budget categories;
- Strategic direction and priorities (including those identified through stakeholder consultation activities);
- Policy decisions that cannot be aligned to the overall strategic direction;
- Annual agreement of consolidated ASF Funding Rules and Rates;
- Termination of an ASF contract for services/grant agreement;

- Substantive in-year changes to ASF Funding Rules and Rates to improve provider management.

Review

4.7.14 The terms of reference of the will be reviewed annually by the Combined County Authority.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
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Part 4.8 - Terms of Reference

Economic Growth & Regeneration Advisory Board

4.8.1 This is an advisory board to the Combined County Authority. It seeks to provide strategy advice and guidance on Economic Development & Regeneration matters in support of the exercise of Combined County Authority.

4.8.2 The Economic Growth and Regeneration Board provides strategic monitoring of economic development, regeneration, and business engagement aligned with the Local Growth Plan the Hampshire and Solent region. It promotes inclusive growth, supports investment priorities, and advises the Combined County Authority on matters relating to the regional economy.

4.8.3 Membership

The membership of the Economic Growth & Regeneration Advisory Board shall consist of:

- A member from each constituent authority (two for Hampshire County Council).
- One additional member from each constituent authority (two for Hampshire County Council).
- A member of the Business Advisory Board in a non-voting capacity.

4.8.4 In appointing members to Economic Development & Regeneration Advisory Board the Combined County Authority must ensure that the members of the committee taken as a whole reflect so far as reasonably practicable the balance of political parties for the time being prevailing among members of the constituent councils when taken together.

The board may appoint additional Non-Voting Membership from partner and stakeholder bodies relevant to the remit of the committee (including representatives from District & Borough Councils), with the approval of the CCA Board.

4.8.5 Chairing the Board

The Chair of the Economic Growth & Regeneration Advisory Board shall be appointed annually and shall be one of the constituent members of HSCCA Board and replaces that authority's representative.

A Vice-Chair will be appointed by the Economic Growth & Regeneration Advisory Board from amongst the constituent authority membership.

4.8.6 Quorum

The quorum will be 4 voting members including the Chair (or Deputy Chair).

4.8.7 Voting

Any matters that are to be recommended by the board are to be decided by consensus of the board where possible.

When a vote is required, only voting members of the board will be entitled to vote at meetings, the Chair does not exercise a casting vote.

4.8.8 Frequency

The board will first meet upon the required members and officers being in post, and within the financial year in which the HSCCA is constituted.

Economic Growth & Regeneration Advisory Board meetings shall be held in public with provision for public participation.

4.8.9 Functions

The Economic Growth & Regeneration Advisory Board will take a lead on and advise the Combined County Authority in respect of the below, subject to the committee exercising these functions in accordance with the strategic and budgetary framework agreed by the Combined County Authority:

- Oversee the development of the Local Growth Plan and associated engagement and consultation.
- Oversee the developing strategic priorities across the constituent authorities and as underpinned by the evidence base, to support engagement with government to agree these.

- To oversee development of a strategic investment portfolio for the region, aligned to the Local Growth Plan and investment strategy for HSCCA.
- To have visibility of the developing strategic priorities across the constituent authorities and to support engagement with the government in respect of their approval.
- To oversee the development of a strategic investment portfolio for the region, aligned to the LGP and the Investment Strategy for the HSCCA.
- Drive economic growth and productivity across the region.
- Support regeneration initiatives and infrastructure development.
- Promote innovation, skills development, and employment opportunities.
- Advise on the allocation and delivery of relevant funding streams.
- Foster collaboration between public, private, and third sector stakeholders.

4.8.10 Review

The terms of reference of the will be reviewed annually by the Combined County Authority.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
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Part 5a - Procedure Rules

1 Annual Meetings

1.1 In 2026 the inaugural annual meeting shall take place as soon as is reasonably practicable following the HSCCA being established.

1.2 In subsequent years the annual general meeting must be held between 1 March and prior to 30th June each year in line with Schedule 12, paragraph 6A of the Local Government Act 1972.

1.3 At the Annual meeting the Combined County Authority Board will:

(a) Until a Mayor is elected, appoint a Chair and Vice- Chair and note the constituent council members and substitute members;

(b) Receive apologies for absence;

(c) Receive any declarations of interest from Members;

(d) Approve the minutes of the last meeting;

(e) Receive any announcements from the Chair or the Chief Executive;

(f) Once the Mayor has been elected, receive details of the Mayor's appointments of the Deputy Mayor and arrangements in respect of Mayoral General Functions;

(g) Appoint non-constituent members and associate members and their substitutes;

(h) Approve a programme of ordinary meetings of the Combined County Authority for the year;

(i) Approve committee arrangements and appointments to committees including appointing at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and an Audit and Governance Committee and such other committees and advisory boards as required;

(j) Receive nominations and appoint Members to serve on outside bodies;

(k) Consider any other business set out in the summons convening the meeting;

(l) Consider any business that the Chair believes to be urgent, in that the matter to be determined has arisen since the publication

of the agenda and failure to determine it at this meeting would cause significant adverse impact on the Combined County Authority.

2 Ordinary Meetings

2.1 Ordinary meetings of the Combined County Authority shall take place in accordance with a programme decided at the Combined County Authority's Annual meeting. Ordinary meetings will:

(a) Receive apologies for absence;

(b) Approve the minutes of the last meeting;

(c) Receive any declarations of interest;

(d) Receive any announcements from the Chair or the Chief Executive;

(e) Deal with any business adjourned from the last Combined County Authority meeting;

(f) Respond to any questions from members of the public;

(g) Consider reports and recommendations from any Committee or Advisory Board of the Combined County Authority;

(h) Consider reports and recommendations from any Officer of the Combined County Authority;

(i) Consider motions on notice;

(j) Consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, and for debate;

3. Extraordinary Meetings

3.1 The Monitoring Officer, Chief Financial Officer and Head of Paid Services (Chief Executive) may call, and those listed below may require the Monitoring Officer to call, Extraordinary Combined County Authority Board meetings in addition to ordinary meetings:

(a) The Combined County Authority;

(b) The Chair of the Combined County Authority;

(c) Any three Combined County Authority Members who have signed a requisition which has been presented to the Chair and

the Chair has refused to call a meeting or has failed to call a meeting within 5 clear working days of the presentation of the request.

Only business specified in the summons may be transacted at an Extraordinary Combined County Authority Board meeting.

4. Chair

4.1 The Chair, or in their absence the Vice Chair (who will have the same powers and duties as the Chair), will preside at meetings of the Combined County Board.

4.2 Where the Vice Chair is acting in place of the Chair they cannot also act in their capacity as a Combined County Member. The substitute member for the Vice Chair may act in the place of the Vice Chair in their capacity as a Combined County Member.

4.3 If for any reason the Chair or Vice Chair are unable to act, the meeting will stand adjourned.

5. Quorum

5.1 No business may be transacted at a meeting of the Combined County Authority unless the following persons are present:

(a) The Chair or the Vice Chair acting in place of the Chair, and

(b) at least three members of the Combined County Authority appointed by constituent councils, or substitute members acting in their place.

5.2 If at the time for which a meeting is called, and for 15 minutes thereafter, a quorum is not present, then no meeting shall take place with the agreement of the Chair.

5.3 If during any meeting the Chair, after counting the number of Members present, declares that there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall stand adjourned to a time fixed by the Chair. If there is no quorum and the Chair does not fix a time for the reconvened meeting, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the next ordinary meeting of the Combined County Authority.

6. Time, Place and Duration of Meetings

6.1 Combined County Authority meetings are held at any place within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight as the Combined County Authority directs and held during normal business hours unless the Combined County Authority or the Chair decides otherwise. Any changes to the date, time and place of meetings or cancellation of meetings will be determined by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair.

6.2 The Chair shall interrupt proceedings where any meeting has lasted for three hours, whereupon all Members shall stop speaking. The Chair shall, without discussion, take a vote on whether or not the Members wish the meeting to continue.

6.3 Any meeting which has sat continuously for three hours shall stand adjourned unless the Chair puts, without debate, a motion to the vote that the meeting continue for a further specified period, and that motion is passed by a majority of the Members present and voting.

7. Suspension, Variation, Revocation, and Interpretation of Procedure Rules

7.1 Any motion to vary or revoke these Procedure Rules shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Combined County Authority Board.

7.2 Procedure Rules may be suspended in respect of any business at a meeting of the Combined County Authority Board where its suspension is moved and seconded, except where this would be in contravention of statute.

7.3 A motion to suspend Procedure Rules shall not be moved without notice unless there are present at least three of the Members of the Combined County Authority appointed by constituent councils or Substitute Members acting in their place.

7.4 The ruling of the Chair as to the construction or application of Procedure Rules, or as to any proceedings of the Combined County Authority, shall not be challenged. The Chair may consult with the Monitoring Officer or their nominee on any question of interpretation.

8. Items of Business

8.1 No item of business may be considered at any meeting except:

- The business set out in the Summons,
- Business required by law to be transacted at the annual meeting, or
- Business brought before the meeting as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances, which shall be specified in the minutes, and the Chair is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

9. Order of Business

9.1 Business shall be dealt with in the order in which it is set out in the agenda unless the Chair decides otherwise.

10. Record of Attendance

10.1 The Monitoring Officer will ensure that the name of any Member present during the whole or part of a meeting is recorded.

11. Confirmation of Minutes and Declarations of Interest

11.1 Minutes of the last Combined County Authority meeting shall be confirmed at the next Ordinary meeting of the Combined County Authority.

11.2 Only matters relating to the accuracy of the minutes can be raised, which must be done by way of a motion which is proposed, seconded, and voted upon. Where no issues are raised, or after the motion has been dealt with, the Chair shall initial each page and sign the minutes.

11.3 Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter being discussed should declare the nature of the interest and withdraw from the meeting during the item.

11.4 Any Member with an Other Registrable Interest or Non-Registrable Interest in a matter being discussed should declare the nature of the

interest and should withdraw from the meeting during the item, if required to do so under the Member Code of Conduct.

12. Motions on Notice

12.1 **Notice.** Except for Procedural Motions which can be moved without notice, written notice of every motion, signed by at least one Member, must be delivered to the Monitoring Officer, not later than midday, at least ten clear working days before the date of the meeting.

12.2 Motions for which notice has been given will be listed on the agenda in the order in which they were received, unless the Member giving notice states, in writing, that they propose to move it to a later meeting or withdraw it.

12.3 No more than one motion may be proposed by any individual Member for each meeting.

12.4 **Scope**. Each motion must:

(a) clearly and succinctly identify the matter to be debated;

(b) be capable of being passed as a formal resolution; and

(c) be about matters for which the Combined County Authority has a responsibility, or which specifically affect the Combined County Authority area.

12.5 The Monitoring Officer may, reject a motion which, in their opinion:

(a) is irrelevant, defamatory, frivolous, offensive, vexatious, unlawful or otherwise improper;

(b) refers to legal proceedings taken or anticipated by or against the Combined County Authority

(c) requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information;

(d) names or identifies specific service users, members of staff or members of staff of partner organisations without the mover demonstrating they have provided consent;

(e) relates to the Member's own personal circumstances;

(f) expresses support or objection to proposals where the Combined County Authority is in the process of consulting with the public or responding to a formal consultation process.

12.6 **Alteration.** A proposer may alter a motion on which they have given notice when they come to move it, in which case the amendment becomes part of the substantive motion without debate. Only alterations that could be made as an amendment may be made.

12.7 **Withdrawal.** Where a motion on notice is before the Combined County Authority having been formally moved and seconded, the mover may subsequently withdraw it only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion. No member may speak on the Motion after the proposer has asked permission to withdraw it unless permission is refused.

12.8 **Motions not moved.** If a motion set out in the summons is not moved by the Member who gave notice of it, it shall, unless postponed by consent of the Combined County Authority, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

12.9 **Rescission of earlier resolutions.** No motion or amendment may be proposed to rescind any resolution of the Combined County Authority passed within the preceding six months, or which is to the same effect as one which has been rejected within that period, unless:

(a) It is proposed by a committee of the Combined County Authority,

(b) It is required to comply with a statutory duty; or

(c) Notice of such motion has been given and signed by at least one third of the total number of members who include members from more than one political group.

13. Amendments

13.1 An amendment to a motion must:

(a) Be relevant to the motion;

(b) Add and/or delete a word or words;

(c) Not introduce a new topic;

(d) Not negate the motion;

(e) Be worded so that, if it is agreed by the Combined County Authority, it can be passed as a valid resolution.

13.2 The Chair, following consultation with the Monitoring Officer, may reject an amendment on the grounds set out in Rule 12.5 or 13.1. An amendment will not be accepted if it is substantially the same as a

motion or amendment which has already been submitted to the same meeting of the Combined County Authority Board.

13.3 **Number of Amendments.** Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at a time. No further amendment shall be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of.

13.4 **Status of Amendments.** If an amendment is lost, another amendment may be moved on the original motion. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

13.5 After all amendments have been considered and determined there shall be an opportunity for further debate on the original motion, as amended or otherwise as the case may be, prior to the taking of a vote.

14. Motions and Amendments that may be moved without Notice

14.1 **Procedural motions.** The following motions and amendments may be moved without notice for consideration when a Chair is in place for the meeting:

(a) Relating to the accuracy of the minutes of the Combined County Authority, a committee or sub-committee;

(b) For a change in the order of business;

(c) Extending the time limit for speeches;

(d) That the meeting proceeds to the next business;

(e) That the question be now put;

(f) That the debate be now adjourned;

(g) That the meeting does now adjourn;

(h) To suspend Procedure Rules;

(i) Giving consent where consent of the Combined County Authority is required by the Procedure Rules

(j) Reference of a matter to a committee or sub-committee;

(k) Appointment of or appointment to committees or sub-committees occasioned by an item mentioned in the summons to the meeting;

(l) That a Member should not be heard further or should leave the meeting;

(m) Adoption of recommendations of committees and subcommittees and any consequent resolutions;

(n) That leave is given to withdraw a motion;

(o) That leave is given to alter a motion by the mover of that motion;

(p) Receipt of reports of officers and any consequent resolutions;

(q) Amendment to reports of which notification has been included within the summons of the meeting but where the reports were circulated at a later date than the summons;

(r) Authorising the sealing of documents;

(s) To exclude the press and public

14.2 **Closure motions.** Motions designed to close a debate, e.g. (e)-(h) above, may be moved provided no-one else is speaking at the time. Closure motions cannot be moved by anyone who has moved, seconded, or already spoken in the debate. No person may intervene in discussion on a motion by moving more than one closure motion.

14.3 When one of the following motions has been seconded, the Chair shall proceed as follows:

(a) **On a motion to proceed to next business** - unless in their opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, they shall first give the mover of the original motion the right of reply and then put to the vote the motion to proceed to next business.

(b) **On a motion that the question, be now put** - unless in their opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, they shall put to the vote the motion that the question be now put and, if it is passed, give the mover of the original motion the right of reply before putting the motion to the vote.

(c) **On a motion to adjourn the debate or the meeting** - if in their opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed on that occasion, they shall put the adjournment motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion the right of reply on that occasion.

(d) **On a motion to exclude the public** - they shall ascertain the grounds for the motion and seek the advice of the Monitoring

Officer. If members of the public may be lawfully excluded, the Mayor, or until the first Mayor is elected, the Chair, will allow the mover of the original motion a right of reply on the proposal to exclude the public and then put the motion to the vote. If it is passed, the Mayor or until the first Mayor is elected, the Chair may, at their discretion, either immediately require the public to leave the room or adjourn the debate until some convenient time later in the meeting when the public shall have been excluded.

(e) On a motion that a named Member, be not further heard or leave the meeting - they shall put the motion to the vote without discussion. If it is passed, the named Member shall not be permitted to speak again during the meeting on any motion or amendment relating to the same matter or shall be required to leave the room.

15. Rules of Debate

15.1 **Motions and Amendments.** No motion or amendment shall be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded. Where required by the Chair, motions or amendments shall be put in writing and handed to the Chair before they are further debated or put to the meeting.

15.2 **Seconder's Speech**. When seconding a motion or amendment, a Member may advise the Chair that they will reserve their right to speak until a later period in the debate.

15.3 **Content and length of speeches**. A Member will confine their speech to the question under discussion, a personal explanation, or a point of order. All speeches shall not exceed five minutes.

15.4 **When a Member may speak again**. A Member who has spoken on any motion shall not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate, except:

(a) To speak once on an amendment moved by another Member;

(b) If the motion has been amended since they last spoke, to move a further amendment;

(c) If their first speech was on an amendment moved by another Member, to speak on the main issue, whether or not the amendment on which they spoke was carried;

(d) Where the mover of a motion exercises their right to reply:

(i) at the close of the debate on the motion, immediately before it is put to the vote;

(ii) if an amendment is moved, at the close of the debate on the amendment (but they shall not otherwise speak on it). The mover of an amendment shall have no right of reply to the debate on their amendment.

(e) On a point of order referring to a specific Procedure Rule or statutory provision (which must be cited);

(f) By way of personal explanation.

16. Points of Order and Personal Explanations

16.1 A Member may raise on a point of order or in personal explanation and shall be entitled to be heard immediately. A Member raising a point of order must specify a Procedure Rule or statutory provision and the way in which they consider it has been breached.

16.2 A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by them which may appear to have been misunderstood or misquoted in the current debate.

16.3 The Chair will hear the Member and give a ruling on the point of order or the admissibility of the personal explanation before the debate continues. The Chair may consult on any question of interpretation with the Monitoring Officer or their nominee prior to making a ruling. The ruling of the Chair on the matter shall not be open to discussion and will be final.

17. Voting

17.1 Until such time as the first mayor's term of office begins, the following voting arrangements shall apply:

(a) Each of the five Constituent Members (or a Substitute Member acting in their place) has one vote.

(b) Except as otherwise provided for by law and by the provisions in this section, any question shall be decided by a majority of members present and voting on that question at a meeting of the Combined County Authority.

(c) Decisions relating to the following matters require a unanimous vote in favour by all five Constituent Members to be carried—

(i) approval or amendment of the Combined County Authority's budget;

(ii) development and adoption of any local transport plan under section 108(3) of the 2000 Act;

(iii) approval or amendment of the Combined County Authority's constitution or standing orders;

(iv) approval or amendment of such other plans and strategies as may be determined by the Combined County Authority and set out in its constitution or standing orders.

(d) none of the following decisions may be taken unless the decision is approved by the member appointed by the constituent council concerned—

(i) any decision which results in a financial liability on the constituent council;

(ii) any decision which affects any land within the area of the constituent council;

(iii) any decision which results in an exercise of functions within the area of the constituent council.

17.2 Unless otherwise stated below, a non-constituent member appointed to a committee or to a sub-committee established by such a committee, or an advisory board is to be treated as a *non-voting member* of that body.

A person may vote only if they are:

i. a councillor of one of the constituent councils (as defined in regulation 2 of the *Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026*); or

ii. a non-constituent- member of the Combined County Authority (as defined in the same regulation) and the Authority has resolved, under section 11(4) of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, that the individual is to have voting rights on that committee or sub-committee.

17.3 Associate members are not entitled to vote.

17.4 Neither the Chair, Vice Chair nor any member or substitute member is to have a casting vote.

17.5 If a vote is tied on any matter, it is deemed not to have been carried.

18. Method of Voting

18.1 At all public meetings voting will be by recorded vote. When a recorded vote is undertaken, the minutes will record how each voting member voted, or whether they abstained from voting.

19. Conduct at Meetings

19.1 Mobile phones and other electronic devices must be switched to 'silent' during meetings.

19.2 Filming or recording of any meeting of the Combined County Authority is permitted, subject to the following:

(a) Filming or recording is done openly.

(b) That the Chair has been notified at the commencement of the meeting that filming or recording will be taking place.

(c) That anybody attending the meeting, with the exception of Members and officers, may request not to be filmed or recorded.

(d) Meetings or parts of meetings from which the press and public are excluded may not be filmed or recorded.

(e) Any person or organisation choosing to film, photograph or record any meeting of the Council, is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them doing so and by choosing to film, photograph or record proceedings, they accept that they are required to indemnify the Council, its members and officers in relation to any such claims or liabilities.

19.3 Placards are not permitted during meetings.

19.4 **Member not to be heard further**. If a Member persistently disregards the ruling of the Chair by continued irrelevance or repetitions, by behaving improperly or offensively, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the Combined County Authority, the Chair may direct the Member to stop speaking. If, following a direction from the Chair to stop speaking, the Member continues to speak, the Chair (or any other Member) may move that the Member be not heard further. If seconded, the Chair shall put the motion to the vote without discussion and if passed, the Member shall not be permitted to speak on the same matter again during the meeting.

19.5 **Member to leave the meeting.** If a Member persistently disregards the ruling of the Mayor by continued irrelevance or repetitions, by behaving improperly or offensively, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the Combined County Authority, the Chair may request them to leave for the

remainder of the meeting or for any lesser period. If following a request to leave the meeting, the offending Member does not leave, the Chair (or any other Member) may move that the Member named leave the meeting. The motion shall be put and, if seconded, voted upon without discussion. If carried, the Chair shall give directions for the removal of the Member and such other directions as are necessary for restoring order to the proceedings.

19.6 **Removal of member of the public.** If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, causes a disturbance or behaves improperly, offensively, or wilfully obstructs the business of the Combined County Authority, the Chair will warn the person concerned. If the member of the public, having been warned, continues their conduct, the Chair may order their removal from the meeting room.

19.7 **General disturbance.** If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for as long as they think necessary.

20. Substitute Members

20.1 Subject to Part 2, Article 1, paragraph 2.7, a substitute member may only act for the Combined County Authority Member for whom they are the designated substitute.

20.2 With the exception of the substitute member for the Vice Chair where the Vice Chair is acting in the place of the Chair, a substitute member may only act when the Combined County Authority Member is absent from the meeting.

20.3 A substitute member may not exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the Member for whom they are substituting.

21. Attendance at Meetings

21.1 The Chair may invite the Chair of any advisory board, committee, or sub-committee of the Combined County Authority to attend and speak at any meeting of the Combined County Authority to:

- Present any reports or recommendations of the committee or sub-committee;
- Answer questions about any matter in the minutes of that committee or sub-committee, or

- Contribute to the discussions about any matter which is relevant to the functions discharged by the committee or sub-committee of which they are chair.

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Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 5b - Access to Information Procedure Rules

Rights to attend meetings, inspect documents and record proceedings

Part 1: Rights of the Public: Combined County Authority Functions

References to meetings of the Combined County Authority include meetings of any ordinary or statutory committee or sub-committee appointed by the Combined County Authority. These provisions do not affect any other rights to information arising under any standing orders of the Combined County Authority, or by law.

1. Public Access to a Combined County Authority Meetings, Committees and Advisory Boards

1.1 Any meeting of the Combined County Authority shall be open to the public except where the public is excluded (during the whole or part of the proceedings) in accordance with the following:

A Confidential Information

1.2 The public must be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that confidential information would be disclosed.

1.3 Confidential information means:

- information given to the Combined County Authority by a Government department on terms which forbid its public disclosure, or
- information the public disclosure of which is prohibited by or under an Act or Court Order.

B Exempt Information

1.4 The Combined County Authority may resolve to exclude the public from a meeting during an item whenever it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that exempt information would be disclosed to the public if the public were present during the item.

1.5 Exempt information means information falling within one of the following descriptions (as set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972):

Description

Paragraph 1 Information relating to any **individual.**

Paragraph 2 Information which is likely to reveal the **identity of an individual.**

Paragraph 3 Information relating to the financial or **business affairs of any particular person** (including the Combined County Authority holding that information), except information which must be registered under various statutes, such as the Companies Acts or the Charities Act 2011. "Financial or business affairs" includes contemplated, as well as past or current, activities.

Paragraph 4 Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any **labour relations matter** arising between the Combined County Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or officer-holders under the Combined County Authority

Paragraph 5 Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in **legal proceedings**.

Paragraph 6 Information which reveals that the Combined County Authority proposes:

(a) to give under any enactment **a notice** under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person, or
(b) to make an **order or direction** under any enactment.

Paragraph 7 Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation, or prosecution of **crime.**

1.6 Information falling within any of these descriptions is not exempt information if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission under regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.

1.7 Information falling within any of these descriptions may only be exempt if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

1.8 A resolution to exclude the public from a meeting must:

- identify the proceedings, or the part of the proceedings, to which it applies,

- state the description of the exempt information giving rise to the exclusion of the public, and

- confirm (by referring to reasons in a relevant report or otherwise) that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

C General Disturbance

1.9 Procedure Standing Order 20.7 in Part 5 of the Constitution provides for the public to be excluded from a meeting where general disturbance arises.

2. Public Access to Agenda and Reports of a Combined County Authority Meeting

2.1 The Monitoring Officer shall make the following open to public inspection, at the offices of the Combined County Authority in accordance with the Combined County Authority's Procedure Standing Orders in Part 5 of the Constitution:

- copies of the agenda for a meeting of the Combined County Authority

- copies of any report for the meeting open to the public

3. Public Access to Copies at a Combined Authority Meeting

3.1 The Monitoring Officer will make available for the use of members of the public present at a meeting a reasonable number of copies of:

- the agenda

- those reports open to the public

4. Public Access to Documents After a Combined Authority Meeting

4.1 The Monitoring Officer will make available for inspection copies of the following for six years after a meeting:

- the minutes of the meeting (excluding any part of the minutes when the meeting was not open to the public or which disclose exempt or confidential information).

- a written summary of any proceedings not open to the public where the minutes open to inspection would not provide a reasonably fair and coherent record.

- the agenda for the meeting.

- reports relating to items when the meeting was open to the public.

5. Public Access to Background Papers to a Combined County Authority Meeting Report

5.1 The author of any report will set out in the report a list of the background papers relating to the subject matter of the report which in the author's opinion:

- disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based
- have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report.

This requirement does not extend to:

- published works
- papers which disclose exempt or confidential information.

5.2 The Monitoring Officer will:

- publish a list of each of the background documents listed on the Combined County Authority's website at the same time as the report is available for public inspection

- make a copy of each available to the public at the offices of the Combined Authority, on payment of a reasonable fee

5.3 The Monitoring Officer will make available for public inspection one copy of each of the documents on the list of background papers, for four years after the date of the meeting.

6. Reporting and Recording a Combined County Authority Meeting

6.1 The Combined County Authority will provide so far as practicable, reasonable facilities to any person attending a meeting for the purpose of reporting on the meeting.

6.2 A person attending a meeting for the purpose of reporting on it may use any communication method, including the internet, to publish, post or otherwise share the results of the person's reporting activities.

6.3 Publication and dissemination may take place at the time of the meeting or occur after the meeting.

6.4 Any person reporting on a meeting is expected to comply with the attached Code of Practice.

6.5 Meetings of the Combined County Authority may be recorded and made available for public viewing on the internet. The Chair of a meeting may restrict the recording of meetings where an external participant in the meeting objects to being recorded and the Chair considers that the public interest in upholding their objection outweighs the public interest in allowing the recording to continue. The Chair will ask those reporting to respect the wishes of the external participant.

7. Forward Plan: Combined County Authority Functions

A Definition of a Key Decision

7.1 A Key Decision means a decision of a decision maker, which in the view of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Combined County Authority is likely to:

(i) result in the authority or the Mayor (once elected) incurring significant expenditure, or the making of significant savings, having regard to the Combined County Authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

(ii) be significant in terms of its effects on persons living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the Combined County Authority.

When assessing whether or not a decision is a Key Decision, Members must consider all the circumstances of the case. However, a decision which results in a significant amount spent or saved will not generally be considered to be a Key Decision if that amount is less than £1,000,000.

A decision-maker may only make a Key Decision in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Access to Information Procedure Rules, and
- Combined County Authority Procedure Standing Orders

7.2 For the purposes of (i) above, this includes any decision likely to result in the Combined County Authority incurring expenditure or making savings (including the receipt or loss of income) of £1,000,000 or more in any financial year.

7.3 For the purposes of (i) and (ii) above, the following shall not be treated as a Key Decision:

- any decision which is a direct consequence of implementing a previous Key Decision

- any decision which is the result of varying a previous Key Decision in line with recommendations made by an overview and scrutiny committee following a call-in of that decision
- a Treasury Management decision in relation to the making, payment or borrowing of a loan
- a decision by an officer under delegated authority to vary any document for updating or clarification purposes only
- the urgent settlement of proceedings to which the Combined County Authority is a party
- any decision relating to the acceptance of funding

B Notice Provisions

7.4 Except where impracticable, a Key Decision cannot be made unless and until a notice has been published which states:

- that a Key Decision is to be made in relation to the discharge of functions which are the Combined County Authority's responsibility
- the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made
- the decision maker's name and title, if any
- the date on which, or the period within which, the decision is to be made
- a list of documents submitted to the decision maker for consideration in relation to the matter in respect of which the key decision is to be made
- the address from which, subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure, copies of or extracts from, any document listed is available
- that other documents relevant to those matters may be submitted to the decision maker
- the procedure for requesting details of those documents (if any) as they become available

7.5 The Monitoring Officer will publish any such notice on the Forward Plan on the Combined County Authority's website at least 28 clear days before the Key Decision is made and make it available for public inspection at the Offices of the Combined County Authority (subject to C and D below).

7.6 Where in relation to any matter:

- the public may be excluded under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 from the meeting at which the matter is to be discussed
- documents relating to the decision need not (because of confidential information) be disclosed to the public

C General Exception

7.7 Subject to cases of special urgency, where it is impracticable to publish a notice of a Key Decision at least 28 clear days before the Key Decision is to be made, the decision may only be made:

- where the Monitoring Officer has informed the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by notice in writing of the matter about which the decision is to be made
- where the Monitoring Officer has published the notice on the Combined County Authority's website and made the notice available for public inspection at the Combined County Authority's offices
- after 5 clear days have elapsed following the day on which the Monitoring Officer made the copy of the notice available

7.8 As soon as reasonably practicable after the Monitoring Officer has served a notice on the Chair, published the notice and made it available to the public, the Monitoring Officer must make available to the public and publish a notice setting out the reasons why it was impracticable to publish the notice of a Key Decision at least 28 days before the Key Decision was to be made.

D Cases of Special Urgency

7.9 Where the date by which a Key Decision must be made makes it impracticable to comply with the general exception provision above, the Key Decision may only be made where the decision maker has obtained agreement from the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, or if they are unable to act, the Chair of the CCA, that the making of the Key Decision is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred.

7.10 As soon as reasonably practicable after the decision maker has obtained the necessary agreement that the Key Decision is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred, the decision maker must make available to the public at the Combined County Authority's offices a notice setting out the reasons why the Key Decision is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred; and publish that notice on the Combined County Authority's website.

E Requests for Statutory Consents – Combined County Authority Functions

7.11 The 2026 Order provides that the exercise of some Concurrent Functions are subject to a consent provision, ("Statutory Consent"), to safeguard the constituent councils' role in local decision-making and delivery.

8. Public access to written records of decisions made by officers: Combined County Authority Functions

8.1 A decision-making officer is required to produce a written record of their decision if the decision has been delegated under specific authority.

8.2 Any award of a contract or expenditure of £1,000,000 or over will be deemed to materially affect the Combined County Authority's financial position.

8.3 An Officer may also:
(a) record, or
(b) record and publish, any other decision outside of 8.1, if they consider this to be in the public interest.

8.4 As soon as reasonably practicable after an officer has made a written record in accordance with 8.1 or 8.3b, the Monitoring Officer shall make any written record and any background papers

- available for inspection by the public:
- during usual business hours, at the offices of the Combined County Authority,
- on the Combined County Authority's website, and
- by such other means that the Combined County Authority considers appropriate.

8.5 On request the Monitoring Officer will provide:

- a copy of the written record, and
- a copy of any background papers.

8.6 The Combined County Authority will retain each written record and make it available for public inspection for six years beginning with the date on which the decision was made.

8.7 The Combined County Authority will retain any background papers and make them available for public inspection for four years beginning with the date on which the decision was made.

Part 2: Press Access to a Combined County Authority Meeting

1.1 The Monitoring Officer shall supply on request for any media outlet:

- a copy of the agenda and those reports open to the public,
- any further statements necessary to indicate the nature of the items on the agenda, and
- if the Monitoring Officer thinks fit, copies of any other documents supplied to Combined County Authority Members in connection with the item.

1.2 Procedure Standing Order 20 and rights relating to recording proceedings set out above apply to members of the press, in the same way as they apply to the public.

Part 3: Freedom of Information (FOI) and the Local Government Transparency Code

1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 apply to the Combined County Authority, which therefore publishes information under a Publication Scheme. The Scheme specifies:

- the classes of information which the Combined County Authority publishes or intends to publish,
- how information in each class is, or is intended to be, published, and
- whether the material is, or is intended to be, available to the public free of charge or on payment.

1.2 The public also has a general right of access to information held by the Combined County Authority, but this is subject to exemptions

1.3 A request for information must be submitted to and dealt with by the Data Protection Officer.

1.4 A request for information under the FOIA must:

- be in writing
- state the name of the applicant
- state an address for correspondence, and
- describe the information requested.

1.5 A request for information under the EIR must state a name and address for written correspondence, however the request can be made verbally or in writing.

1.6 The Combined County Authority publishes information as required by the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, which includes but is not limited to the following:

- spending and expenditure including grants,
- procurement information including contracts,
- organisation chart detailing senior management personnel, and
- land and assets

Part 4: Members' Access

1. General

1.1 Any member of the Combined County Authority is entitled to inspect any document which:

- is in the possession of or under the control of the Combined County Authority, and
- contains material relating to any business to be transacted at a meeting of the Combined County Authority.

1.2 unless it appears to the Monitoring Officer that it discloses information falling within any of the descriptions of exempt information (set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as listed under section 1B above), other than the following (which will be open for inspection by members):

(a) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the Combined County Authority (except to the extent that the information relates to any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Combined County Authority in the course of negotiations for a contract), or

(b) Information which reveals that the Combined County Authority proposes:
- to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person, or
- to make an order or direction under any enactment

1.3 These rights are in addition to any other rights the member may have (such as those arising from a member's need to know at common law).

1.4 The accounts of the Combined County Authority shall be open to the inspection of any member and any such member may make a copy of or extract from the accounts.

2. Additional Rights of Access to Documents for Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee

2.1 Subject to the exceptions outlined below, a member of an overview and scrutiny committee or subcommittee is entitled to a copy of any document which is in the possession or under the control of the Combined County Authority or the Mayor, once elected, and contains material relating to any business that has been transacted at a meeting of the Combined County Authority or at a decision-making committee of the Combined County Authority or any decision that has been made by an individual member of the Combined County Authority. The member must make any request for such a document in writing to the Monitoring Officer, who shall consider any such request on behalf of the Combined County Authority.

2.2 The document must be provided as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any case, no later than 10 clear days after the Monitoring Officer receives the request.

2.3 No member of an overview and scrutiny committee or sub-committee is entitled to a copy:

(a) of any such document or part of a document as contains exempt or confidential information, unless that information is relevant to:

- an action or decision that the member is reviewing or scrutinising, or
- any review contained in any programme of work of the committee or sub-committee.

(b) of a document or part of a document containing advice provided by a political adviser.

2.4 Where the Monitoring Officer determines that a member is not entitled to a copy of a document or part of any such document, they must provide the overview and scrutiny committee or subcommittee with a written statement setting out the reasons for that decision.

Part 5: List of Members

1.1 The Monitoring Officer will publish a list stating:

- the name and address of all current members of the Combined County Authority and the constituent or non-constituent council they represent, and
- the name and address of all current members of the other Committees and any subcommittees.

1.2 A member of the public may inspect the list.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 5c - Mayoral Procedure Rules

To be updated

Part 5c (ii) - Mayoral Procedure Rules (Guidance on obligations in respect of Housing and Strategic Planning)

To be updated

Part 5d - Budget & Policy Procedure Rules

1. General

1.1 These rules reflect specific statutory requirements relating to the approval of budgets and policies by the Combined County Authority and the Mayor (once elected), or other decision-makers on their behalf.

1.2 Decision-makers should consider whether any consultation is required in respect of their proposals, in addition to the statutory requirements specified in these rules.

1.2A In developing, considering and approving the annual budget and any related budget proposal, decision-makers must have regard to the Combined County Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan, including the forecast financial position, funding assumptions, risks, capital and revenue implications and the adequacy of reserves.

1.2B The annual budget and any related budget proposal shall be prepared and considered in the context of the Combined County Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan and the wider financial planning framework in Part 5H, including, where applicable, the Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Statement or policy and reserves policy.

1.3 Decision-makers should also engage with a Combined County Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee (and any other committee of the Combined County Authority) as appropriate in the development and scrutiny of proposals.

1.4 When approving budgets or policies, decision-makers must comply with the provisions relating to Key Decisions in the Access to Information Rules in Part 5 of the Constitution.

1.4A Any budget or policy decision with financial implications must be taken consistently with Article 6 in Part 2, the Financial Procedure Rules in Part 5H and, where relevant, the Scheme of Delegation in Part 6.

1.5 No spending or budget proposal will be predicated on a contribution to the costs of the proposal being made by a constituent council to the Combined County Authority without unanimous agreement of the representatives of the constituent councils.

1.6 All costs associated with the Combined County Authority including but not limited to the core costs of running the Combined County Authority, election costs and the costs of additional investment and capital scheme will be met from funding sources directly granted to or raised directly by

the Combined County Authority including but not limited to the Capability Funding provided by the Government, specific grant funding, Government Capital and Revenue Funding, the Mayor's precept for the Mayor's general functions (once a Mayor has been elected), the precept to support the costs of the MCCA and borrowing and not from contributions from the constituent councils.

1.7 The constituent councils will only be required to make a contribution to the costs of the Combined County Authority if all the constituent councils agree and after the Combined County Authority's Chief Financial Officer has certified that the Combined County Authority has exhausted all other available sources of funding including but not limited to Government Funding, Combined County Authority reserves, borrowing (supported by future precepts) and the potential for the costs to be met by a precept.

1.8 Any grant made by the Combined County Authority to a constituent council in relation to the distribution of any passenger transport funding (including but not limited to Local Authority Bus Grant, BSIP, Consolidated Active Travel, Local Transport Grant, LEVI Grant), highways funding and any distribution of the Investment Fund shall be determined as part of the Combined County Authority's budget.

2 Mayor's General Budget

2.1 Under the Combined Authorities (Finance) Order 2017 and Finance (Amendment) Regulations 2024 the Mayor, once elected must prepare a draft budget for the Mayoral Functions by 1 February. The draft budget must:

- set out the Mayor's spending plans and how the Mayor intends to meet the costs of the Mayoral General Functions, and
- include the relevant amounts and calculations.

2.1A In preparing the draft budget for Mayoral Functions, the Mayor must have regard to the Combined County Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan and the supporting financial strategies and statements required under Part 5H.

2.2 If the Mayor fails to present a draft budget to the Combined Authority by 1 February, the Combined County Authority must determine the relevant amounts and calculations for the financial year. The decision must be made by a majority of the Combined County Authority Members present and voting, such majority to include the Mayor and a member from each constituent council (or their substitute).

2.3 The Combined Authority must review any draft budget presented by the Mayor, and may make a report on the draft budget to the Mayor. The Mayor does not vote on this decision, which is decided by a simple majority of the other Combined Authority Members present and voting.

2.4 The Mayor's draft budget shall be deemed to be approved by the Combined County Authority, unless the Combined County Authority makes such a report by 8 February.

2.5 Any report made by the Combined County Authority:

- must set out whether or not the Combined County Authority would approve the draft budget in its current form, and
- may include recommendations, including recommendations as to the relevant amounts and calculations that should be used for the financial year.

2.6 Where the Combined County Authority has made a report, it must specify a period of at least 5 working days (beginning on the day after the day on which the Mayor receives the report) within which the Mayor may:

- decide whether or not to make any revisions to the draft budget, and
- notify the Combined County Authority of the reasons for that decision and, where revisions are made, provide a copy of the revised budget.

2.7 Where any specified period has expired, the Combined County Authority must decide (taking into account the reasons given by the Mayor) whether to:

- approve the Mayor's draft budget, or the revised draft budget; or
- veto the Mayor's draft budget (or revised draft budget) and approve the Mayor's draft budget incorporating the Combined County Authority's recommendations contained in the report to the Mayor.

2.8 The Mayor's draft budget (or the revised draft budget) shall be deemed to be approved unless vetoed within 5 working days beginning with the day after the date on which the period specified for the Mayor to consider the Combined County Authority's report commences.

3. Approval of Policy – Non-Mayoral Functions

3.1 The Combined County Authority will approve any applicable policy in relation to Non-Mayoral Functions. Where a Non-Mayoral Function has been conferred on the Combined County Authority by the 2026 Order, approval of that policy requires the support of the Mayor, or by majority vote of the CCA Board until such time that a Mayor has been elected.

4. Approval of Policy – Mayoral Functions

4.1 Preparing and reviewing a Local Transport Plan under section 108 of the Transport Act 2000 is a Mayoral General Function, (that is, exercisable by the Mayor), subject to paragraph 4.4 below. The Mayor must have regard to any relevant statutory guidance when discharging this function.

4.2 The CCA gains Local Transport Plan powers concurrent with the upper tier local authorities up to and including 8 May 2028. An Interim Local Transport Plan may be adopted by the CCA to protect strategic continuity and funding eligibility. This links into the transport grant funding position and the passporting of funding whilst concurrent powers exist to deliver commitments in line with existing adopted Local Transport Plans in the county.

4.3 In preparing future Local Transport Plans and keeping them under review, the CCA must consult:

- each local traffic authority for the Combined County Authority's Area,
- the Secretary of State in relation to functions which the Secretary of State has as highway authority and traffic authority, and
- each local council in the area of the Combined County Authority.

4.4 In preparing future Local Transport Plans and keeping them under review,, the Mayor must also consult such of the following as the Mayor considers appropriate:

- operators of any network or station, or of any railways services in the Combined County Authority's Area,
- operators or providers of other transport services in the Combined County Authority's Area, or representative organisations,
- organisations appearing to the Mayor to represent the interests of users of transport services and facilities in the Combined County Authority's Area, and
- other persons whom they consider appropriate.

4.5 In the transition period the Local Transport Plan must be approved by the Combined County Authority by a unanimous vote. After the end of the transition period, by a 2/3 majority vote, the Combined County Authority may amend any Local Transport Plan subject to it adhering to the statutory processes that are required for such amendments. The Combined County Authority must have regard to any relevant statutory guidance when discharging this function.

4.6 As soon as practicable when a new Local Transport Plan has been prepared or altered, the Mayor once elected or the Combined County Authority until the Mayor has been elected, must:

- publish the Local Transport Plan, and send a copy of it to the Secretary of State and such other persons as specified in statutory guidance,
- cause a copy of the Local Transport Plan to be made available for inspection, and give the public notice about this,
- supply a copy to any person on request.

4.7 Once elected, the Mayor will approve any other policy in relation to Mayoral General Functions, unless authority to do this has been delegated under the Mayor's arrangements.

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
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Date:	
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Part 5E - Contract Procedure Rules

1. Interpretation

2. Status of, and Compliance with, Contract Procedure Rules

3. Approval to spend

4. Contract Value and Aggregation

5. Frameworks and Suitability of Contractors

6. Publication of Notices

7. Purchasing Procedures for Contracts of a Value less than £30,000

8. Sourcing and Tendering Procedures for Contracts of a Value of £30,000 or greater but below the relevant Threshold

9. Tendering Procedures for Contracts Above Thresholds and Modifications of Contracts above Thresholds

10. Receipt and Opening of Tenders

11. Evaluation of Tenders and Award of Contract

12. Waiver of Contract Procedure Rules

Contract Procedure Rule 1: Interpretation

1.1 In these Contract Procedure Rules, the following terms have the following meanings:

"Advance Works Order" means an advance works order issued under CPR 11.10

"Area of Responsibility" means the function and area of responsibility for a Chief Officer as detailed in Part 6 of the Combined County Authority's Constitution.

"Central Digital Platform" means a web-based portal provided for the purposes of the UK Procurement Legislation by or on behalf of the Cabinet Office.

"Chief Officer" means any of the posts identified at as such in the Combined County Authority's Constitution.

"Contract" means:

(i) any agreement for the supply of goods, services, or the execution of works to or for the Combined County Authority including the use of consultants;

(ii) any framework contract; or

(iii) any agreement where no payment is made by the Combined County Authority but which is of financial value to the Contractor (e.g. a catering concession) but does not include (without exception)

(iv) an employment contract: or

(v) a Grant Agreement

"Contract Lead Officer" means a HSCCA officer nominated to deal with Contracts in accordance with CPR 3.3

"Contractor" means the party or potential party to a Contract

"PCR 2015" means the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/102)

"Contracts Finder" means a web-based portal provided for the purposes of the PCR 2015 by or on behalf of the Cabinet Office

"Combined County Authority" means The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority.

“CPR”/"CPRs" means Contract Procedure Rule/Contract Procedure Rules.

“Evaluation Report” means a report on the evaluation of tenders prepared under CPR 11

"Framework" means a contract between a contracting authority and one or more Contractors that provides for the future award of contracts by a contracting authority to the Contractor or Contractors as defined in CPR 5.1

“Grant Agreement” means an agreement giving financial assistance to an individual or organisation with no supply of goods or services, or execution of works, in return

“Most Advantageous Tender” is the tender that the contracting authority considers:

(a) satisfies the contracting authority’s requirements, and

(b) best satisfies the award criteria when assessed by reference to:

(i) the assessment methodology under section 23(3)(a) PA 2023, and

(ii) if there is more than one criterion, the relative importance of the criteria under section 23(3)(b) PA 2023

“Procurement Function” means the Combined County Authority’s arrangements for procurement governance and delivery.

“Procurement Manager” means the officer designated by the Chief Financial Officer with responsibility for the procurement function, including oversight of compliance with these CPRs, approval of sourcing routes (including frameworks), and providing or arranging professional procurement advice.

“Senior Officer” means an officer of the Combined County Authority who is authorised under the relevant Scheme of Delegation / financial delegations to exercise the relevant function (and includes any officer formally nominated by a Chief Officer as a Contract Lead Officer).

“Thresholds” means the thresholds for public advertisement of goods, works and services contracts as provided for in the UK Procurement Legislation and advised by the Government

“UK e-notification service” are as defined in the UK Procurement Legislation

"UK Procurement Legislation" means the PCR 2015, Procurement Act 2023 (PA 2023), Procurement Regulations 2024 and the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023 (PSR) as amended from time to time

"Works" "Supplies" & "Services" are as defined in the UK Procurement Legislation

Contract Procedure Rule 2: Status of, and compliance with, Contract Procedure Rules

2.1 By law, the Combined County Authority is required to make procedure rules with respect to contracts for the supply of goods or services or for the execution of works which provide for securing competition and regulation of the manner in which tenders are invited.

2.2 The Combined County Authority is a contracting authority for the purposes of the UK Procurement Legislation and is thereby legally bound to comply with certain practices and procedures in the award of contracts. These Rules are made in accordance with Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972.

2.3 These CPRs work alongside the Combined County Authorities policies and the law. When carrying out a procurement, Officers must also follow all relevant policies and legal requirements.

2.4 The Combined County Authority has therefore adopted these CPR's which set out the procedures that must be followed in relation to the procurement and award of a Contract. CPRs provide a framework to ensure that the Combined County Authority uses its resources efficiently in making purchasing decisions to obtain best value in public services. CPRs also provide a means of safeguarding the reputation of the Combined County Authority and its staff from any implication of dishonesty or corruption.

2.5 The Chief Financial Officer and Monitoring Officer are the joint custodians of these CPRs and are responsible for keeping them under review. This includes giving advice on their implementation and interpretation. These custodians shall have delegated authority to make the following incidental amendments from time to time to these Rules:

a. Changes to the thresholds set out in the applicable procurement legislation to reflect changes made by central government;
b. Changes to job titles, departments and roles of staff;
c. Changes required to clarify or add or remove definitions;
d. Changes to update references to approved policies, plans and legislation.

2.6 Every contract made by the Combined County Authority or on its behalf (irrespective of the source of funding) shall comply with the UK Procurement Legislation and all other domestic legal requirements, CPRs and Financial Regulations. In the event that there is any conflict or inconsistency between the provisions of CPRs and any legal requirement, the legal requirement shall apply.

2.7 The UK Procurement Legislation sets out core procurement objectives and principles which apply generally in the award of public contracts including those of a value below the thresholds. These are broadly; equal treatment of suppliers/contractors and not putting them at unfair advantage or disadvantage, transparency, delivering value for money, maximising public benefit, sharing information, integrity and having regard to SMEs. Contracting authorities must "have regard" to any published national procurement policy statement (NPPS). Care must be taken at all times to ensure that nothing is done which is discriminatory, inconsistent with the procurement objectives, improper or which distorts competition.

2.8 It is the role of the Chief Financial Officer to publish the Corporate Procurement Strategy and to ensure that the Procurement Function (including the Procurement Manager) is maintained on behalf of the Combined County Authority.

2.9 The Chief Financial Officer shall designate an officer as Procurement Manager. The Procurement Manager is responsible for procurement governance, maintaining procurement guidance/templates, advising on compliant sourcing routes and ensuring appropriate transparency and audit trails.

2.10 These CPRs supplement the Officer Code of Conduct and a failure to comply will normally be regarded as a disciplinary offence. Where a person who is not a Combined County Authority employee is contracted to a position where they are authorised to carry out purchasing functions, it is a condition of their contract that they comply with CPRs.

2.11 These CPRs shall always be interpreted and applied in a way that supports the achievement of the Combined County Authority identified business objectives, within relevant legal frameworks.

2.12 Any contracts procured and awarded by way of collaboration with other public bodies where a competitive process has been followed that complies with the equivalent of these CPRs of the leading organisation will be deemed to comply with these CPRs and no waiver in accordance with CPR 12 will be required.

Contract Procedure Rule 3: Approval to spend

3.1 The procurement of a contract (not including a framework contract) is subject to the approval of the relevant decision maker who has the authority to give approval for the relevant expenditure under the constitution. The giving of approval is subject to the expenditure involved having been included in approved estimates and sufficient budgetary provision having been made in the Combined County Authority's capital programme or revenue budget.

3.2 In estimating the value of the contract, the principles of CPR 4 shall be applied.

3.3 In all cases, the Chief Officer within whose area of responsibility the contract falls shall designate a Senior Officer as contract lead officer for the contract. It shall be the responsibility of the contract lead officer to ensure that the processes followed in relation to the procurement and award of the contract are compliant with these CPRs.

Contract Procedure Rule 4: Contract Value and Aggregation

4.1 The estimated value of a contract shall be the total value of the contract over its full term, including any options to extend or renew. For the purposes of determining whether the contract is a “public contract” and whether it is above or below the thresholds under the UK Procurement Legislation, the estimated value must include any amount referable to VAT. For internal budget approval and management reporting the value may also be recorded net of VAT. Where the contract is one where no payment is made by the Combined County Authority (e.g. a concession), a best estimate of the total financial value/turnover opportunity to the contractor over the term (including any extensions) shall be ascertained.

4.2 In valuing concession arrangements, the Contract Lead Officer must take into account the total value of the business opportunity to the Contractor (including expected turnover, charges, fees, rental concessions, discounts and other financial benefits), and must not under-estimate the value to avoid application of the UK Procurement Legislation.

4.3 Where the contract period is indefinite or if uncertain (where it is uncertain to be based upon a period of four years), the contract will be deemed to be above the relevant threshold.

4.4 The estimated value of a framework contract is the total value of all the contracts which could be entered into by the Combined County Authority and other contracting authorities, further to that framework contract.

4.5 Purchases of the same or similar goods or services must be aggregated wherever practicable. Contracts must not be artificially separated so as to circumvent the application of any part of CPRs or the UK Procurement Legislation.

4.6 Contracts which are each of a value below the relevant threshold may nevertheless be subject to full UK Procurement Legislation tendering requirements where they constitute a series of related or repeat purchases. Advice should be sought where this is the case, in order that the relevant procurement route can be adopted.

Contract Procedure Rule 5: Frameworks and suitability of contractors

5.1 A framework is a contract between a contracting authority and one or more contractors that provides for the future award of contracts by a contracting authority to the contractor or contractors, the purpose of which is to establish the terms governing contracts to be awarded during a given period, in particular with regard to price and, where appropriate, the quantity envisaged by the framework contracts may be established by the Combined County Authority, or by other public bodies, or public sector buying consortia, as arrangements through which the Combined County Authority, along with other public bodies, may make specific purchases.

5.2 Frameworks, dynamic markets and other compliant collaborative arrangements are one potential sourcing route. They should be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be used where the Procurement Manager confirms that:

(i) the arrangement was established in compliance with the UK Procurement Legislation;

(ii) the scope covers the Authority's requirement; and

(iii) the terms and conditions are acceptable to the Combined County Authority. Officers must not assume a framework is suitable without this check.

5.3 Provisions contained in the UK Procurement Legislation which govern Frameworks must be complied with when concluding a framework contract or awarding a contract based on a framework.

5.4 In all cases where a contract is awarded under these CPRs, a contractor can only be appointed who, as a minimum:

a) meets the Combined County Authority's insurance requirements for the contract (in respect of public liability, product, professional indemnity and/or employer's liability as appropriate, based on an assessment of risk for the contract)

b) is registered for tax and holds a valid certificate (where appropriate).

Contract Procedure Rule 6: Publication of Notices

6.1 In all cases where, by virtue of these CPRs or by UK Procurement Legislation, a public notice is required.

6.2 Where the value of the contract is £30,000 or greater, or where required by the UK Procurement Legislation for any value (including certain call-offs), the information regarding the contract award must be published on the Central Digital Platform (or Contracts Finder where the PCR 2015 applies).

6.3 In addition, the Procurement Manager shall ensure that an electronic contracts register is maintained and published in line with the Local Government Transparency Code (including details of contracts and procurement activity over £5,000), subject to lawful redaction where required.

6.4 For framework/dynamic market call-off contract at any value, the information regarding the contract award is required to be placed on Central Digital Platform or Contract Finder (only if the PCR 2015 applies).

6.5 Where the value of the contract exceeds the relevant threshold, the appropriate required notices shall also be placed in the UK e-notification service in accordance with the UK Procurement Legislation.

Contract Procedure Rule 7: Purchasing Procedures for Contracts of a Value less than £30,000

7.1 Where the estimated value of the contract (calculated in accordance with CPR 4) is less than £5,000, competitive quotations should be sought where practicable and proportionate. Officers may use benchmarked prices, catalogue pricing or desktop market research to demonstrate best value, provided a clear audit trail is retained.

7.2 Where the estimated value is £5,000 or greater but less than £10,000, at least one written quotation (confirmed in writing, including by email) must be obtained as a minimum. This does not prevent officers from seeking additional quotations where this is appropriate to demonstrate best value.

7.3 Where the estimated value is £10,000 or greater but less than £30,000, at least three written quotations should be obtained against the same written specification/request for quotation. Where it is not reasonably practicable to obtain three quotations, the Contract Lead Officer must record the steps taken to obtain competition and the reasons why fewer quotations were received.

7.4 Frameworks and other collaborative arrangements may be used where they are suitable and approved in accordance with CPR 5.2, but their use is not mandatory and officers must select the route that best achieves the Authority's objectives and best value, consistent with the UK Procurement Legislation.

Contract Procedure Rule 8: Sourcing and Tendering Procedures for Contracts of a Value of £30,000 or greater but below the relevant threshold

8.1 For contracts with an estimated value of £30,000 or greater but less than £170,000, the default approach shall be to seek a minimum of three competitive written quotations/tenders on an invitation-only basis, using the Combined County Authority's corporate e-tendering portal wherever practicable. Advertising may be used where this is considered likely to improve value for money or deliver policy objectives (e.g. supporting SME/VCSE participation).

8.2 Direct award (single tender) may be used below the thresholds where justified and proportionate (for example, where only one supplier can deliver, where genuine urgency applies, or where continuation with an incumbent is demonstrably necessary). Any direct award with an estimated value of £30,000 or greater must be approved by the Procurement Manager, recorded in writing with a conflicts of interest statement, and published in accordance with CPR 6.

8.3 For contracts with an estimated value of £170,000 or greater but below the relevant threshold, formal procurement advice must be sought from the Procurement Manager. The Procurement Manager shall advise on the most appropriate compliant sourcing route for the contract in question (which may include an advertised below-threshold competition, a mini-competition or direct award under a suitable framework/dynamic market, or a direct award in exceptional circumstances).

8.4 For contracts within this band (£170,000 to below threshold), use of the Combined County Authority's designated corporate e-tendering portal is mandatory for competitive processes unless the Procurement Manager agrees an exception. A proportionate procurement risk assessment and procurement plan must be completed and retained on file.

8.5 Where the estimated value is close to the relevant threshold, is uncertain, or is likely to increase (including by extensions, options or modifications), the Contract Lead Officer must treat the procurement as above-threshold or seek advice from the Procurement Manager to ensure compliance with the UK Procurement Legislation.

Contract Procedure Rule 9: Tendering Procedures for Contracts above Thresholds and Modifications of Contracts above Thresholds

9.1 The UK Procurement Legislation sets thresholds beyond which prescribed procurement procedures and transparency requirements must be followed. Thresholds are updated from time to time and are published in the Procurement Best Practice Guide.

9.2 Where the estimated value of the contract is at or above the relevant threshold, the procedures and notices required by the UK Procurement Legislation must be followed. Under the Procurement Act 2023 the competitive tendering procedures are the open procedure and the competitive flexible procedure; however, contracts may also be awarded by way of a direct award where a justification applies, or by awarding contracts under a framework or dynamic market in accordance with the applicable rules.

9.3 Before commencing an above-threshold procurement, the Contract Lead Officer must prepare a proportionate options appraisal and procurement plan (including any preliminary market engagement) and a procurement risk assessment, and must seek advice from the Procurement Manager as to the appropriate compliant procedure and notices.

9.4 During the procurement, the Contract Lead Officer (with support from the Procurement Manager) must apply the exclusions regime, including consideration of mandatory and discretionary exclusion grounds and checking the published debarment list via the central digital platform, in accordance with the UK Procurement Legislation and guidance.

9.5 Any proposed modifications to above-threshold public contracts and “convertible contracts” must comply with the contract modification rules in the UK Procurement Legislation. Where required, a contract change notice must be published before the modification is made, and the modification must be approved by the Chief Officer within whose area of responsibility the contract falls, in consultation with the Procurement Manager and Monitoring Officer.

9.6 In the event that the Chief Officer determines that the contract or modification relates to a strategic or policy decision, then approval of the HSCCA Board shall be sought.

9.7 In the event that the Chief Officer for the relevant service area is unavailable the decisions reserved to that Chief Officer by this CPR may be taken by a Deputy Chief Officer nominated by the Chief Officer for the relevant service area.

Contract Procedure Rule 10: Receipt and Opening of Tenders above Thresholds

10.1 Subject to CPR 10.2, all tenders shall be opened at the same time, by an officer independent of the procurement process and appropriately trained to open tenders on the electronic tendering system as soon as reasonably practicable on or after the date for return of tenders. People under contract to the Combined County Authority, but not permanent employees of the Combined County Authority shall not open tenders unless approved by a Chief Officer or Monitoring Officer.

10.2 The officer opening tenders shall record, in respect of each tender opened, the name of the tenderer and, where applicable, the total value.

Contract Procedure Rule 11: Evaluation of Tenders and Award of Contract

11.1 The Contract Lead Officer (who should normally be an employee of the Combined County Authority) shall ensure that the tenders received are evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria that have been adopted for the contract and stated in the invitation to tender. These criteria must be capable of objective assessment, include price and other relevant factors, and be weighted by relative importance.

11.2 The Contract Lead Officer shall produce a written report evaluating each tender received against the evaluation criteria. The report shall identify the tenderer who has submitted the most advantageous tender (i.e. the tender that achieves the highest score in the evaluation) and recommend the award of the contract to that tenderer. This report shall be submitted to the person authorised to award the contract under CPR 11.6.

11.3 The Contract Lead Officer shall ensure that appropriate due diligence is undertaken, including economic and financial standing checks (where proportionate), verification of insurance requirements (CPR 5.4), and any checks required by the UK Procurement Legislation (including exclusion/debarment considerations where applicable).

11.4 For contracts at or above £170,000 (or where otherwise advised by the Procurement Manager), a documented evaluation and moderation process should be used and retained, together with a clear audit trail of decisions and approvals.

11.5 No contract may be awarded unless the expenditure involved has been included in approved estimates and sufficient budgetary provision made in the Combined County Authority's capital or revenue accounts in accordance with CPR 3.1. The evaluation report shall confirm how this requirement is met.

11.6 Each Chief Officer is authorised to award and sign any contract entered into on the Combined County Authority's behalf, where it relates to their area of responsibility, and where the value of the contract is less than £170,000. The contract may be awarded and signed by a senior officer who is authorised to do so on behalf of the Chief Officer as documented in that Chief Officer's scheme of financial delegation. All other contracts shall be awarded by the Monitoring Officer or a senior officer nominated by the Monitoring Officer for this purpose, and signed by or on behalf of the Monitoring Officer.

11.7 Where the value of a contract is above the relevant threshold, the contract shall be awarded in accordance with the UK Procurement Legislation and in particular the requirements relating to a "standstill" period prior to the contract being entered into.

11.8 In evaluating tenders, the Authority shall have due regard to the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, the Government's Social Value Model (as set out in Procurement Policy Note 002), and any other applicable procurement legislation or statutory guidance. This includes consideration of how the tender proposals will improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the relevant area, as well as compliance with wider legal duties such as equal treatment, non-discrimination and transparency. Social value shall be evaluated as a scored element of the quality assessment, applying relevant themes and outcomes proportionately to the contract, in accordance with national guidance.

11.9 All contracts, including an arrangement subject to a purchase order, must be made in writing under English Law, and must clearly and carefully specify the supplies, services or works to be provided, the

agreed programme for delivery and the price and terms for payment together with all other terms and conditions.

Contract Procedure Rule 12: Waiver of Contract Procedure Rules

12.1 A waiver (also referred to as an exemption or single tender action) is an authorisation to depart from these CPRs in a particular case. A waiver cannot disapply or override the UK Procurement Legislation and must not be used to avoid competition or transparency where these are required by law.

12.2 Waivers may only be approved where a clear written justification is provided and best value can still be demonstrated. The justification must include:

i the estimated contract value and basis of calculation;

ii the proposed sourcing route and why the CPR requirement cannot be met;

iii confirmation that aggregation and contract duration/extension options have been considered;

iv a conflicts of interest declaration; and

v a summary of the procurement risk assessment (where proportionate).

12.3 Approval levels:

i where the estimated value is less than £30,000, the Chief Officer within whose area of responsibility the Contract falls;

ii where the estimated value is £30,000 or greater but below £170,000, the Chief Officer with written advice from the Procurement Manager;

iii where the estimated value is £170,000 or greater, the Chief Officer with written advice from the Procurement Manager and the Monitoring Officer.

12.4 For any waiver/direct award where the estimated value is at or above the relevant threshold, the Procurement Manager must confirm the applicable legal justification and the Monitoring Officer must be consulted. Any required transparency notice must be published before entering into the contract and any applicable standstill/voluntary standstill provisions must be considered.

12.5 All waiver decisions and supporting documentation must be recorded and retained in accordance with the Combined County Authority's

records retention requirements and must be capable of audit. The Procurement Manager shall maintain a central register of waivers and exemptions.

12.6 In the event that the Chief Officer for the relevant service area is unavailable, the decision reserved to that Chief Officer by this CPR may be taken by a Deputy Chief Officer nominated by the Chief Officer for the relevant service area.

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Municipal Year:	
Version:	
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Part 5F - Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules

1. Establishment of Overview & Scrutiny Committees

The Combined County Authority must appoint one or more overview and scrutiny committees whose proceedings shall operate in accordance with the Terms of Reference in Part 4.

2. Membership

Members are appointed in accordance with the Terms of Reference (including in respect of political balance). The majority must be elected members of constituent councils. The Mayor, once elected and any Combined County Authority Member or substitute member may not be members.

Within 28 days of appointment the Monitoring Officer will publish a notice confirming appointments and terms of office.

3. Remuneration

The Combined County Authority may agree to pay allowances to members subject to recommendations of an independent remuneration panel.

4. Chairing

The Combined County Authority will appoint the Chair. In their absence, the committee will appoint a Chair. The Chair must not be of the same political party as the Chair of the HSCCA Board.

5. Quorum

Two-thirds of the voting members must be present.

6. Voting

Each member appointed from a constituent council has one vote. Co-opted members are non-voting unless voting rights are granted by the Combined County Authority. A simple majority is required. No member has a casting vote. If a vote is tied on any matter, it is deemed not to have been carried.

7. Conflicts of Interest

No member may scrutinise a decision in which they were directly involved. They may only attend to make representations, answer questions or give evidence.

8. Working Groups

A committee or sub-committee may appoint working groups to support scrutiny work.

9. Work Programme and Referrals

Committees set their own work programmes. Matters may be referred by the Combined County Authority, its committees, members, or constituent/non-constituent council members (and, in specified circumstances, principal councils).

10. Meetings

Committees will meet as required. Extraordinary meetings may be called by the Chair or any five members from at least two constituent councils.

11. Attendees

Committees may require the Chair of the HSCCA Board, any Combined County Authority Member or officer to attend and answer questions. At least 8 clear working days' notice must be given of any such request.

12. Reports and Recommendations

Committees may produce reports and recommendations to the Combined County Authority. Minority reports may be appended.

13. Notice

The Combined County Authority must respond within 2 months to any report or recommendation.

14. Publication of Documents

Confidential or exempt information must be removed from published documents. Summaries must be provided if needed for clarity.

15. Call-in of Decisions

Committees may call-in any eligible decision prior to implementation. Five members from at least two constituent councils may submit the request.

A Committee, having first obtained the consent of the Combined County Authority, must publish details of how it proposes to exercise its powers in relation to the review and scrutiny of decisions made but not yet implemented and its arrangements in connection with the exercise of those powers.

16. Implementing Call-in

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer will notify the decision-maker and arrange scrutiny. Decisions may not be implemented until the process concludes.

17. Secretary of State Guidance

Committees must have regard to any relevant national guidance.

18. Statutory Scrutiny Officer

The officer responsible for promoting scrutiny and supporting committees and members.

19. Additional Rights of Access

As set out in the Access to Information Rules in Part 5B.

20. Interpretation

The Chair, with advice from the Monitoring Officer or Statutory Scrutiny Officer, will determine interpretation issues during meetings.

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Part 5G - Officer Employment Procedure Rules

1. General

1.1 The Officer Employment Procedure Rules set out the Authority's governance arrangements for the recruitment and dismissal of, and the taking of disciplinary action against, officers.

1.2 The functions of appointment and dismissal of, and taking disciplinary action against, officers below the level of statutory Chief Officer must be discharged by the Head of Paid Service, on behalf of the Authority, or by an officer nominated by them.

1.3 The functions of appointment and dismissal of and taking disciplinary action against statutory Chief Officers must be discharged by the Combined County Authority.

1.4 This section should be read in conjunction with the Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Chief Officers.

1.5 The Combined County Authority Chief Officers are, in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, defined as follows:

a. a statutory chief officer (e.g., the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer);
b. a non-statutory chief officer (e.g., an officer who reports directly to the Head of Paid Service)

2. Recruitment and Appointment

2.1 The Authority will draw up a statement requiring any candidate for appointment as an officer to state in writing whether they are the parent, grandparent, partner, child, stepchild, adopted child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece of an existing Member or officer; or of the partner of such persons.

2.2 No candidate so related to a Member, or an officer will be appointed without the authority of the Head of Paid Service, or an officer nominated by them.

2.3 The Authority will disqualify any applicant who directly or indirectly seeks the support of any Member for any appointment with the Authority. The content of this paragraph will be included in any recruitment information.

2.4 No Member will seek support for any person for any appointment with the Authority.

2.5 Nothing in the above paragraphs precludes a Member from giving a written reference for a candidate for submission with an application for employment.

3. Appointments

3.1 Where the Combined County Authority proposes to appoint a Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Monitoring Officer, an officer with the responsibilities set out in Section 73 (1) of the Local Government Act 1985 (Chief Finance Officer), the Combined County Authority will appoint an Appointments Panel.

3.2 The appointment of any other officer is a matter for the Head of Paid Service.

3.3 The Appointments Panel will draft a statement specifying:

a. the pay range for the post;
b. the duties of the Officer concerned; and
c. any qualifications or qualities to be sought in the person to be appointed.

3.4 The Combined County Authority will:

a. make arrangements for the post to be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it; and
b. make arrangements for a copy of the written statement mentioned above to be sent to any person on request.

3.5 On the establishment by Order of the Combined County Authority, and prior to the election of a Mayor, an Appointments Panel will undertake the appointment of statutory officers following the procedures set out in 3.7a and 3.7b below.

3.6 The Appointments Panel will conduct a competitive interview process when appointing the statutory officers referenced in para 3.6 of these Officer Employment Procedure Rules (statutory chief officers). The Appointments Panel to comprise:

- Two Members of the CCA, each representing a different non-constituent council.

3.7 The Appointments Panel will undertake the following:

a. Interview all qualified applicants for the post, or

b. Select a shortlist of such qualified applicants and interview those included on the shortlist.

3.8 Upon completion of this process the Appointments Panel will make a recommendation to the Combined County Authority for confirmation.

3.9 The Combined County Authority will, following the recommendation of such an appointment by the Appointments Panel, approve the appointment of:

- Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
- Chief Financial Officer (Section 73 officer)
- Monitoring Officer

3.10 Where no qualified person has applied, the Combined County Authority shall make further arrangements for appointment in accordance with Rule 3.3.

4. Disciplinary Action for Chief Officers

Scope

4.1 This procedure applies to the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Monitoring Officer, Chief Finance Officer, employed under Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Executive terms and conditions, and any officer employed under Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) terms and conditions for Chief Officers.

Threshold for Formal Action

4.2 Before any formal disciplinary process is initiated, the Monitoring Officer shall determine whether the matter meets the threshold for formal action. In cases where the Monitoring Officer is the subject of the allegation, this determination shall be made by the Chief Executive.

Suspension

4.3 Suspension may only be considered where the alleged misconduct is sufficiently serious and after the threshold determination. Any suspension must be reviewed within two months and kept under regular review.

Procedure

4.4 Where formal disciplinary action is warranted, the process shall follow the model procedures set out in the JNC Handbook for Chief Executives and the JNC Handbook for Chief Officers, including the appointment of a Designated Independent Person (DIP) where dismissal is being considered.

Decision and Appeal

4.5 No dismissal may take place without full consideration of the DIP's report. The officer shall have the right to appeal to a designated Appeals Committee, in accordance with JNC procedures.

4.6 The Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance Officer, and any other Chief Officer may be suspended whilst an investigation takes place into alleged misconduct. That suspension will be on full pay and last no longer than two months.

4.7 No other disciplinary action may be taken in respect of any of those officers except in accordance with a recommendation in a report made by an independent person designated and acting in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001.

4.8 Members will not be involved in the disciplinary action against any officer below Chief Officer level except where such involvement is necessary for any investigation or inquiry into alleged misconduct, through the Authority's disciplinary, capability and related procedures.

5. Dismissal

5.1 Members will not be involved in the dismissal of any officer below statutory Chief Officer level except where such involvement is necessary for any investigation or inquiry into alleged misconduct, through the Authority's disciplinary, capability and related procedures.

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Part 5H - Financial Procedure Rules

Section 1 Financial Regulations

1. Introduction

1.1 The Authority must conduct its business efficiently and ensure it has sound financial management policies in place, including arrangements to monitor compliance. The Authority's statutory Section 73 Officer is also charged with ensuring that proper financial management processes are in place.

1.2 The financial regulations provide clarity about the financial accountabilities of individuals. Each of the financial regulations sets out the overarching financial responsibilities which must be followed by those acting on the Authority's behalf. A detailed set of financial procedure rules supports the overarching financial responsibilities set out in this document. These financial procedure rules are included in Appendices A to F and form part of the Authority's financial regulations. Under the financial regulations, other financial instructions and guidance manuals may be issued from time to time as considered appropriate by the Section 73 Officer, such guidance will have the force of financial regulations.

1.3 All financial decisions and decisions with financial implications must have regard to proper financial control. Any doubt as to whether a financial proposal is appropriate, or whether a financial action is correct, must be clarified in advance of the decision or action with the Section 73 Officer.

2. Status of the Financial Regulations

2.1 Financial Regulations provide the framework for managing the financial affairs of the Authority. They apply to every member and officer of the Authority and anyone acting on its behalf.

2.2 The regulations identify financial responsibilities of individuals - members, officers, the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer, the Section 73 Officer, and other Directors. Members and Directors should maintain a written record where decision making has been delegated to members of their staff, including seconded staff. Where decisions are so delegated, the officer to whom the decision has been delegated must provide sufficient information to the Member or Director on request to give assurance that tasks or decisions have been performed in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

2.3 All Members and officers have a general responsibility for taking reasonable action to provide for the security of the assets under their control, and for ensuring that the use of these resources is legal, is properly authorised, and provides value for money.

2.4 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the financial regulations and submitting any additions or changes necessary to the Authority for approval. The Section 73 Officer is also responsible for reporting, where appropriate, breaches of the financial regulations to the Authority.

2.5 Directors are responsible for ensuring that all staff in their departments are aware of the existence and content of the Authority's financial regulations and other internal

regulatory documents and that they comply with them. Any person charged with the use or care of the Authority's resources and assets should inform him or herself of the Authority's requirements under the financial regulations. Any queries should be referred to the Section 73 Officer.

2.6 All Directors should ensure that any financial procedures/guidelines produced by their service areas in support of financial control are fully compliant with the financial regulations. The agreement of the Section 73 Officer should be obtained for the development of such financial procedures.

2.7 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for issuing advice and guidance to underpin the financial regulations that Members, officers, and others acting on behalf of the Authority are required to follow.

2.8 In line with the Whistleblowing Policy, all officers must report to their manager or other responsible senior officer any illegality, impropriety, breach of procedure or serious deficiency discovered in the following of financial procedures or financial regulations. All reports of impropriety will be investigated under formal action procedures and be notified to the Section 73 Officer and Head of Audit where it appears that a breach has occurred.

2.9 Any proposals for changes or amendments to the financial regulations should be forwarded to the Section 73 Officer for consideration.

3.0 Financial Regulation A: Financial Management

3.1 Financial Management covers all financial accountabilities in relation to the running of the Authority, including the Budget and Assurance Framework

Virement

3.2 Virements between budget heads is an integral and important feature of budgetary control. The Authority is responsible for agreeing procedures for virement of expenditure between budget headings.

3.3 Once the Authority has approved its revenue and capital budget for the coming year, there will be a brief period of review that will allow virements between budgets to be made. Following that, the Section 73 Officer will issue guidance to minimise the processing of virements during the financial year. Examples of permitted virements include:

- to recognise new external funding streams
- to recognise the realisation of budget savings
- transfers to/from corporate contingencies
- transfers between revenue and capital
- permanent transfers between service areas
- to recognise Authority decisions
- material adjustments to aid budgetary control (e.g. capital re-profiling)

3.4 Virements (of both revenue and capital) are permitted subject to the following authorisations:

Virement Value	Authorisation required

Virements up to £50,000	Relevant Director in consultation with the Section 73 Officer.
Proposed virements of between £50,000 & £350,000	Advance approval of the Section 73 Officer and the relevant Authority member.
Proposed virements more than £350,000	Authority approval required before the virement can take place.

3.5 With respect to the Capital Programme, approval is delegated to the Section 73 Officer in consultation with the relevant Authority Member to approve:

- re-phasing of capital budgets within approved budget (but across years); and
- amendments to the capital programme up to £500.000.

3.6 All delegations exercised in accordance with the above would be reported to Authority in the quarterly monitoring reports.

3.7 Virements may not be broken down into smaller values to circumvent the procedures outlined

Budget realignment

3.8 The Section 73 Officer will determine whether a change to budgets is a virement (i.e. the budget is reallocated to a purpose other than originally intended) or a re-presentation or restructure where there is no change to the purpose of the spending. It is important that any budget realignment is transparent and that the process can be subject to proper scrutiny.

3.9 The virement rules set out above shall not apply to restructure or representational changes. However, the approval of the Section 73 Officer should be obtained before any such changes are implemented.

Treatment of year-end balances

3.10 The Authority is responsible for agreeing procedures in respect of carrying forward under-and overspendings on budget headings in line with the Budget and Policy Framework.

Accounting policies

3.11 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for setting accounting policies in accordance with statute and best practice and ensuring that these are applied consistently throughout the Authority. The Audit Committee must approve any policy changes.

Accounting records and returns

3.12 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for determining the accounting procedures and records for the Authority.

The Annual Statement of Accounts

3.13 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for ensuring that the Annual Statement of Accounts is prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and codes of practice. The Audit Committee is responsible for making recommendations on approval for the Annual Statement of Accounts.

3.14 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for preparing, alongside the Annual Statement of Accounts, an Annual Governance Statement setting out the Authority's governance framework, the effectiveness of risk management and internal control arrangements, and any significant governance issues together with the actions proposed to address them.

Sound Financial Management

3.15 The Authority is responsible for ensuring its financial management is adequate and effective, and that sound systems of risk management are in place (as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015). The Authority is also responsible for ensuring that a budget monitoring system is in place, and if there is a deterioration in the Authority's financial position during the year it must consider what action to take to deal with the situation.

Budget setting

3.16 When the Authority is deciding its annual budget and precept level, Members and officers must consider a report from the Section 73 Officer on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of the authority's reserves.

3.17 In advising on the annual budget and medium-term financial plan, the Section 73 Officer shall ensure that revenue, capital, treasury management and reserves are considered on an integrated basis, including the Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement or policy, and reserves policy.

4.0 Financial Regulation B: Financial Planning

4.1 The Authority is responsible for agreeing the Authority's policy framework and budget. In terms of financial planning, the key elements are the:

- Strategic Plan,
- Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan,
- Capital Investment Strategy
- Treasury Management Policy and Strategy

4.2 The Authority's financial planning framework shall also include a Reserves Policy, an MRP Statement or policy, the Annual Governance Statement and arrangements for Member training in relation to budget setting, treasury management, capital investment and risk management.

Policy Framework

4.3 The Authority is responsible for approving the policy framework and budget. The policy framework comprises those plans and strategies set out in the Constitution.

4.4 The Authority's budget and policy responsibilities are set out in the budget and policy framework procedure rules, contained in the Authority's Constitution.

4.5 The Authority is responsible for taking in-year decisions on resources and priorities to deliver the budget policy framework within the financial limits set by the Authority as part of the budget and policy framework.

Budgeting

4.6 The general format of the budget will be approved by the Authority on the advice of the Section 73 Officer.

4.7 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for ensuring that a revenue budget is prepared on an annual basis together with a medium-term financial plan looking forward for a minimum of three financial years. The Authority may, subject to consultation with the Section 73 Officer, amend the budget before approving it.

4.8 The Section 73 Officer will issue guidelines on the budget to appropriate officers throughout the Authority.

4.9 It is the responsibility of Directors to ensure that accurate budget estimates are prepared in line with guidelines issued by the Section 73 Officer.

4.10 The Authority has a duty to monitor its budget during the year. If, because of this monitoring, it appears that there has been deterioration in its financial position, the Authority must take action to deal with the situation.

4.11 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for providing appropriate financial information and guidance to enable budgets to be monitored effectively. The Section 73 Officer should report to Authority on the overall financial position of the Authority on a regular basis, and at least quarterly.

4.12 Budget monitoring reports shall include forecast outturn, analysis of significant variances, management actions and, where relevant, the implications for capital financing, treasury management and reserves.

4.13 For the purposes of these Rules, a significant variance means any forecast over or underspend, income shortfall or slippage exceeding the greater of £50,000 or 10% of the relevant budget heading, or any lower amount that the Section 73 Officer determines to be material by reason of risk, volatility or service impact.

4.14 It is the responsibility of Directors to control income and expenditure for revenue and capital within their area and to monitor performance, taking account of financial information provided by the Section 73 Officer. They should report on variances within their own areas to the Section 73 Officer. They should also take any action necessary (without affecting policy) to avoid exceeding their budget allocation, in accordance with the Financial Regulations. If it becomes apparent to a Director that, due to exceptional or unforeseen circumstances, there may be difficulty in providing a service within budget, this must be communicated to the Section 73 Officer at the earliest opportunity. In such circumstances the Director retains responsibility for the careful monitoring and control of income and expenditure and must make every effort (without affecting policy) to minimise the impact on the Authority.

4.15 Where a significant adverse variance is forecast, the relevant Director shall prepare a recovery plan, in consultation with the Section 73 Officer, setting out corrective action, timescales, responsible officers and any decision or virement required.

4.16 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for developing and maintaining a resource allocation process that ensures due consideration of the Authority's policy framework.

4.17 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for ensuring that a capital programme, showing capital expenditure and how that expenditure is funded, is prepared on an annual basis for consideration by the Authority. The plan should cover a three-year period and may in addition include information on capital investment strategy including non-treasury investments for up to 10 years ahead. In addition to this, the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities requires that a set of prudential indicators for capital and treasury management (covering a three-year period) are agreed by the Authority. This CIPFA code is backed by statute in the Local Government Act 2003.

4.18 The capital programme and Capital Strategy must be aligned with the Treasury Management Strategy, MRP Statement or policy, reserves policy and Medium-Term Financial Plan, and shall demonstrate affordability, prudence, sustainability and the ongoing revenue consequences of capital investment.

4.19 Directors providing information to the Section 73 Officer for the capital programme shall ensure that for each capital scheme the full financial implications of any proposals are fully evaluated and disclosed, including phasing and commissioning plans. A business case must be completed, detailing both revenue and capital implications of each proposed scheme.

4.20 Business cases for capital schemes must include option appraisal, whole-life costing, funding and financing assumptions, revenue consequences, risk assessment, delivery milestones, gateway review requirements and arrangements for post-implementation review and benefits realisation.

4.21 Material capital schemes shall be subject to proportionate gateway reviews at key stages determined by the Section 73 Officer, including before approval, procurement, contract award and completion, with any exemptions recorded and reported.

4.22 Guidelines on budget preparation will be issued to Members and Directors by the Section 73 Officer.

4.23 Members who take, advise on or scrutinise financial, treasury, capital or audit decisions shall receive appropriate and proportionate training, including refresher training where necessary, and the Section 73 Officer shall maintain a record of such training.

Maintenance of Reserves

4.24 It is the responsibility of the Section 73 Officer to advise the Authority on prudent levels of reserves for the Authority. When the Authority is deciding its annual budget and precept level it is required to consider a report from the Section 73 Officer on the adequacy of the authority's financial reserves and the robustness of the budget.

4.25 The Section 73 Officer undertakes an annual review on the adequacy of reserves and robustness of financial estimates.

5.0 Financial Regulation C: Risk Management & Control of Resources

5.1 It is essential that robust, integrated systems are developed and maintained for identifying and evaluating all significant operational risks to the Authority. This should include the proactive participation of all those associated with planning and delivering services.

Risk Management

5.2 The Authority is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of risk management and for ensuring that proper insurance exists where appropriate.

5.3 Risk management arrangements shall include a strategic risk register and, where appropriate, programme, project and service risk registers, each with a named owner, current and target risk assessment, key controls, mitigating actions and review date.

5.4 Significant risks shall be reported regularly to the Senior Leadership Team and Audit Committee, and material risks shall be explicitly addressed in reports, business cases, budget monitoring and decision-making.

5.5 Directors shall ensure that risk information is used to inform prioritisation, resource allocation, project approvals and other significant decisions.

5.6 The Section 73 Officer will be responsible for the authority's Risk and Opportunities Policy, which may be prepared by a nominated officer. The Section 73 Officer will advise the Authority on proper insurance cover where appropriate.

5.7 Directors should ensure that records and assets are properly maintained and securely held. They should also ensure that contingency plans for the security of assets and continuity of service in the event of disaster or system failure are in place.

Internal Control

5.8 Internal control refers to the systems of control devised by management to help ensure the Authority's objectives are achieved in a manner that promotes economical, efficient, and effective use of resources and that the Authority's assets and interests are safeguarded.

5.9 Internal control arrangements shall include measures to prevent, detect and respond to fraud, bribery, corruption and irregularity, effective whistleblowing arrangements, and compliance with information governance, records management, data protection and cyber security requirements.

5.10 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for advising on effective systems of internal control. These arrangements need to ensure compliance with all applicable statutes and regulations, and other relevant statements of best practice. They should ensure that public funds are properly safeguarded and used economically, efficiently, and in accordance with the statutory and other authorities that govern their use.

5.11 It is the responsibility of Directors to establish sound arrangements for planning, appraising, authorising, and controlling their operations to achieve continuous improvement, economy, efficiency and effectiveness and for achieving their financial performance targets.

Audit Requirements

5.12 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require every local authority to maintain an adequate and effective internal audit function.

5.13 The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 requires all local authorities to appoint an independent panel to manage the appointment of an external auditor.

5.14 The Authority may, from time to time, be subject to audit, inspection, or investigation by external bodies such as HM Revenue and Customs, who have statutory rights of access.

Preventing Fraud and Corruption

5.15 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for the development and maintenance of the Fraud Strategy.

Treasury Management and Banking

5.16 The Authority follows the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services. The Authority will create and maintain, as the cornerstones for effective treasury management:

5.17 A Treasury Management Policy Statement, stating the policies, objectives, and approach to risk management of its treasury management activities.

5.18 Suitable Treasury Management Practices (TMPs), setting out the way the organisation will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, and prescribing how it will manage and control those activities.

5.19 All money in the hands of the Authority is controlled by the officer designated for the purposes of Section 73 of the Local Government Act 1985, referred to in this document as the Section 73 Officer.

5.20 In accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services, the Section 73 Officer is responsible for reporting to the Authority on the treasury management policies, practices, and activities. Including as a minimum, an annual strategy and plan of the year, a mid-year review and an annual report after its close, in the form prescribed in the TMP's.

5.21 All Authority decisions on borrowing, investment or financing shall be delegated to the Section 73 Officer. In relation to the authorised limits for the Authority's external debt, and the operational boundary for external debt agreed by Authority, any movements in borrowing limits made under delegation to the Section 73 Officer will be reported to the Authority at its next meeting.

5.22 In accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services, the Authority delegates responsibility for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Section 73 Officer, who will act in accordance with the Authority's policy statement and TMPs and CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

6.0 Financial Regulation D: Systems and Procedures

6.1 Sound systems and procedures are essential to an effective framework of accountability and control.

General

6.2 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for the operation of the Authority's accounting systems, the form of accounts and the supporting financial records. Any changes made by Directors to the existing financial systems, or the establishment of new systems must be approved by the Section 73 Officer after consultation with Internal Audit. However, Directors are responsible for the proper operation of financial processes in their own departments.

6.3 Any changes to agreed procedures by Directors to meet their own specific service needs should be agreed with the Section 73 Officer.

6.4 Directors should ensure that their staff receive relevant financial training that has been approved by the Section 73 Officer.

6.5 Officers exercising financial responsibilities shall complete such financial management training as the Section 73 Officer considers necessary, with refresher training provided where material changes in legislation, systems or procedures occur.

Income and Expenditure

6.6 It is the responsibility of Directors to ensure the officers' scheme of delegation is complied with within their department. In addition, each Director should ensure that an authorised signatory list is held and regularly updated, identifying staff authorised to act on the Director's behalf in respect of payments, income collection and placing orders, together with the limits of their authority. The Authority is responsible for approving procedures for writing off debts as part of the overall control framework of accountability and control.

Payments to Employees and Members

6.7 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for ensuring that adequate systems and processes are in place for the payments of salaries and wages to all staff, including payments for overtime, and for payment of allowances to Members.

6.8 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for ensuring that adequate systems and processes are in place for making ex-gratia payments in accordance with guidelines agreed with the Monitoring Officer.

Taxation

6.9 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for advising Directors, in the light of guidance issued by appropriate bodies and relevant legislation as it applies, on all taxation issues that affect the Authority.

6.10 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for maintaining the Authority's tax records, making all tax payments, receiving tax credits, and submitting tax returns by their due date as appropriate.

7.0 Financial Regulation E: External Arrangements

External Funding

7.1 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for ensuring that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Authority's accounts.

Confidentiality

7.2 All information held by or on behalf of the Authority will be available to the public upon written request, unless it falls into one of the statutory exemptions set out in the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Officers must therefore ensure, when negotiating or entering into a contract on behalf of the Authority, that any confidentiality clause proposed by a third party has been approved by the Monitoring Office

Section 2 FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES

Financial Procedure Rules: Financial Management

1.0 Financial Management Standards

1.1 All staff and Members have a duty to abide by the highest standards of probity in dealing with financial issues. This is facilitated by ensuring everyone is clear about the standards to which they are working and the controls that are in place to ensure that these standards are met.

Key controls

1.2 The key controls and control objectives for financial management standards are:

- their promotion throughout the Authority; and
- a monitoring system to review compliance with financial standards, and regular comparisons of performance indicators and benchmark standards that are reported to the Authority.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

1.3 To ensure the proper administration of the financial affairs of the Authority, and to determine on behalf of the Authority the accounting records and the accounting control systems in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

1.4 To set the financial management standards and to monitor compliance with them in accordance with the relevant codes of practice and accounting standards.

1.5 To ensure proper professional practices are adhered to and to act as head of profession in relation to the standards and performance.

1.6 To advise on the key strategic controls necessary to secure sound financial management.

1.7 To ensure that financial information is available to enable accurate and timely monitoring and reporting of comparisons of national and local financial performance indicators.

Responsibilities of Directors

1.8 To promote the financial management standards set by the Section 73 Officer in their departments and to monitor adherence to the standards and practices, liaising as necessary with the Section 73 Officer.

1.9 To promote sound financial practices in relation to the standards, performance, and development of staff in their departments.

2.0 MANAGING EXPENDITURE

Scheme of virement

2.1 The scheme of virement is intended to enable the Authority, Directors and their staff to manage budgets with a degree of flexibility within the overall policy framework determined by the Authority, and therefore to optimise the use of resources.

Key controls

2.2 Key controls for the scheme of virement are:

- it is administered by the Section 73 Officer within guidelines set by the Authority. Any variation from this scheme requires the approval of the Authority.

- the overall budget is agreed by the Authority. Directors and managers are therefore authorised to incur expenditure in accordance with the estimates that make up the budget. The rules below cover virement; that is, switching resources between approved estimates or heads of expenditure. For the purposes of this scheme, a budget head is considered to be a cost centre in the revenue budget, or a project set out in the capital programme.

- virement does not create additional overall budget liability. Directors are expected to exercise their discretion in managing their budgets responsibly and prudently.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

2.3 To prepare jointly with the relevant Director a report to the Authority where revenue or capital virements more than £350,000 are proposed.

Responsibilities of Directors

2.4 A Director may exercise virement on revenue budgets under their control for amounts up to £50,000 on any one budget head during the year in consultation with the Section 73 Officer. This must follow notification to the Section 73 Officer and be subject to the general conditions around virement.

2.5 Revenue and capital virement amounts greater than £50,000 but less than £350,000 requires the approval of the Section 73 Officer and relevant Authority member.

2.6 Revenue and capital virement amounts greater than £350,000, require the approval of the Authority, following a joint report by the Section 73 Officer and the Director, which must specify the proposed expenditure and the source of funding, and must explain the implications in the current and future financial years. In exceptional circumstances, a virement of this value can be made with the approval of the Section 73 Officer, in consultation with the Head of Paid Service and relevant Authority member.

2.7 A virement that is likely to impact on the level of service activity of another Director should be implemented only after agreement with the relevant Director.

2.8 Where an approved budget is a lump-sum budget or contingency intended for allocation during the year, its allocation will not be treated as a virement, provided that:

2.9 the amount is used in accordance with the purposes for which it has been established, as set out in the budget-setting report to the Authority in advance of each financial year,

2.10 the Authority has approved the basis and the terms, including financial limits, on which it will be allocated.

2.11 Budget realignment is described in Financial Regulation A: Financial Management of the Financial Regulations. Any proposal to realign all or part of a service area budget must be notified (by the Director of the service area) in writing to the Section 73 Officer. Budget realignment should usually only occur once in any financial year and be notified to and agreed by the Section 73 Officer.

Treatment of year-end balances

2.12 The year-end treatment of revenue budgets and the re-phasing of capital budgets shall be undertaken in accordance with these Financial Regulations, the approved scheme of virement and the overall financial position of the Authority.

2.13 Requests to carry forward unspent revenue budgets shall only be made where expenditure could not reasonably be incurred within the financial year and there is a continuing operational or programme need. Capital expenditure shall be managed through the Authority's capital programme re-phasing arrangements. Requests shall be submitted in the form and by the timetable determined by the Section 73 Office'

Key controls

- Appropriate accounting procedures are in operation to ensure that carried-forward totals are correct.
- Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer
- To administer the scheme of carry-forward within the guidelines approved by the Authority.
- To report all overspends and underspends on outturn estimates presented to the Authority.

3.0 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

3.1 The Section 73 Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts, in accordance with proper practices and relevant code of practice, for each financial year ending 31 March. In addition, the Local Government Act 2003 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 set out statutory requirements governing the Authority's accounts.

Key controls

3.2 The key controls for accounting policies are:

- systems of internal control are in place that ensure that financial transactions are lawful,
- suitable accounting policies are set out and applied consistently throughout the Authority,
- proper accounting records are maintained, and

- financial statements are prepared which present a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority and its expenditure and income.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

3.3 To select suitable accounting policies and to ensure that these are applied consistently. The accounting policies are set out in the Statement of Accounts, which is prepared at 31 March each year, and covers such items as:

- separate accounts for capital and revenue transactions,
- the basis on which debtors and creditors at year end are included in the accounts,
- details on substantial provisions and reserves,
- fixed assets,
- depreciation,
- retirement benefits,
- stocks and stores,
- financial assets and liabilities,
- accounting for value added tax,
- government grant

Responsibilities of Directors

3.4 To adhere to the accounting policies and guidelines approved by the Section 73 Officer.

4.0 ACCOUNTING RECORDS AND RETURNS

4.1 Maintaining proper accounting records is one of the ways in which the Authority discharges its responsibility for stewardship of public resources. The Authority has a statutory responsibility to prepare its annual accounts to present a true and fair view of its operations during the year. These are subject to external audit. This audit provides assurance that the accounts are prepared properly, that proper accounting practices have been followed and that quality arrangements have been made for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of the Authority's resources.

Key controls

The key controls for accounting records and returns are:

- all Members and officers operate within the required accounting standards and timetables,

- all the Authority's transactions, material commitments and contracts and other essential accounting information are recorded completely, accurately and on a timely basis,

- procedures are in place to enable accounting records to be reconstituted in the event of systems failure,

- reconciliation procedures are carried out to ensure transactions are correctly recorded,

- prime documents are retained in accordance with legislative and other requirements.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

4.2 To determine on behalf of the Authority suitable accounting records, accounting statements and accounting control systems for the Authority. Where records are maintained outside the Finance section, the Section 73 Officer should consult the Director concerned. The Section 73 Officer must also ensure that the accounting control systems are observed and that the accounting records of the Authority are maintained in accordance with proper practices and kept up to date.

4.3 To arrange for the compilation of all accounts and accounting records under their direction.

4.4 To comply with the following principles when allocating accounting duties:

- separating the duties of providing information about sums due to or from the Authority and calculating, checking, and recording these sums from the duty of collecting or disbursing them,

- employees with the duty of examining or checking the accounts of cash transactions must not themselves be engaged in these transactions.

- separating the duties of providing information about sums due to or from the Authority and calculating, checking, and recording these sums from the duty of collecting or disbursing them,

- employees with the duty of examining or checking the accounts of cash transactions must not themselves be engaged in these transactions.

- To make proper arrangements for the audit of the Authority's accounts in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, as amended.

- To ensure that all claims for funds including grants are made by the due date.

- To prepare and publish the audited accounts of the Authority for each financial year, in accordance with the statutory timetable and with the requirement for the Audit Committee to approve the Statement of Accounts by the dates prescribed by statute.

- To administer any arrangements for under and overspending to be carried forward to the following financial year.

- To ensure the proper retention of financial documents in accordance with the legislative requirements.

Responsibilities of Directors

4.5 To consult and obtain the approval of the Section 73 Officer before making any changes to accounting records and procedures.

4.6 To comply with the principles outlined above when allocating accounting duties to ensure a clear separation of duties.

4.7 To maintain adequate records to provide a management trail leading from the source of income/expenditure through to the accounting statements.

4.8 To supply information required to enable the Statement of Accounts to be completed in accordance with guidelines issued by the Section 73 Officer.

5.0 The Annual Statement of Accounts

5.1 The Authority has a statutory responsibility to prepare its own accounts to present a true and fair view of its operations during the year. The Audit Committee is responsible for approving the statutory annual Statement of Accounts.

Key controls

5.2 The key controls for the annual Statement of Accounts are:

- the Authority is required to plan for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of these affairs. In this Authority, that officer is the Section 73 Officer.

- the Authority is required to comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 which set out the statutory dates for approval and publication of the annual accounts.

- the Authority's Statement of Accounts must be prepared in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting (CIPFA/LASAAC).

- Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

- To set out correct accounting policies and to apply them consistently throughout the Authority.

- To prepare the Statement of Accounts and present this to Authority by the statutory date set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

- To sign and date the Statement of Accounts.

- To draw up the timetable for final accounts preparation and to advise staff and external auditors accordingly.

Responsibilities of Directors

5.3 To comply with accounting guidance provided by the Section 73 Officer in relation to the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts, and to supply the Section 73 Officer with information when required.

6.0 Performance Plans

6.1 The purpose of performance plans is to explain overall priorities and objectives, current performance, and proposals for further improvement. Annually the Authority produces a Plan that is approved by Authority through the budget setting process.

Key Controls

6.2 The key controls for performance plans are to:

- ensure that all relevant plans are produced and that they are consistent,
- produce plans in accordance with statutory requirements,
- meet the timetables set,
- ensure that all performance information is accurate, complete and up to date,
- provide improvement targets which are meaningful, realistic and challenging.
- Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer
- To advise and supply the financial information that needs to be included in performance plans in accordance with statutory requirements and agreed timetables.
- To contribute to the development of corporate and service targets, objectives, and performance information.
- Responsibilities of Directors
- To contribute to the development of performance plans.
- To contribute to the development of targets and objectives, both corporate and service led ensuring delivery.
- To ensure that systems are in place to measure activity and collect accurate information for use as performance indicators.
- To ensure that performance information is monitored frequently to allow corrective action to be taken if targets are not likely to be met.

7.0 Budgeting

7.1 The format of the budget determines the level of detail to which financial control and management will be exercised. The format shapes how the rules around virement operate, the operation of budget allocations and sets the level at which funds may be reallocated within budgets.

Key controls

7.2 The key controls for the budget format are:

- complies with all legal requirements,
- complies with CIPFA's Service Reporting Code of Practice,
- reflects the accountabilities of service delivery.
- Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer
- To advise on the format of the budget that is approved by the Authority.
- Responsibilities of Directors
- To comply with accounting guidance provided by the Section 73 Officer.

8.0 Revenue budget preparation, monitoring, and control

8.1 Budget management ensures that once the budget has been approved by the Authority, resources allocated are used for their intended purposes and are properly accounted for. Budgetary control is a continuous process, enabling the Authority to review and adjust its budget targets during the financial year. It also provides the mechanism that calls to account managers responsible for defined elements of the budget.

8.2 By continuously identifying and explaining variances against budgetary targets, the Authority can identify changes in trends and resource requirements at the earliest opportunity. The Authority itself operates within an annual budget allocation, approved when setting the overall budget. To ensure that the Authority in total does not overspend, each service is required to manage its own expenditure within the budget allocated to it.

8.3 For the purposes of budgetary control by officers, a budget will normally be the planned income and expenditure for a service area or cost centre.

<u>Key controls</u>

8.4 The key controls for managing and controlling the revenue budget are:

- the responsibility of the Authority for budget monitoring and control, under the Local Government Act 2003,
- there is a nominated budget manager and budget holder for each cost centre heading,
- budget holders should be responsible only for income and expenditure that they can influence, and act under the direction of their budget manager,
- budget managers accept accountability for their budgets and the level of service to be delivered and understand their financial responsibilities,
- budget holders follow an approved certification process for all expenditure,
- income and expenditure are properly recorded and accounted for,

- performance levels/levels of service are monitored in conjunction with the budget and necessary action is taken to align service outputs and budget,

- appropriate forms of reporting are identified and put in place.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

8.5 To establish an appropriate framework of budgetary management and control that ensures that:

8.6 The framework for budgetary management and control shall require budget managers to provide forecasts on the basis of the best available information and to certify, in the form required by the Section 73 Officer, that forecasts are complete, reasonable and take account of known commitments, risks and recovery actions.

- budget management is exercised within annual budget allocations unless the Authority agrees otherwise,

- each Director has available timely information on receipts and payments on each budget which is sufficiently detailed to enable managers to fulfil their budgetary responsibilities,

- expenditure is committed only against an approved budget head,

- all officers responsible for committing expenditure comply with relevant guidance, and the financial regulations,

- each cost centre has a single named officer, determined by the relevant budget manager (Director or senior manager), to act as the budget holder for that cost centre. As a general principle, budget responsibility should be aligned as closely as possible to the decision-making processes that commits expenditure,

- significant variances from approved budgets are investigated and reported by budget managers regularly.

8.7 To administer the Authority's scheme of virement.

8.8 To submit reports to the Authority, in consultation with the relevant Director, where a Director is unable to balance expenditure and resources within existing approved budgets under their control.

8.9 To prepare and submit reports on the Authority's projected income and expenditure compared with the budget on a regular basis.

Responsibilities of Directors

8.10 To maintain budgetary control within their departments. To ensure that all income and expenditure is legal and is properly recorded and accounted for.

8.11 To ensure there is an accountable budget holder, who will act under the direction of a nominated budget manager, for income and expenditure under the control of the

Director (grouped together in a series of cost centres). As a general principle, budget responsibility should be aligned as closely as possible to the decision- making that commits expenditure.

8.12 To ensure that spending remains within the service's overall budget allocation, and that individual budget heads are not overspent, by monitoring the budget and taking appropriate corrective action where significant variations from the approved budget are forecast.

8.13 To ensure that a monitoring process is in place to review performance levels/levels of service in conjunction with the budget and is operating effectively.

8.14 To prepare and submit to the Section 73 Officer reports on the service's projected expenditure compared with its budget, and to keep the Section 73 Officer informed of any actual or likely changes which may/will have a significant impact on current or future budgets.

8.15 Where a significant adverse variance is reported under this section, the Director shall submit a recovery plan to the Section 73 Officer and shall report progress against that plan until the variance is resolved or the Authority determines otherwise.

8.16 To ensure prior approval by the Authority (in accordance with the Authority's Constitution) for new proposals which:

- create material financial commitments in future years,
- change existing policies, initiate new policies, or cease existing policies,
- materially extend or reduce the Authority's services.

8.17 A report on new proposals should explain the full financial implications, following consultation with the Section 73 Officer. Unless the Authority has agreed otherwise, Directors must plan to contain the financial implications of such proposals within their budget allocation.

8.18 To ensure compliance with the scheme of virement.

8.19 To agree with the relevant Director where it appears that a budget proposal, including a virement proposal, may impact materially on another service area or Director's level of service activity.

8.20 To ensure that the Authority's standing orders with respect to contracts are complied with whenever expenditure is proposed to be incurred.

9.0 Budgets and medium-term planning

9.1 The Authority needs to plan effectively and to develop systems to enable resources to be allocated in accordance with priorities. The budget is the financial expression of the Authority's plans and policies.

9.2 The revenue budget must be constructed to ensure that resource allocation properly reflects the service plans and priorities of the Authority. Budgets (spending plans) are needed so that the Authority can plan, authorise, monitor, and control the way money is allocated and spent. It is illegal for an authority to budget for a deficit.

9.3 Medium-term planning involves a planning cycle in which managers develop their own plans. As each year passes, another future year will be added to the medium- term plan. This ensures that the Authority is always preparing for events in advance.

Key controls

9.4 The key controls for budgets and medium-term planning are:

- specific budget approval for all expenditure,
- budget managers (Directors and senior managers) are consulted in the preparation of the budgets for which they will be held responsible. They accept accountability for the budgets as per the delegations set by the Authority for their budgets and the level of service to be delivered,
- budget managers nominate designated budget holders to be responsible for the day-to-day control of income and expenditure against a set budget for a cost centre,
- a monitoring process is in place to regularly review the effectiveness and operation of budget preparation and to ensure that corrective action is taken to address any issues that are identified,
- the Section 73 Officer to prepare a report, for use when the authority is deciding its annual budget and precept level, on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of the Authority's reserves.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

9.5 To prepare and submit reports on budget prospects for the Authority, including resource constraints set by the Government, the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of the Authority's reserves. Reports should take account of medium-term prospects, where appropriate.

9.6 To determine the detailed form of revenue estimates and the methods for their preparation, consistent with the budget approved by the Authority, and after consultation with Directors.

9.7 To prepare and submit reports to the Authority on the aggregate spending plans and on the resources available to fund them.

9.8 To advise on the medium-term implications of spending decisions.

9.9 To encourage the best use of resources and value for money by working with Directors to identify opportunities to improve economy, efficiency, and effectiveness

9.10 To advise the Authority in accordance with their responsibilities under section 73 of the Local Government Act 1985.

Responsibilities of Directors

9.11 To prepare estimates of income and expenditure, in consultation with the Section 73 Officer, to be submitted to the Authority.

9.12 To prepare budgets that are consistent with any relevant budget allocations, with the Authority's annual budget cycle and with guidelines issued by the Section 73 Officer. The format should be prescribed by the Section 73 Officer in accordance with the Authority's general directions.

9.13 To integrate financial and budget plans into service planning, so that budget plans can be supported by financial and non-financial performance measures.

9.14 In consultation with the Section 73 Officer, and in accordance with the laid-down guidance and timetable, to prepare detailed draft revenue and capital budgets for consideration by the Authority in accordance with the budget and policy framework.

9.15 When drawing up draft budget requirements, to have regard to:

- spending patterns and pressures revealed through the budget monitoring process,
- legal requirements,
- policy requirements as defined by the Authority in the approved policy framework,
- service developments,
- efficiency savings, and
- the priorities of the Authority.

10. Resource allocation

10.1 A mismatch sometimes exists between available resources and required resources. It is therefore imperative that needs/desires are carefully prioritised and that resources are properly allocated, to fulfil all legal responsibilities. Resources may include staff, money, equipment, goods, and materials.

Key controls

10.2 The key controls for resource allocation are that resources are:

- acquired in accordance with the law and using an approved authorisation process,
- used only for the purpose intended, to achieve the approved policies and objectives, and are properly accounted for,
- securely held for use when required,
- used with the minimum level of waste, inefficiency, or loss for other reasons.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

10.3 To advise on methods available for the funding of resources, such as grants from central government and borrowing requirements.

10.4 To assist in the allocation of resources to budget managers.

Responsibilities of Directors

10.5 To work within budget limits and to utilise resources allocated, and further allocate resources, in the most efficient, effective and economic way.

10.6 To identify opportunities to minimise or eliminate resource requirements or consumption without having a detrimental effect on service delivery.

11.0 Capital plans

11.1 Capital expenditure involves acquiring or enhancing assets with a long-term value to the Authority, such as land, buildings, and major items of plant, equipment, or vehicles. Capital assets shape the way services are delivered in the long term and create financial commitments for the future in the form of financing costs and revenue running costs. As capital expenditure can involve significant sums of money it is important that capital projects are carefully appraised and managed to ensure that the project objectives are delivered.

11.2 The Local Government Act 2003 established a new system for capital financing based on a prudential framework. Local Authorities now have the freedom to borrow funds to finance their capital programmes, without Government consent. The framework requires that local authorities ensure their plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable.

Key controls

11.3 The key controls for capital plans are:

- specific approval by the Authority for the programme of capital expenditure,
- expenditure on capital schemes is subject to the approval of the Authority,
- (b) the development and implementation of a Capital Investment Strategy,
- accountability for each proposal is accepted by a named manager,
- monitoring of progress in conjunction with expenditure and comparison with approved budget. Quarterly reports of capital monitoring are required to be presented to the Authority.

11.4 A Key controls for capital plans shall also include proportionate gateway reviews, whole-life costing, identification of financing and revenue consequences, and arrangements to monitor outputs, outcomes and benefits realisation following completion.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

11.5 To prepare the Authority's capital programme jointly with Directors and the Head of Paid Service and to report it to the Authority for approval. Approval from the Authority is required where a Director proposes additional unsupported borrowing not anticipated in the capital programme.

11.6 To prepare and submit reports to the Authority on the capital outturn as compared with capital budget.

11.7 To issue guidance concerning capital schemes and regulations, for example, on project appraisal techniques. The definition of 'capital expenditure' will be in accordance with standard accounting practice and government regulation.

11.8 To obtain authorisation from the Authority for individual schemes where the estimated expenditure exceeds the capital programme provision by more than a specified amount which will be from time to time declared.

Responsibilities of Directors

11.9 To comply with guidance concerning capital schemes and controls issued by the Section 73 Officer.

11.10 To ensure that all capital proposals have undergone a project appraisal in accordance with guidance issued by the Section 73 Officer, regardless of the source of funding of the proposed project.

11.11 Project appraisals for capital proposals must include whole-life costing, expected benefits, measurable outcomes, delivery risks, gateway review requirements and post-completion arrangements for evaluating whether benefits have been realised.

11.12 To prepare regular reports for the Section 73 Officer reviewing the capital plan provisions for their services. They should also prepare a quarterly return of estimated final costs of schemes in the approved capital programme for submission to the Section 73 Officer.

11.13 To ensure that adequate records are maintained for all capital contracts.

11.14 To proceed with projects only when there is adequate provision in the capital programme and the project has been approved by Authority with the agreement of the Section 73 Officer, where required. The funding of proposed projects must be clearly identified together with full financial implications (both revenue and capital) and a business case must be completed for every capital project, regardless of the source of funding of the project.

11.15 To prepare and submit reports, jointly with the Section 73 Officer, to the Authority, of any variation in contract costs greater than the approved limits.

11.16 To prepare and submit reports, jointly with the Section 73 Officer, to the Authority, on completion of all contracts where the final expenditure exceeds the approved contract sum by more than the specified amount.

11.17 To ensure that credit arrangements, such as leasing agreements, are not entered into without the prior approval of the Section 73 Officer and approval of the scheme through the capital programme.

11.18 To consult with the Section 73 Officer and to seek Authority approval where the Director proposes to bid for funding to finance a project where expenditure has not been included in the current year's capital plan.

11.19 To comply with standing orders in the administration of contracts.

11.20 Where projects in the capital programme are included on the assumption of resources becoming available, no financial commitments should be entered into on These projects unless resources are confirmed as being available to the satisfaction of the Section 73 Officer.

11.21 To ensure that one accountable manager is identified for the management of each capital project, ensuring that approved funding is spent in accordance with the capital plan, and the project is delivered within the timeframes set down in the capital plan.

12 Maintenance of Reserves

12.1 The Authority must decide the level of general reserves (balances) it wishes to maintain. Reserves are maintained as a matter of prudence. They enable the Authority to provide for unexpected events and thereby protect it from overspending, should such events occur. Reserves for specific purposes may also be maintained. When an authority is deciding its annual budget and precept level it is required to consider a report from the Section 73 Officer on the adequacy of the Authority's reserves and robustness of the budget.

Key controls

12.2 To establish and maintain reserves in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003.

12.3 It is the responsibility of the Section 73 Officer to advise the Authority regarding the level of reserves that they should hold and to ensure that there are clear protocols for their establishment and use.

12.4 For each reserve established the purpose, usage and basis of transactions should be clearly identified.

12.5 Transfers to and from reserves require authorisation by the appropriate Director in consultation with the Section 73 Officer.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

12.6 To advise the Authority on prudent levels of reserves for the Authority. The Section 73 Officer is also required to prepare a report on the adequacy of the Authority's reserves for use when the Authority is deciding its annual budget and precept level.

12.7 To ensure that there is a clear protocol for the establishment and use of reserves.

Responsibilities of Directors

12.8 To ensure that reserves are used only for the purposes for which they were intended.

13 Risk Management

13.1 Risk is the chance or possibility of loss, damage, injury, or failure to achieve objectives caused by an unwanted or uncertain action or event.

13.2 It is the overall responsibility of the Authority to set the Authority's risk appetite and promote a culture of risk management awareness throughout the authority.

Key controls

13.3 The key controls for risk management are:

- procedures are in place to identify, assess, prevent, or contain material known risks, and these procedures are operating effectively throughout the Authority,
- a monitoring process is in place to regularly review the effectiveness of risk reduction strategies and the operation of these controls. The risk management process should be conducted on a continuing basis.
- managers know that they are responsible for managing relevant risks and are provided with relevant information on risk management initiatives,
- provision is made for losses that might result from the risks that remain,
- acceptable levels of risk are determined and insured against where appropriate,
- the Authority has identified business continuity plans for implementation in the event of disaster that results in significant loss or damage to its resources.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

13.4 To ensure that the Authority's Risk and Opportunities register is prepared and promoted throughout the Authority by the nominated officer.

13.5 To develop risk management controls in conjunction with other Directors.

13.6 To include all appropriate employees of the Authority in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance.

13.7 To retain corporate insurance cover, through external insurance and internal funding, and to negotiate all claims in consultation with other officers, where necessary.

Responsibilities of Directors

13.8 To notify the Section 73 Officer immediately of any loss, liability or damage that may lead to a claim against the Authority, together with any information or explanation required by the Section 73 Officer or the Authority's insurers.

13.9 To take responsibility for risk management, having regard to advice from the Section 73 Officer or nominated officer on behalf of the Section 73 Officer and other specialist advice.

13.10 To ensure that there are regular reviews of risk within their department, in accordance with Authority's policies and procedures.

13.11 To notify the Section 73 Officer promptly of all new risks, properties or vehicles that require insurance and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

13.12 To consult the Section 73 Officer and the Monitoring Officer on the terms of any indemnity that the Authority is requested to give.

13.13 To ensure that employees, or anyone covered by the Authority's insurances, do not admit liability, or make any offer to pay compensation that may prejudice the assessment of liability in respect of any insurance claim.

14 INTERNAL CONTROLS

14.1 The Authority is beyond the direct control of individuals. It therefore requires internal controls to manage and monitor progress towards strategic objectives.

14.2 The Authority has statutory obligations and, therefore, requires internal controls to identify, meet and monitor compliance with these obligations.

14.3 The Authority faces a range of financial, administrative, and commercial risks, both from internal and external factors, which threaten the achievement of its objectives. Internal controls are necessary to manage these risks.

14.4 The system of internal controls is established to provide measurable achievement of:

- efficient and effective operations,
- reliable financial information and reporting,
- compliance with laws and regulations, and
- risk management.

Key controls

14.5 The key controls and control objectives for internal control systems are:

- key controls should be reviewed on a regular basis and the Authority should make a formal statement annually to the effect that it is satisfied that the systems of internal control are operating effectively,
- managerial control systems, including defining policies, setting objectives and plans, monitoring financial and other performance, and taking appropriate anticipatory and remedial action. The key objective of these systems is to promote ownership of the control environment by defining roles and responsibilities,
- financial and operational control systems and procedures, which include physical safeguards for assets, segregation of duties, authorisation and approval procedures and information systems,
- an effective internal audit function that is properly resourced. It should operate in accordance with the principles contained in the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (2017) and with any other statutory obligations and regulations.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

14.6 To assist the Authority to put in place an appropriate control environment and effective internal controls which provide reasonable assurance of effective and efficient operations, financial stewardship, probity and compliance with laws and regulations.

Responsibilities of Directors

14.7 To manage processes to check that established controls are being adhered to and to evaluate their effectiveness, to be confident in the proper use of resources, achievement of objectives and management of risks.

14.8 To review existing controls in the light of changes affecting the Authority and to establish and implement new ones in line with guidance from the Section 73 Officer and internal audit. Directors should also be responsible for removing controls that are unnecessary or not cost or risk effective – for example, because of duplication.

14.9 To ensure staff have a clear understanding of the consequences of lack of control.

15. AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

Internal Audit

15.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 more specifically require that a "relevant body shall maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices in relation to internal control".

15.2 Accordingly, Internal Audit is an independent and objective appraisal function established by the Authority for reviewing the system of internal control. It examines, evaluates, and reports on the adequacy of internal control as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources. Internal Audit assists management in delivering the objectives of the Authority through assessing exposure to risk and recommending, where appropriate, practical improvements to the control environment. To this end, Internal Audit will have no executive responsibilities. Internal Audit's remit, as laid out in its charter, includes:

- assessing if operations are being carried out as planned, and if objectives / goals are being achieved,
- assessing the adequacy of systems established to ensure compliance with policies, plans, procedures, laws and regulations, i.e. rules established by the management of the organisation or externally,
- assessing the completeness, reliability, and integrity of information, both financial and operational,
- assessing the extent to which the Authority's assets, data and interests are properly accounted for and safeguarded from losses of all kinds, including fraud, corruption, waste, extravagance, abuse, ineffective management, and poor value for money, and
- assessing the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are deployed.

Key controls

15.3 The key controls for Internal Audit are:

- that it is independent in its planning and operation,

- the Head of Audit and Assurance has direct access to the Head of Paid Service, all levels of management and directly to elected Members, and

- the internal auditors comply with the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards, and the "Local Government Application Note Public Sector Internal Audit Standards" prepared by CIPFA.

- Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

- To ensure that internal auditors have the authority to:

- access authority premises at reasonable times,

- access all assets, records, documents, correspondence, and control systems,

- receive any information and explanation considered necessary concerning any matter under consideration,

- require any employee of the Authority to account for any asset under his or her control, and

- directly access the Head of Paid Service, the Authority and appropriate committees, in accordance with the terms of reference agreed for Internal Audit.

- Internal Audit shall also have access to all officers, buildings, information, explanations, and documentation required to discharge the audit role in respect of:

    - organisations to whom the Authority has given grants,
    - organisations with whom the Authority contracts, and
    - partner organisations in any scheme for which the Authority has responsibility as lead or accountable body.

  Such rights of access shall be written into the appropriate agreements with these organisations.

- To approve the strategic and annual audit plans prepared by the Head of Audit and Assurance, which take account of the characteristics and relative risks of the activities involved. In producing such audit plans, the Head of Audit and Assurance shall have an unrestricted range of coverage of the Authority's operations; the Head of Audit and Assurance will have freedom to determine the priorities of Internal Audit in consultation with the Section 73 Officer and other Directors.

- To ensure that effective procedures are in place to investigate promptly any fraud or irregularity.

- To ensure that a review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit is undertaken at least once a year.

<u>Responsibilities of Directors</u>

15.4 To ensure that internal auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents, and assets that the auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.

15.5 To ensure that auditors are provided with any information and explanations that they seek in the course of their work.

15.6 To consider and respond promptly to recommendations in audit reports.

15.7 To ensure that any agreed actions arising from audit recommendations are carried out in a timely and efficient fashion.

15.8 To notify the Section 73 Officer and Head of Audit and Assurance immediately of any suspected fraud, theft, irregularity, improper use or misappropriation of the Authority's property or resources. Pending investigation and reporting, the Director should take all necessary steps to prevent further loss and to secure records and documentation against removal or alteration. If a serious irregularity is confirmed, the matter shall also be reported to the Head of Paid Service and the Authority lead member.

15.9 To ensure that new systems for maintaining financial records, or records of assets, or changes to such systems, are discussed with and agreed by the Section 73 Officer prior to implementation.

16 External Audit

16.1 The authority has opted into the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd national scheme to oversee the appointment of its external auditor. An appointed auditor has rights of access to all documents and information deemed necessary for audit purposes.

16.2 The basic duties of the external auditor are defined in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Local Government Act 1999. Additionally, the National Audit Office has now taken on responsibility for preparing / maintaining the Code of Audit Practice which sets out the way in which the auditors carry out their functions.

16.3 The Authority's accounts are scrutinised by external auditors, who must be satisfied that the Statement of Accounts presents a 'true and fair view' of the financial position of the Authority and its income and expenditure for the year in question and complies with the legal requirements.

Key controls

16.4 External auditors are appointed for a maximum contract period of five years (Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 s.7). The National Audit Office prepares a Code of Audit Practice, which external auditors follow when carrying out their audits.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

16.5 To ensure that external auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents, and assets that the external auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.

16.6 To ensure there is effective liaison between external and internal audit.

16.7 To work with the external auditor and advise the Authority and Directors on their responsibilities in relation to external audit.

Responsibilities of Directors

16.8 To ensure that external auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents, and assets which the external auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.

16.9 To ensure that all records and systems are up to date and available for inspection.

17 PREVENTING FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

17.1 The Authority will not tolerate fraud and corruption in the administration of its responsibilities, whether from inside or outside the Authority.

17.2 The Authority's expectation of propriety and accountability is that Members and officers at all levels will lead by example in ensuring adherence to legal requirements, rules, procedures, and practices.

17.3 The Authority also expects that individuals and organisations with whom it comes into contact will act towards the Authority with integrity and without thought or actions involving fraud and corruption.

Key controls

17.4 The key controls regarding the prevention of financial irregularities are that:

- the Authority has an effective Fraud Strategy and maintains a culture that will not tolerate fraud or corruption,
- all Members and staff act with integrity and lead by example,
- senior managers are required to deal swiftly and firmly with those who defraud or attempt to defraud the authority or who are corrupt,
- high standards of conduct are promoted amongst Members,
- the maintenance of a register of interests in which any interests, or offers of gifts or hospitality must be recorded,
- whistle blowing procedures are in place and operate effectively,
- legislation including the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 is adhered to
- anti-money laundering procedures are in place.
- Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer
- To develop and maintain a Fraud Strategy.
- To develop and maintain an Anti-Money Laundering Policy
- To maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements.
- To ensure that all suspected irregularities are reported to the Head of Audit and Assurance; to report fraud or irregularity necessitating police involvement to the Authority lead member and Head of Paid Service.

Responsibilities of Directors

17.5 To ensure that all suspected irregularities are reported to the Section 73 Officer and Head of Audit and Assurance.

17.6 To instigate the Authority's disciplinary procedures where the outcome of an audit investigation indicates improper behaviour.

17.7 To ensure that where financial impropriety is discovered, the Section 73 Officer is informed, and where sufficient evidence exists to believe that a criminal offence may have been committed, the police are called in to determine with the Crown Prosecution Service whether any prosecution will take place.

17.8 To maintain a departmental register of interests, gifts, and hospitality, and to ensure that all staff within the department are made aware of their duty to declare interests, or offers of gifts or hospitality, which may conflict with their role as a Authority employee.

18 Assets: Security

Why is this important?

18.1 It is important that assets are safeguarded and used efficiently in service delivery, and that arrangements are in place for the security of both assets and information required for service operations. An up-to-date asset register is a prerequisite for proper fixed asset accounting and sound asset management.

Key controls

18.2 The key controls for the security of resources are:

- resources are used only for the purposes of the Authority and are properly accounted for,
- resources are available for use when required,
- resources that are no longer required are disposed of in accordance with the law and the regulations of the Authority to maximise benefits,
- an asset register is maintained for the Authority, assets are recorded when they are acquired and this record is updated as changes occur with respect to the location and condition of the asset,
- all staff are aware of their responsibilities about safeguarding the Authority's assets and information, including the requirements of the General Data Protection Act and software copyright legislation, and
- all staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding the security of the Authority's computer systems, including maintaining restricted access to the information held on them and compliance with the Authority's computer and internet security policies.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

18.3 To ensure that an asset register is maintained in accordance with good practice for all fixed assets with a value in excess of an amount which will be declared from time to time. The function of the asset register is to provide the Authority with information about fixed assets so that they are:

- safeguarded,
- used efficiently and effectively,
- adequately maintained.
- To receive the information required for accounting, costing, and financial records from each Director, and to determine the method of valuation of stores.

18.4 To ensure that assets are valued in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (CIPFA/LASAAC).

Responsibilities of Directors

18.5 The appropriate Director shall maintain a property database in a form approved by the Section 73 Officer for all assets currently owned or used by the Authority.
To ensure the proper security of all buildings and other assets under their control.

18.6 To pass title deeds to the appropriate Director who is responsible for custody of all title deeds.

18.7 To ensure that no Authority asset is subject to personal use by an employee without proper authority.

18.8 To ensure the safe custody of vehicles, equipment, furniture, stock, stores, and other property belonging to the Authority.

18.9 To ensure that the department maintains a register of moveable assets in accordance with arrangements defined by the Section 73 Officer.

18.10 To ensure that assets are identified, their location recorded and that they are appropriately marked and insured.

18.11 To consult the Section 73 Officer in any case where security is thought to be defective or where it is considered that special security arrangements may be needed.

18.12 To arrange for the valuation of assets for accounting purposes to meet requirements specified by the Section 73 Officer.

18.13 To ensure that all employees are aware that they have a personal responsibility regarding the protection and confidentiality of information, whether held in manual or computerised records. Information may be sensitive or privileged, or may possess some intrinsic value, and its disclosure or loss could result in a cost to the Authority in some way.

18.14 To maintain inventories and record an adequate description of furniture, fittings, equipment, plant, and machinery with an individual value exceeding £1,000, and for portable goods such as Laptop Computers, iPads, mobile telephones, exceeding £100.

18.15 To carry out an annual check of all items on the inventory to verify location, review condition and to take action in relation to surpluses or deficiencies, annotating the

inventory accordingly. Significant variations should be brought to the attention of the Section 73 Officer and Head of Audit and Assurance. Portable items, such as computers and cameras, should be identified with security markings as belonging to the Authority. Guidance on the disposal of obsolete inventory, or that which is surplus to requirements is provided below.

18.16 To make sure that property is only used in the course of the Authority's business, unless the Director concerned has given permission otherwise.

18.17 To make arrangements for the care and custody of stocks and stores in the department.

18.18 To ensure stocks are maintained at reasonable levels (which do not exceed normal business requirements) and are subject to a regular independent physical check.

18.19 To investigate and remove from the Authority's records (i.e. write off) discrepancies as necessary, or to obtain Authority approval if they are in excess of a predetermined limit which will be announced on an annual basis.

18.20 To authorise or write off disposal of redundant stocks, equipment, or inventory after consultation with the Section 73 Officer.

18.21 To seek Authority approval to the write-off of redundant stocks and equipment more than a predetermined sum.

18.22 To ensure that all stores' issues, except in the case of small value materials, are supported by a requisition stating the quantity required which is signed by an authorised signatory.

18.23 To ensure that delivery notes are obtained in respect of all goods received into store and that the goods are checked with both the delivery note and official order as regards quantity and specification compliance as soon as possible.

18.24 To provide the Section 73 Officer with such information as he or she requires in relation to stores for accounting, costing, and financial records.

19 Assets: Intellectual property

19.1 Intellectual property is a generic term that includes inventions and writing. If these are created by the employee during the course of employment, then, as a general rule, they belong to the employer, not the employee. Various acts of Parliament cover different types of intellectual property.

19.2 Certain activities undertaken within the Authority may give rise to items that may be patentable, for example, software development. These items are collectively known as intellectual property.

Key controls

19.3 In the event that the Authority decides to become involved in the commercial exploitation of intellectual property, guidelines for this should be drafted.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

19.4 To develop and disseminate good practice and guidelines on the ownership and exploitation of intellectual property, in conjunction with other relevant officers of the Authority (e.g. the Monitoring Officer).

Responsibilities of Directors

19.5 To ensure that controls are in place to ensure that staff do not carry out private work in Authority time and that staff are aware of an employer's rights regarding intellectual property.

20 Asset disposal

Why is this important?

20.1 It would be uneconomic and inefficient for the cost of assets to outweigh their benefits. Obsolete, non-repairable or unnecessary resources should be disposed of in accordance with the law and the regulations of the Authority.

Key controls

20.2 Assets for disposal are identified and are disposed of at the most appropriate time, and only when it is in the best interests of the Authority, and best price is obtained, bearing in mind other factors, such as environmental issues. For items of significant value, disposal should be by competitive tender or public auction.

20.3 Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

20.4 To issue guidelines representing best practice for disposal of assets.

20.5 To ensure appropriate accounting entries are made to remove the value of disposed assets from the Authority's records and to include the sale proceeds if appropriate.

Responsibilities of Directors

20.6 To seek advice from the Section 73 Officer on the disposal of surplus or obsolete materials, stores, or equipment, and to follow the asset disposal guidelines prepared by the Section 73 Officer.

20.7 To ensure that maximum income is received for the disposal of an asset and is properly banked and recorded in the accounts.

21 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND BANKING

21.1 Codes of practice governing the appropriate way of administering these funds are provided by CIPFA and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. These aim to ensure assurances that the Authority's money is properly managed in a way that prioritises security of capital and liquidity, with yield being an important but tertiary consideration.

Key controls

21.2 That the Authority's borrowings and investments comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services and with the Authority's Treasury Policy Statement.

Responsibilities of Section 73 Officer – treasury management and banking

21.3 To arrange the borrowing and investments of the Authority in such a manner as to comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services, the Authority's Treasury Management Policy Statement, and the Annual Strategy Statement.

21.4 The Treasury Management Strategy shall include or be supported by an MRP Statement or policy where required, and Members charged with treasury management responsibilities shall receive appropriate training in accordance with relevant professional guidance.

21.5 In accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services, to report on a regular basis on treasury management activities.

21.6 To operate bank accounts as are considered necessary – opening or closing any bank account shall require the approval of the Section 73 Officer (or a person to whom such authority has been properly delegated), and all such accounts must be in the name of the Authority.

Responsibilities of Directors – treasury management and banking

21.7 To follow the instructions on banking issued by the Section 73 Officer, and to comply with the Authority's Treasury Management Policy Statement; to ensure that Authority cheques held within (or being transported from or to) the Director's department are securely stored, administered, and controlled.

Responsibilities of Section 73 Officer – investments and borrowing

21.8 To ensure that all investments of money are made in the name of the Authority or in the name of nominees approved by the Authority.

21.9 To ensure that all securities that are the property of the Authority (or its nominees) and the title deeds of all property in the Authority's ownership are held in the custody of the appropriate Director.

21.10 To affect all borrowings in the name of the Authority.

21.11 To act as the Authority's registrar of stocks, bonds, and mortgages and to maintain records of all borrowing of money by the Authority.

21.12 To ensure that arrangements exist which provide for an officer (other than the officer who usually makes investments) to monitor investment levels, which should be periodically reviewed.

21.13 To ensure that an adequate division of duties exists between the arranging and settling of transactions.

Responsibilities of Directors – investments and borrowing

21.14 For non-treasury loans and investments that are not covered within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement the capital investment strategy should be considered and where a key decision is required then approval should be by the Authority.

Responsibilities of Directors – trust funds and funds held for third parties

21.15 To arrange for all trust funds to be held, wherever possible, in the name of the Authority. All officers acting as trustees by virtue of their official position shall deposit securities, etc. relating to the trust with the Section 73 Officer, unless the deed specifies otherwise.

21.16 To arrange, where funds are held on behalf of third parties, for their secure administration, approved by the Section 73 Officer, and to maintain written records of all transactions.

21.17 To ensure that trust funds are operated within any relevant legislation and the specific requirements for each trust.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer – imprest accounts

21.18 To provide employees of the Authority with cash or bank imprest accounts to purchase low value items on behalf of the Authority and to prescribe rules for operating these accounts. For petty cash imprests, expenditure on goods should not usually exceed £100 for any one transaction; payments may not be broken down in order to avoid this limit. For cheque accounts individual cheques should be signed by at least two authorised signatories, a list of whom should be provided to the Section 73 Officer and regularly updated. Cheques should never be 'pre-signed', or signed when the account payee or value of the cheque is blank.

21.19 Where appropriate, to open an account with the Authority's bankers for use by the imprest holder who shall not overdraw the account. It shall be a standing instruction to the Authority's bankers that the amount of any overdrawn balance shall forthwith be notified to the Section 73 Officer.

21.20 To determine the petty cash advance limit and to maintain a record of all transactions and petty cash advances made, and periodically to review the arrangements for the safe custody and control of these advances.

21.21 To reimburse imprest holders as often as necessary to restore the imprests, but normally not more than monthly.

21.22 To inform all Directors of the Authority's insurance cover with regard to cash holdings.

Responsibilities of Directors – Imprest Accounts

21.23 To ensure that employees operating an imprest account:

- obtain and retain vouchers to support each payment from the imprest account. Where appropriate, an official receipted VAT invoice must be obtained, to ensure that VAT may be reclaimed where appropriate,
- make adequate arrangements for the safe custody of the account, having regard to the Authority's insurance cover where appropriate,
- produce upon demand by the Section 73 Officer cash and all vouchers to the total value of the imprest amount,
- record transactions promptly,
- respect the £100 limit for petty cash payments, unless in exceptional circumstances the Director has allowed a higher value for a particular purchase,
- reconcile and balance the account at least monthly; reconciliation sheets to be signed and retained by the imprest holder,

- ensure a petty cash payment slip is completed for every reimbursement which is made, signed by the claimant, authorised by their line manager, and signed by the person making the petty cash payment (who shall be an authorised signatory for such purposes). Receipts must be obtained to back up all expenditure made and reclaimed through the petty cash account and attached to the petty cash payment slip to comply with the requirements of HM Revenue & Customs,
- provide the Section 73 Officer with a certificate of the value of the account held at 31 March each year,
- ensure that the float is never used to cash personal cheques or to make personal loans and that the only payments into the account are the reimbursement of the float and change relating to purchases where an advance has been made.
- Income should never be paid into a petty cash account, but banked separately as required by these financial regulations,
- on leaving the Authority's employment, or otherwise ceasing to be entitled to hold an imprest advance, an employee shall account to the Section 73 Officer for the amount advanced to him or her, and surrender the imprest and associated records to the Director or their nominated senior representative, and
- advise the Director of any significant imbalances which cannot be reconciled; the Director should then contact the Section 73 Officer for advice.
- When making expenditure on behalf of the service for reimbursement by petty cash or payment voucher, employees are reminded that:

21.24 Use of personal credit/debit cards should be avoided where possible for paying for goods. Personal loyalty cards must not be used to gain points or benefits from transactions. Any loyalty cards should be held in the Authority's name. This principle applies to any purchase made by the Authority from which vouchers can be collected and exchanged for gifts.

22 STAFFING

22.1 In order to provide the highest level of service, it is critical that the Authority recruits and retains high calibre, knowledgeable staff, qualified to an appropriate level.

Key controls

22.2 The key controls for staffing are:

- A clear Recruitment and Selection Policy exists, in which staffing requirements and budget allocation are matched,
- procedures are in place for forecasting staffing requirements and cost,
- controls are implemented that ensure that staff time is used efficiently and to the benefit of the Authority, and
- checks are undertaken prior to employing new staff to ensure that they are appropriately qualified, experienced, and trustworthy.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

22.3 To ensure that budget provision exists for all existing and new employees.

22.4 To act as an advisor to Directors on areas such as national insurance and pension contributions, as appropriate.

Responsibilities of Directors

22.5 To agree an annual staffing budget.

22.6 To ensure that the staffing budget is an accurate forecast of staffing levels and is equated to appropriate revenue budget provision (including on-costs and overheads).

22.7 To monitor staff activity to ensure adequate control over such costs as sickness, overtime, training, and temporary staff.

22.8 To ensure that the staffing budget is not exceeded without due authority and that it is managed to enable the agreed level of service to be provided.

22.9 To ensure that the Section 73 Officer is immediately informed if the staffing budget is likely to be materially over or underspent.

22.10 To ensure that adequate employment checks are made in respect of any individuals to whom it is proposed to make an offer of employment, in line with instructions issued by the Section 73 Officer. This should include the obtaining of employment references, evidence of qualifications where such qualifications are a requirement of the offer of employment, identity and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where appropriate.

23 Financial Systems and Procedures

General

23.1 The Section 73 Officer has a professional responsibility to ensure that the Authority's financial systems are sound and should therefore be notified of any new developments or changes.

Key controls

23.2 The key controls for systems and procedures are:

- basic data exists to enable the Authority's objectives, targets, budgets and plans to be formulated,
- performance is communicated to the appropriate managers on an accurate, complete and timely basis,
- early warning is provided of deviations from target, plans and budgets that require management attention, and
- operating systems and procedures are secure.
- Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer
- To make arrangements for the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs, including to:
- issue advice, guidance and procedures for officers and others acting on the
- Authority's behalf,
- determine the accounting systems, form of accounts and supporting financial records,

- establish arrangements for audit of the Authority's financial affairs,
- approve any new financial systems to be introduced, and
- approve any changes to be made to existing financial systems.

Responsibilities of Directors

23.3 To ensure that accounting records are properly maintained and held securely.

23.4 To ensure that vouchers and documents with financial implications are retained in accordance with latest legislation.

23.5 To ensure that a complete audit trail, allowing financial transactions to be traced from the accounting records to the original document, and vice versa, is maintained.

23.6 To incorporate appropriate controls to ensure that, where relevant:

- all input is genuine, complete, accurate, timely and not previously processed,
- all processing is carried out in an accurate, complete and timely manner, and
- output from the system is complete, accurate and timely.

23.7 To ensure that the organisational structure provides an appropriate segregation of duties to provide adequate internal controls and to minimise the risk of fraud or other malpractice.

23.8 To ensure there is a documented and tested disaster recovery plan/ business continuity plan to allow information system processing to resume quickly in the event of an interruption, and that this plan is shared widely with appropriate staff within the service.

23.9 To ensure that systems are documented and staff trained in operations.

23.10 To inform the Section 73 Officer and Internal Audit before changing any existing system or introducing new systems.

23.11 To comply with the Authority's officer delegation scheme, and to establish a schedule of authorised signatories, identifying officers authorised to act on the Director's behalf in respect of payments, income collection and placing orders, including variations, and showing the limits of their authority.

23.12 To supply the schedule of authorised signatories, with specimen signatures and delegated limits, to the Section 73 Officer together with any subsequent variations.

23.13 To ensure that effective contingency arrangements, including back-up procedures, exist for computer systems in accordance with the ICT and Information Security Standards.

23.14 To ensure that, where appropriate, computer systems are registered in accordance with general data protection legislation and that staff are aware of their responsibilities under the legislation.

23.15 To ensure that relevant standards and guidelines for computer systems issued by the Director are observed, and that the ICT and Information Security Standards are observed.

24 Income and Expenditure

Income

24.1 Income can be a vulnerable asset and effective income collection systems are necessary to ensure that all income due is identified, collected, receipted, and banked properly. It is preferable to obtain income in advance of supplying goods or services as this improves the Authority's cash flow and avoids the time and cost of administering debts.

Key controls

24.2 The key controls for income are:

- all income due to the Authority is identified and charged correctly, in accordance with an approved charging policy, which is regularly reviewed,

- all income is collected from the correct person, at the right time, using the correct procedures and the appropriate stationery, and

- all monies received by an employee on behalf of the Authority is deposited with the appropriate officers ready for collection by an approved security company appointed by the Authority, this should be properly recorded via e-returns or cash receipting. The responsibility for cash collection should be separated from that:

- for identifying the amount due, and
- for reconciling the amount due to the amount received,
- effective action is taken to pursue non-payment within defined timescales,

- formal approval for debt write-off is obtained,

- appropriate write-off action is taken within defined timescales,
- appropriate accounting adjustments are made following write-off action,
- all appropriate income documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention periods.

- money collected and deposited is reconciled to the bank account and/or general ledger system by a person who is not involved in the collection or banking process, and

- all controlled stationery associated with income collection (e.g. receipt books, paying in books etc.) is held in a controlled environment.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

24.3 To agree arrangements for the collection of all income due to the Authority and to approve the procedures, systems and documentation for its collection.

24.4 To agree the write-off of bad debts up to an approved limit as detailed below:

Officer	Authorisation Limit
Budget Holder	Up to £1,000
Service Manager	Up to £5,000
Director	Up to £10,000
Section 73 Officer	Up to £50,000
Authority Member	Over £50,000

24.5 To approve debts to be written off, in consultation with the relevant Director, as detailed in the officers' scheme of delegation and to adhere to the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

24.6 To obtain the approval of the Authority in consultation with the relevant Directors for writing off debts in excess of the approved limits set down in the officers' scheme of delegation.

24.7 To ensure that appropriate accounting adjustments are made following write-off action.

24.8 To issue detailed guidance to departments regarding VAT and its correct treatment.

24.9 To make or approve arrangements with the Authority's bankers and to operate such bank accounts as are considered necessary. No bank accounts or similar may be opened without the consent of the Section 73 Officer. The maintenance of Authority bank accounts shall be in accordance with arrangements determined by the Section 73 Officer.

24.10 To make or approve all arrangements in connection with electronic payment and collection of monies and to ensure that adequate security exists within these arrangements to prevent loss due to error or fraud.

24.11 To ensure that all cheques and other orders for payment bear the electronic signature of the Chief Operating Officer or be signed by the Section 73 Officer or other officers so authorised.

Responsibilities of Directors

24.12 To establish a charging policy for the supply of goods or services, including the appropriate charging of VAT, and to review it at least annually, in line with corporate policies and in consultation with the Section 73 Officer and Monitoring Officer. After this consultation, the charging policies proposed by Directors should be referred to Authority for approval.

24.13 To separate the responsibility for identifying amounts due and the responsibility for collection, as far as is practicable.

24.14 To establish and initiate appropriate recovery procedures, including legal action where necessary, for debts that are not paid promptly.

24.15 To issue official receipts or to maintain other documentation for income collection. All sums shall be immediately acknowledged by the issue of an official receipt or ticket or by other means agreed with the Section 73 Officer. Payments by cheque or electronic means need not be acknowledged unless requested.

24.16 To ensure that controlled stationery is administered securely. A register should be maintained of all controlled stationery held and that which has been issued to staff. Blank/unused stationery should only be issued to staff on receipt of their signature in the register.

24.17 Ensure that all monies received through the post are identified and recorded.

24.18 To ensure that income is 'banked intact' and collected by an approved security company appointed by the Authority in the form in which it is received.

24.19 To ensure income is not used to cash personal cheques or other payments, unless such cheques are drawn on the Authority's bank account and the express authority of the Section 73 Officer has been given to such action, or to finance expenditure.

24.20 To supply the Section 73 Officer with details relating to work done, goods supplied, services rendered or other amounts due, to enable the Section 73 Officer to correctly record the sums due to the Authority and to ensure debtor accounts are sent out promptly.

24.21 To keep a record of every transfer of money between employees of the Authority; such a transfer should be immediately evidenced in writing. The receiving officer must sign for the transfer and the transferor must retain a copy.

24.22 To recommend to the Section 73 Officer all debts to be written off and to keep a record of all sums written off up to the approved limit. Once raised, no bona fide debt may be cancelled, except by full payment or by its formal writing off. A credit note to replace a debt can only be issued to correct a factual inaccuracy or administrative error in the calculation and/or billing of the original debt.

24.23 To obtain the approval of the Section 73 Officer when writing off debts, in accordance with the provisions of the officers' scheme of delegation, and the approval of the Authority where required.

24.24 To ensure that the existence of any sums advanced as change monies by the Section 73 Officer are periodically verified by an independent officer.

24.25 To ensure that levels of income received are compared to budgeted figures of income due on a regular basis and that differences are promptly investigated. Where a decision is made by a Director to offer services at a discount (for example, to increase demand), the 'discount' / reduced income will be borne by the service area. In making such decisions, the Director must have regard to the overall income targets set for the service area.

24.26 To obtain the advice of the Section 73 Officer on any agreements which provide for variable income and the approval of the Section 73 Officer for arrangements to pay by instalments.

24.27 To ensure, wherever possible and practical, that income is collected in advance of a service or where this is not possible by an official invoice.

24.28 To ensure that grant claims requiring certification in the name of the Section 73 Officer are submitted for approval to the Section 73 Officer on a timely basis.

24.29 To ensure that any donations made to the Authority are receipted and banked in accordance with the procedures set out above and charged against an appropriate income code in the Authority's accounts.

25 Ordering and paying for work, goods and services

25.1 Public money should be spent with demonstrable probity and in accordance with the Authority's policies. The Authority has a statutory duty to achieve best value in part through economy and efficiency. The Authority's procedures should help to ensure that services obtain value for money from their purchasing arrangements. These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Authority's standing orders with respect to contracts.

General

25.2 Every officer and member of the Authority has a responsibility to declare any links, relationships, or personal interests that they may have with purchasers, suppliers and/or contractors if they are engaged in contractual or purchasing decisions on behalf of the Authority, in accordance with the Authority's codes of conduct and section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972.

25.3 Official orders must be in a form approved by the Section 73 Officer. In most cases goods should be procured through the electronic ordering system, an electronic order raised on that system.

25.4 The normal method of payment from the Authority shall be by BACs transmission or cheque, drawn on the Authority's bank account by the Section 73 Officer. The use of direct debit shall require the prior agreement of the Section 73 Officer.

25.5 Official orders must not be raised for any personal or private purchases, nor must personal or private use be made of Authority contracts. Staff involved in ordering or otherwise committing expenditure must ensure that there is budgetary provision before an order is placed, and that standing orders with respect to contracts are complied with.

Key controls

25.6 The key controls for ordering and paying for work, goods and services are:

- all goods and services are ordered only by appropriate persons, as detailed on departmental authorised signatory lists, and are correctly recorded on official order forms,
- goods and services received are checked to ensure they are in accordance with the order,
- payments are not made unless goods / services have been received by the Authority at the correct price, quantity, and quality standards,
- all payments are made to the correct person/body, for the correct amount and are properly recorded, regardless of the payment method,

- all payments should be made in £ sterling, if a contract / service is required to be paid in any other currency approval must be sought via the Section 73 Officer any commitment is made,

- all appropriate evidence of the transaction and payment documents are retained and stored for the periods stated within the Records Management Policy,

- all expenditure, including VAT, is accurately recorded against the correct budget, and

- in addition, the effect of e-business/e-commerce and electronic purchasing requires that processes are in place to maintain the security and integrity of data for transacting business electronically.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

25.7 To ensure that all the Authority's financial systems and procedures are sound and properly administered.

25.8 To approve any changes to existing financial systems and to approve any new systems before they are introduced.

25.9 To approve the form of official orders (both hard copy and electronic).

25.10 To make payments from the Authority's funds on the Director's authorisation that the expenditure has been duly incurred in accordance with financial regulations.

25.11 To make payments, whether provision exists within the estimates, where the payment is specifically required by statute or is made under a court order.

25.12 To make payments to contractors on the certificate of the appropriate Directors, which must include details of the value of work, retention money, amounts previously certified and amounts now certified.

25.13 To provide advice on making payments by the most economical means.

25.14 To ensure that a budgetary control system is established that enables commitments incurred by placing orders to be shown against the appropriate budget allocation so that they can be taken into account in budget monitoring reports.

Responsibilities of Directors

25.15 To ensure that contractual terms and conditions for the supply of goods and services are in the Authority's best interests.

25.16 To ensure that unique pre-numbered official hard copy orders, or, in the case of the electronic procurement system, official electronic orders, are used for all goods and services, other than in the case of exceptions such controlled stationery must be securely administered. Orders must be raised as soon as is practicable and fully completed, especially regarding the price agreed for the items or services. Only in emergency situations can an order be raised after receipt of an invoice, and the order should then be clearly marked 'confirmation only'.

25.17 To ensure that orders are only used for goods and services provided to the department; to ensure that adequate systems are in place to prevent the use of official orders by individuals to obtain goods or services for their private use.

25.18 To ensure that only authorised staff as recorded on the departmental authorised signatory list, authorise orders; and to ensure that the authorised signatory list is kept up to date, includes specimen signatures and initials and identifies in each case the limits of each authorised signatory's authority. Directors should ensure that those authorised signatories committing the department to expenditure are aware of their responsibilities and are satisfied that goods and services ordered are appropriate and needed, that there is adequate budgetary provision and that quotations or tenders have been obtained in accordance with standing orders with respect to contracts. Best value principles should underpin the Authority's approach to procurement. Value for money should always be achieved.

25.19 To ensure that goods and services are checked on receipt to verify that they are in accordance with the order and of sufficient quality and quantity. This check should, where possible, be carried out by a different officer to the person who authorised the order. Appropriate entries should then be made in inventories or stores records.

25.20 To ensure that payment is not made unless a proper VAT invoice has been received, checked, coded, and certified for payment, confirming:

- receipt of goods or services,
- that the invoice has not previously been paid,
- that expenditure has been properly incurred and is within budget provision,
- that prices and arithmetic are correct and accord with quotations, tenders, contracts, or catalogue prices,
- correct accounting treatment of tax,
- that the invoice is correctly coded,
- that discounts have been taken where available, and
- that appropriate entries will be made in accounting records and stores / inventories records.
- To ensure that two authorised members of staff are involved in the ordering, receiving and payment process. If possible, a different officer from the person who approved the order, and in every case, a different officer from the person checking a written invoice, should authorise the invoice.
- To ensure that the department maintains and reviews periodically a list of staff approved to authorise invoices. Names of authorising officers together with specimen signatures and details of the limits of their authority shall be forwarded to the Section 73 Officer.
- To ensure that payments are not made on a photocopied invoice, statement or document other than the formal invoice, except where the requirements relating to faxed invoices (see below) are met. Payment should not be made on a

photocopied invoice, as this may affect the Authority's ability to reclaim VAT. Where the original invoice has not reached the Authority for whatever reason, an official duplicate invoice (not a photocopy) should be requested from the supplier. Emailed invoices from a supplier, where the supplier's name and email address are shown are sufficient. Checks must be performed to ensure that any invoices have not previously been paid.

- To encourage suppliers of goods and services to receive payment by the most economical means for the Authority. It is essential, however, that payments made by direct debit have the prior approval of the Section 73 Officer.

- To ensure that the department obtains best value from purchases by taking appropriate steps to obtain competitive prices for goods and services of the appropriate quality.

- To ensure that standing orders with respect to contracts are explicitly complied with.

- To ensure that employees are aware of codes of conduct and the requirements to declare any personal or pecuniary interests.
- To ensure that loans, leasing, or rental arrangements are not entered into without prior agreement from the Section 73 Officer. This is because of the potential impact on the Authority's borrowing powers, to protect the Authority against entering unapproved credit arrangements and to ensure that value for money is being obtained.

- To notify the Section 73 Officer of any outstanding expenditure relating to the concluding financial year in line with the timetable determined by the Section 73 Officer.

- With regard to contracts for construction and alterations to buildings and for civil engineering works, to document and agree with the Section 73 Officer the systems and procedures to be adopted in relation to financial aspects, including certification of interim and final payments, checking, recording, and authorising payments, the system for monitoring and controlling capital schemes and the procedures for validation of subcontractors' tax status.

- To notify the Section 73 Officer immediately of any expenditure to be incurred because of statute/court order where there is no budgetary provision.

- To adhere to the requirements of the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998. Invoices subject to prompt payment shall be passed in sufficient time to enable discounts to be claimed; where credit terms are not stated, invoices should normally be paid within 30 days.

- To ensure, that where grants can be claimed on expenditure incurred, the appropriate grant conditions are known and arrangements are in place to ensure that payments meet these conditions regarding types of expenditure, payment dates etc.

26 Payments to employees and Members

26.1 Staff costs are a material item of expenditure for the Authority. It is therefore important that payments are accurate, timely, made only where they are due for services to the

Authority and that payments accord with individuals' conditions of employment. It is also important that all payments are accurately and completely recorded and accounted for and that Members' allowances are authorised in accordance with the scheme adopted by the Authority.

Key controls

26.2 The key controls for payments to employees and Members are proper authorisation procedures are in place and that there is adherence to corporate timetables in relation to:

- starters
- leavers
- variations
- enhancements
- other expenses (e.g. relocation expenses) and that payments are made on the basis of timesheets or claims,
- frequent reconciliation of payroll expenditure against approved budget and bank account,
- all appropriate payroll documents are retained and stored for the defined period detailed in the Records management Policy, and
- that HM Revenue & Customs regulations are complied with.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

26.3 To arrange, control and secure reliable payment of salaries, wages, compensation, or other emoluments to existing and former employees, in accordance with procedures prescribed by him or her, on the due date.

26.4 To record and make arrangements for the accurate and timely payment of tax, superannuation and other deductions.

26.5 To make arrangements for payment of all travel and subsistence claims.

26.6 To make arrangements for paying Members travel or other allowances upon receiving the prescribed form, duly completed and authorised.

26.7 To provide advice and encouragement to secure payment of salaries and wages by the most economical means.

26.8 To ensure that there are adequate arrangements for administering superannuation matters on a day-to-day basis.

26.9 To approve, in accordance with guidelines agreed with the Monitoring Officer, the making of ex gratia payments including the setting of limits that will apply.

Responsibilities of Directors

26.10 To ensure appointments are made in accordance with the regulations of the Authority and approved establishments, grades and scale of pay and that adequate budget provision is available.

26.11 To notify the Section 73 Officer of all appointments, terminations or variations which may affect the pay or pension of an employee or former employee, in the form and to the timescale required by the Section 73 Officer.

26.12 To ensure that adequate and effective systems and procedures are operated, so that:

- payments are only authorised to bona fide employees,
- payments are only made where there is a valid entitlement,
- conditions and contracts of employment are correctly applied, and
- employees' names listed on the payroll are checked at regular intervals to verify accuracy and completeness.

26.13 To send an up-to-date list of the names of officers authorised to sign records to the Section 73 Officer, together with specimen signatures.

26.14 To ensure that payroll transactions are processed only through the Payroll System. Directors should consider the employment status of individuals employed on a self-employed consultant or subcontract basis. HM Revenue & Customs applies a tight definition for employee status, and in cases of doubt, advice should be sought from the Section 73 Officer.

26.15 To certify travel and subsistence claims and other allowances. Certification is taken to mean that journeys were authorised, and expenses properly and necessarily incurred, and that allowances are properly payable by the Authority, ensuring that cost-effective use of travel arrangements is achieved. Claims submitted must provide sufficient information to allow such certification to take place. Due consideration should be given to tax implications and that the Section 73 Officer is informed of such implications where appropriate.

26.16 To ensure that the Section 73 Officer is notified of the details of any employee benefits in kind, to enable full and complete reporting within the income tax self- assessment system.

26.17 To ensure that all appropriate payroll documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the Records Management Strategy.

26.18 To ensure that receipts are provided for expenditure claimed wherever possible, as required by HM Revenue & Customs.

26.19 To ensure that employees' travel and subsistence claims are usually submitted monthly. At the discretion of the Director, however, subsistence claims of less than 50 miles per month may be held by the employee and submitted on a quarterly basis, provided that the certifying officer is still able to check the claims properly. Claims over 3 months old must be certified by the Director. All claims in respect of a financial year must however be submitted no later than one month following 31 March in any year.

26.20 To ensure that all timesheets or other pay documents are in a form prescribed or approved by the Section 73 Officer and shall be duly certified by a nominated officer.

26.21 To maintain a personal record file for each employee within the approved establishment, containing a copy of the employee's contract of employment together with sufficient information to identify service, salary scale and current amount payable, sickness leave taken and annual leave due and taken.

26.22 On a regular basis each Director shall be provided by the Section 73 Officer with a list of staff currently being paid by the Authority within his or her department, and the rate at which each is currently being paid. The Director shall certify that every name on the

list is a bona fide employee of the department and that the rate of payment to the employee is correct. Any discrepancies discovered should be communicated immediately to the Section 73 Officer and the Head of Audit and Assurance.

27 Taxation

27.1 Like all organisations, the Authority is responsible for ensuring its tax affairs are in order. Tax issues are often very complex and the penalties for incorrectly accounting for tax are severe. It is therefore very important for all officers to be aware of their role.

Key controls

27.2 The key controls for taxation are:

- budget managers are provided with relevant information and kept up to date on tax issues,
- budget managers are instructed on required record keeping,
- all taxable transactions are identified, properly carried out and accounted for within stipulated timescales,
- records are maintained in accordance with instructions, and
- returns are made to the appropriate authorities within the stipulated timescale.
- Responsibilities of Section 73 Officer
- To complete all HM Revenue & Customs returns regarding PAYE.
- To complete a monthly return of VAT inputs and outputs to HM Revenue & Customs.
- To provide details to HM Revenue & Customs regarding the construction industry tax deduction scheme.
- To maintain up to date guidance for Authority employees on taxation issues, including VAT.

27.3 Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that the correct VAT liability is attached to all income due and that all VAT recoverable on purchases complies with HM Revenue & Customs regulations.
- To ensure that, where construction and maintenance works are undertaken, the contractor fulfils the necessary construction industry tax deduction requirements.
- To ensure that all persons employed by the Authority are added to the Authority's payroll and tax deducted from any payments, except where the individuals are bona fide self-employed or are employed by a recognised staff agency.
- To follow guidance on taxation issued by the Section 73 Officer.

28 TRADING ACCOUNTS AND BUSINESS UNITS

28.1 Under best value, authorities are required to keep trading accounts for services provided on a basis other than straightforward recharge of cost.

Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

28.2 To advise on the establishment and operation of trading accounts and business units.
Responsibilities of Directors

28.3 To consult with the Section 73 Officer where a business unit wishes to enter a contract with a third party where the contract expiry date exceeds the remaining life of their main contract with the Authority. In general, such contracts should not be entered into unless they can be terminated within the main contract period without penalty.

28.4 To observe all statutory requirements in relation to business units, including the maintenance of a separate revenue account to which all relevant income is credited and all relevant expenditure, including overhead costs, is charged, and to produce an annual report in support of the final accounts.

28.5 To ensure that the same accounting principles are applied in relation to trading accounts as for other services or business units.

28.6 To ensure that each business unit prepares an annual business plan.

29 EXTERNAL FUNDING

29.1 External funding is an important source of income, but funding conditions need to be carefully considered to ensure that they are compatible with the aims and objectives of the Authority.

Key controls

29.2 The key controls for external funding are:

- to ensure that key conditions of funding and any statutory requirements are complied with and that the responsibilities of the accountable body are clearly understood,

- to ensure that funds are acquired only to meet the priorities approved in the policy framework by the Authority,

- to ensure that any match-funding requirements are given due consideration prior to entering into long-term agreements and that future revenue budgets reflect these requirements.

- ensure sufficient capacity is available to deliver the project the funding has been sourced for.
- Responsibilities of the Section 73 Officer

- To ensure that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Authority's accounts.

- To ensure that the match-funding requirements are considered prior to entering into the agreements and that future revenue budgets reflect these requirements.

- To ensure that audit requirements are met.

Responsibilities of Directors

29.3 To ensure that all claims for funds are made by the due date and signed by the appropriate signatory.

29.4 To ensure that the project progresses in accordance with the agreed project plan and that all expenditure is properly incurred and recorded.

29.5 To nominate a named responsible senior officer to be accountable for the performance and financial monitoring of each project, and to ensure that where external/grant funding is received this is recorded formally into the general ledger system.

29.6 To ensure that written approval is obtained from the funder which clearly shows the approved allocation, the purpose of the grant and the financial period to which it relates.

29.7 To ensure that project named responsible officers check, prior to submission of a grant claim, that all expenditure declared is eligible in accordance with the relevant funder's criteria. Should there be any uncertainty as to the purpose of such funding, the responsible officer should make such enquiries as are necessary to the funder to ensure the proper use of grant.

29.8 To ensure that any guidance issued by the Section 73 Officer on receipt of funds from a third party (i.e. matched funding) in grant submission is adhered to.

29.9 To ensure that grant claim working papers are maintained in a form agreed by the Section 73 Officer.

29.10 To ensure that the way external funding is managed is in accordance with the Authority's policy and instructions, standing orders with respect to contracts and financial regulations in addition to the funder's own requirements.

29.11 To ensure that where the use of external funding for projects requires a financial commitment from the Authority for which budget provision is not available, or where the acceptance of external funding would lead to a financial commitment beyond the current year, the Director in conjunction with the Section 73 Officer shall provide a written report to Authority giving a full appraisal of the financial implications both in the current year and beyond. The approval of the Authority must be secured before the Director commits the Authority to any agreement.

29.12 To ensure that where additional financial support is to be sought from other agencies, this is subject to the proper decision-making processes of the Authority, as set out in the budget and policy framework, in order to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the action to be taken and clear lines of responsibility and accountability.

30 Certifying Officers Authorisation Limits

Responsibilities

30.1 Responsibilities are set out in the Authority's Financial Regulations and Procedure Rules.

30.2 It is the responsibility of the Section 73 Officer to issue advice, guidance, and procedures.

It is the responsibility of Directors to:

30.3 Establish a schedule of authorised signatories, identifying officers authorised to act on the Director's behalf in respect of payments, income collection and placing orders, including variations, and detailing the limits of their authority.

30.4 Supply the schedule of authorised signatories, with specimen signatures and delegated limits, to the Section 73 Officer together with any subsequent variations.

30.5 The list of authorised signatories with their individual financial limits is maintained by the Section 73 Officer.

Principles applying to delegated limits

30.6 Authority limits should be set at the lowest practical level, taking account of the typical value and incidence of individual transactions.

30.7 Individuals should be authorised to commit the Authority only in those areas where they have sufficient knowledge and responsibility to do so.

30.8 Whilst the limits below are for guidance, higher limits should only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and will require the approval of the Section 73 Officer officers.

30.9 The Head of Paid Service / Directors must approve all delegated authorities.

Limits for Authorising Expenditure

30.10 The limits for raising orders, authorising expenditure on contract and certifying invoices/payment vouchers are as set out below.

Scheme of Delegation Role	Authorisation Limit
Executive	Unlimited
Director	£2,000,000
Service Head / Assistant Director	£500,000

Service Manager	£150,000
All other level	£10,000

Bank Signatories

30.11 The Section 73 Officer maintains a list of bank/cheque signatories.

30.12 All cheques / BACS / CHAPS payments over £50,000 require two signatures.

30.13 The following payments are authorised to be paid and are not subject to the limits detailed above:

Treasury transactions (refer to Treasury Management Procedures)

HM Revenues & Customs (PAYE, National Insurance, VAT)

Payments to Pension Fund in respect of employee and employer contributions

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Part 5l - Recruitment and Appointment Procedure Rules for Business Advisory Board

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Part 6 - Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Chief Officers and Schedule of Proper Officers

1. General roles and responsibilities of Officers

1.1 The Combined County Authority approves strategies and policies which determine the framework in which operational decisions are made – see further the Budget and Policy Procedure Rules in **Part 5** of the Constitution.

1.2 Officers implement decisions made by the Combined County Authority or any decision-making committee of the Combined County Authority. Officers also take measures to carry out these policies and decide day-to-day operational matters, within the framework of these decisions.

1.3 Officers must comply with Article 6 (Decision-making) in **Part 2** of the Constitution when exercising authority delegated to them.

1.4 Decision-making by officers is subject to other control measures. These include:

- Standing Orders including the Contracts Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in **Part 5** of the Constitution
- Officers' Codes of Conduct, gifts and hospitality policy and the Conflicts of Interest Policy in **Part 7** of the Constitution
- The Nolan Principles
- an anti-fraud, bribery, and corruption policy, and
- internal audit and risk management arrangements.

1.5 When exercising their delegated authority, an officer should:

- ensure insofar as reasonably practical that the decision conforms with and furthers strategies and policies approved or endorsed by the Combined County Authority, and
- follow approved practices and procedures of the Combined County Authority, relevant Government guidance and industry/professional best practice being considered and where possible adhered to.

Delegation to Officers

1.6 This Officer Delegation Scheme sets out:

- Combined County Authority Functions delegated to officers by the Combined County Authority, and
- Mayoral Functions delegated to officers by the Mayor (once elected).

1.7 The Combined County Authority or the Mayor (once elected) may also delegate decisions outside of this Scheme to a Combined County Authority officer in relation to any specific matter, subject to statutory restrictions.

1.8 The Combined County Authority's Procedure Rules in **Part 5** of the Constitution including Contracts Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules also delegate to specified officers or post-holders.

1.9 Where the Combined County Authority has appointed a committee to discharge functions, that committee may also delegate any of those functions or a decision in relation to a specific matter within the committee's terms of reference, to an officer.

Sub-Delegations

1.10 Unless required by law or expressly indicated in the scheme, an officer is not required to discharge their delegated authority personally (although they remain responsible for any decision taken on their behalf). An officer may arrange for another officer of suitable experience and seniority to exercise delegated authority on their behalf, including by way of sub-delegation, provided that such arrangements are properly recorded, any limitations are clearly defined, and the delegating officer retains accountability. Sub-delegation shall be exercised in accordance with this Constitution, including Part 5.

1.11 Where an officer is absent, unavailable or otherwise unable to act (including conflict of interest), their delegated powers may be exercised by another suitably qualified officer, their line manager, or the Chief Executive, provided that such arrangements are recorded and consistent with this Scheme.

Referral of Matters to the Combined County Authority or Relevant Committee – Combined County Authority Functions

1.12 An officer may decide not to exercise their delegated authority in relation to any matter. If so, the officer shall refer the matter to the Combined County Authority or a relevant committee.

Key Decisions

1.13 The Access to Information Procedure Rules in **Part 5** of the constitution apply where an officer exercises their delegated authority to take a Key Decision.

1.14 A Key Decision is defined in Article 6: Decision-Making in Part 2 of the Constitution.

Call-in of Officer Decisions

1.15 Any Key Decision taken by an officer under delegated authority is open to call-in, in accordance with the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules in **Part 5** of the constitution.

Recording Officer Decisions

1.16 An officer is required to complete a written record of their decision in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules in **Part 5** of the Constitution.

Concurrent Functions

1.17 An officer proposing to exercise their delegated authority in respect of any concurrent function must follow any protocol agreed by the Combined County Authority with constituent councils relating to concurrent functions, including in relation to consultation.

Statutory Consents

1.18 No officer may exercise their delegated authority in relation to any function which requires a statutory consent.

1.19 An officer should exercise their delegated authority in relation to any function in respect of which a statutory consent has been given, in accordance with the terms of that statutory consent.

2. Officer Delegation Scheme: Delegations

2.1 The Chief Executive may instruct an Executive Director not to exercise their authority delegated under this scheme in respect of a particular matter and to refer the matter for determination:

- in respect of any Combined County Authority Function to a relevant committee to the Combined County Authority, or (where the delegated authority is of a general delegation), to the Chief Executive.

General Delegations (Combined County Authority Functions) to the Chief Executive or Chief Officers

2.2 Each officer is authorised to carry into effect without reference to the Combined County Authority or to any of its committees, matters of day-to-day management and administration in relation to functions within their remit. This includes the following:

(a) Expenditure

2.2.1 To incur expenditure within the agreed revenue budget in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Contracts Procedure Rules in **Part 5** of the Constitution.

2.2.2 To incur expenditure on capital schemes within agreed scheme budgets, in accordance with the Financial Regulations, provided that expenditure has been authorised in accordance with the Hampshire and the Solent County Combined Authority Assurance Framework.

(b) Human Resources

2.2.3 Officers are able to determine any employment issue arising in respect of an individual officer in accordance with agreed procedures and the relevant national conditions of service as modified or extended by any local or national agreements with the exception of:

- granting voluntary redundancy requests,
- releasing preserved pension benefits on ill health grounds,
- releasing preserved pension benefits in respect of early or flexible retirement requests,
- extensions to entitlement to sick pay in the event this has been exhausted, and
- payments to any officer for loss or damage to property arising out of their employment with the Combined County Authority

2.2.4 Officers are able to appoint officers within the approved funded staffing structure in accordance with the Combined County Authority's Recruitment Policy.

2.2.5 Officers are able to appoint officers on a temporary basis to provide cover for absences within approved budgets.

Proper Officer Functions

2.2.6 Each Chief Officeris appointed the Proper Officer for any function within their remit.

Miscellaneous

2.2.7 Officers must implement and ensure compliance with requirements relating to:

a. health and safety
b. data protection, freedom of information and transparency,
c. surveillance activities,
d. human rights,
e. risk management,
f. equality and diversity; and
g. safeguarding

3. Chief Executive

3.1 The Chief Executive is designated the Head of Paid Service of the Combined County Authority and is authorised to exercise the functions of the Head of Paid Service as set out in Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

3.2 With the exception of any matter which the Mayor (once elected) has directed should be referred to the Combined County Authority for determination, the Chief Executive is authorised to exercise any Combined County Authority Function which is not:

- expressly reserved to the Combined County Authority,

- a function of any other officer in their capacity as a statutory officer ,unless prohibited in law and always provided that:

  i. exercising this authority to approve any economic development loan is subject to the conditions set out below and in consultation with the Section 73 Officer, and

  ii. any decision in respect of an application for a loan or grant from a business where a potential conflict of interest arises from the involvement with that business of any person representing the Business Voice or of and associate/non-constituent member of the Combined County Authority is taken in accordance with the Conflicts of Interest Protocol.

3.3 The Chief Executive is further authorised to take urgent decisions that would have been taken by a committee and where, for exceptional circumstances, that committee has been unable to meet, and the decisions are of an urgent nature and cannot wait until the next scheduled meeting.

3.4 The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Section 73 Officer and Monitoring Officer, may take decisions related to the approval of a detailed business case and the acceptance of a tender or quotation for the supply of goods, materials or services provided that the spend is within the

Combined County Authority's approved budget. Prior to exercising this delegation the Chief Executive must consult the Chair of the HSCCA Board, and following the decision, must publish an Officer Decision Notice.

3.5 In order to exercise 3.4 above, the business case or procurement must be approved by the Combined County Authority Board within the Medium Term Financial Plan and, in the case of a tender or quotation, must be approved in accordance with the Authority's Contracts Procedure Rules, ie:

- The decision relates to the delivery of the agreed business plan for that business area;
- the decision accords with any officer decision making guidance issued to officers;
- once the decision has been made the officer complies with the transparency requirements of The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014;
- decisions taken will be reported to the next available Combined County Authority as part of a Delegated Authority report.

3.6 To commit expenditure from earmarked funds and reserves in accordance with the purpose for which those earmarked funds and reserves have been approved by the Combined County Authority, save for those earmarked funds and reserves which the Combined County Authority specifically reserves the right to itself or another committee to approve, and subject to reporting the use of those earmarked funds and reserves through the budget monitoring report at the next meeting of the Combined County Authority after the commitment is made.

4. Section 73 Officer

4.1 The Section 73 Chief Finance Officer of the Combined County Authority, exercises any statutory function of the Chief Finance Officer, including making arrangements for the proper administration of the Combined County Authority's financial affairs.

4.2 For all grant administration the Section 73 Officer has the following delegation:

- Accept grant offers on behalf of the Authority, subject to all the terms and conditions set out by the grant awarding body.

- The submission of all claims for grant to the UK Government or other organisations that grant the Authority money.

4.3 To secure all necessary and sufficient insurances and indemnities (including officers' and public and employer's liability).

4.4 The Chief Finance Officer is authorised to exercise the following Combined County Authority functions with the exception of any matter:

- expressly reserved to the Combined County Authority,
- expressly within the terms of reference of a Combined County Authority committee or
- which the Chief Executive has directed the Chief Finance Officer to refer to the Combined County Authority or any Committee for determination.
- to carry out any function in relation to:

    i. Finance
    ii. Commercial and Procurement
    iii. Audit and Risk
    iv. Funding Plan & Investment portfolio
    v. Commercial and Procurement

5. Monitoring Officer

5.1 The Director of Legal & Governance is designated the Monitoring Officer for the Combined County Authority, and as such exercises any statutory function of the Monitoring Officer.

Legal Proceedings and Settlements

5.1.1 To take any legal action to implement a decision of the Combined County Authority.

5.1.2 To institute, defend or participate in any proceedings or disputes where such action is necessary to give effect to a decision of the Combined County Authority or to protect the interests of the Combined County Authority, and to take all necessary steps in relation to such proceedings or disputes.

5.1.3 To make payments or provide other benefits in cases of maladministration.

5.1.4 Defend and settle all actual and prospective claims made against the Combined County Authority up to £500,000. The Combined County Authority to authorise claims above this threshold.

5.1.5 Make orders or take any other steps in relation to any legislation when instructed by the officer with the relevant area of responsibility.

5.1.6 With the exception of any matter:

- expressly reserved to the Combined County Authority or
- which the Chief Executive has directed the Director of Legal & Governance to refer to the Combined County Authority or any Committee for determination.

5.1.7 To act as the Combined County Authority Senior Information Risk Officer (S.I.R.O).

Governance

5.1.8 To discharge secretarial and other functions in relation to meetings of the Combined County Authority and its committees.

5.1.9 To make any changes to any governance document of the Combined County Authority which are required:

- as a result of legislative change or decisions of the Combined County Authority,
- to enable them to be kept up to date, or
- for the purposes of clarification only

5.1.10 To make any changes to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Assurance Framework which are required:

- as a result of legislative change or decisions of the Combined County Authority,
- to enable it to be kept up to date, or
- for the purposes of clarification only

5.1.11 To make any change to the membership of any committee of the Combined County Authority, provided that the appointment has no impact on the political balance for the committee (where relevant) and only in accordance with any nomination by the designated nominating body.

Members Allowances

5.1.12 To administer the Members' Scheme of Allowances in Part 7 of the constitution.

Interests in Land

5.1.13 To obtain particulars of persons interested in land in alignment with Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

5.1.14 With the exception of any matter:

- expressly reserved to the Combined Authority, or
- which the Chief Executive has directed the Section 73 Officer or the Monitoring Officer to refer to the Combined County Authority or the Governance and Audit Committee for determination

5.1.15 To secure all necessary and sufficient insurances and indemnities (including officers’ and public and employer’s liability).

Document Version Control	
Municipal Year:	
Version:	
Document approved by:	
Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 7A - The Hampshire and The Solent Combined County Authority Protocol for the Exercise of Concurrent Functions and Associated Statutory Consents

Parties

1. **HAMPSHIRE AND THE SOLENT COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY** ("Combined County Authority") comprising the following constituent councils:

2. **HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL,** of The Castle, Upper High Street, Winchester, SO23 8U.

3. **ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL,** of County Hall, High Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1UD.

4. **PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL,** of Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth PO1 2AL.

5. **SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL,** of Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LS.

Each a **party** together the **parties**, and the parties (2) to (5) above collectively the "**constituent councils**" of the Combined County Authority.

1. Background

1.1 The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 made on 3 June 2026 ("the 2026 Regulations") detail the functions of the combined county authority.

1.2 This protocol sets out how the Combined County Authority and each constituent council intend to work together to secure that concurrent functions are exercised in the best interests of the inhabitants of their areas and for their mutual benefit. The Combined County Authority and each constituent council acknowledge that, by law, a concurrent function may be exercised by the Combined County Authority or a constituent council acting alone (subject to any Statutory Consent requirement).

1.3 The Combined County Authority will consult constituent councils about the exercise of any concurrent function in accordance with paragraph 2 below.

1.4 The Combined County Authority will exercise any concurrent function reasonably and after taking all relevant factors or considerations into account, including how any constituent council is exercising or proposes to exercise the concurrent function and the potential effect of a decision on any constituent council. In exercising any concurrent function, the Combined County Authority will comply with the public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

1.5 The Combined County Authority will so far as reasonably practicable exercise any concurrent function in such a way as to be compatible with and complementary to the exercise of the concurrent function by any constituent council.

1.6 The parties will consult with each other before approving, varying or revoking any strategy or plan which is likely to determine or significantly affect how any concurrent function is exercised by the Combined County Authority or any constituent council.

1.7 The Combined County Authority will so far as reasonably practicable seek to develop and agree with each constituent council a common and consistent approach to any monitoring arrangements relating to any concurrent function exercised by the Combined County Authority.

1.8 The regulations and this protocol are based upon the following principles:

- **co-operation** and **collaboration** between the Combined County Authority and the constituent councils in a spirit of partnership,

- **transparency** of roles and processes to engender mutual trust and confidence, and

- the **best use of resources** through co-ordination and reducing duplication between the parties.

1.9 The Combined County Authority shall follow this protocol when exercising any concurrent function and in relation to any Statutory Consent. Constituent Councils may also separately agree to this protocol.

1.10 The Combined County Authority is committed to on-going engagement with constituent councils about all aspects of its work. This includes engagement about how the Combined County Authority exercises its functions. Any timescales set out in this protocol therefore should be regarded as a minimum; there should be additional lead-in time in relation to the development of any projects or schemes involving the possible exercise of any concurrent function.

Miscellaneous

1.11 Where the Combined County Authority and any relevant constituent council reasonably consider that the nature and scale of the exercise of any concurrent function is of a complex, sensitive or significant nature, then the Combined County Authority and constituent council may agree a bespoke protocol to govern the way the Combined County Authority exercises that concurrent function. In particular, it is envisaged that for the purpose of any transport functions discharged during the transition period, an Inter Authority Agreement will be agreed between the constituent councils and the Combined County Authority to manage the process beyond the transition period.

1.12 These principles not itself constitute an arrangement for the discharge of functions made in accordance with section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and/or the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012. Any such arrangement may be made by separate agreement between relevant parties.

2. Concurrent Functions: Consultation with Constituent Councils

2.1 The Combined County Authority will engage with the constituent councils about any proposal by the Combined County Authority to exercise any concurrent function, except where the constituent councils have agreed that no engagement is required.

2.2 The Chief Executive of the Combined County Authority will also notify the relevant Chief Executive (or their nominee) of any proposal to exercise a concurrent function which would require a Key Decision by the Combined County Authority as soon as practicable, and in any event before any Key Decision notice is published by the Combined County Authority in relation to exercising the concurrent function, and unless the Chief Executive (or their nominee) agrees that no engagement is required, the Combined County Authority will then proceed to consult the relevant constituent council in the manner set out in 3.3 and 3.4 below about such proposal.

2.3 The Chief Executive will consult the Chief Executive (or their nominee) of any relevant constituent council as soon as reasonably practicable about the proposed exercise of any concurrent function, including the commencement date/projected timescales and the manner in which it is to be exercised.

2.4 Such engagement must be fair and carried out with a view to reaching agreement on the exercise of the concurrent function.

3. Statutory Consents

3.1 Where Statutory Consent is required from a constituent council, or other local authority within its area, the Combined County Authority will seek that Statutory Consent in a timely way. To facilitate this, and to promote transparency, a notice of the request for Statutory Consent (Statutory Consent Request Notice) should be published on the Combined County Authority's Forward Plan at least 28 clear days before the Combined County Authority meeting at which it is sought, subject to this requirement being waived in exceptional circumstances by any relevant Chief Executive.

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Part 7B - Arrangements for appointment, disqualification and dismissal of Non-Constituent Members on the HSCCA Board

1. Background and Introduction

1.1 The Combined County Authority may designate a body, other than a constituent council, as a nominating body. Such a nominating body must consent to the designation. A nominating body may nominate a representative of that body for appointment by the Combined County Authority as a non-constituent member. The non-constituent members are non-voting members of the Combined County Authority, unless the Combined County Authority resolves otherwise.

1.2 The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations 2026 permit the Combined County Authority to appoint up to five non-constituent or associate members in total to the HSCCA Board.

2. Appointment

2.1 On an annual basis, the HSCCA Board will:

- Approve the designation of a nominating body.
- Agree the number of nominating bodies that may be designated by the Combined County Authority up to a maximum of four.
- Agree the number of non-constituent members that may be nominated by a nominating body of the Combined County Authority.

2.2 A nominating body must nominate a substitute member for each non-constituent member nominated.

2.3 Written notice must be served on the Monitoring Officer of the Combined County Authority confirming who the nominating body has agreed to nominate as a representative of that body for appointment by the Combined County Authority as a non-constituent representative.

2.4 The appointment of a non-constituent member or substitute will only take effect when the nomination is approved by the Combined County Authority.

3. Term of Office and Role

3.1 A non-constituent member or substitute shall act as a representative of the sector which nominated them.

3.2 The term of office shall be for one year, with a maximum of two terms permitted.

4. Disqualification

4.1 A person immediately ceases to be a non-constituent member or substitute if they cease to be eligible to be the representative of the nominating body or sector that nominated them.

5. Resignation

5.1 A person may resign as a non-constituent member or substitute by written notice served on the Monitoring Officer of the Combined County Authority and the resignation takes effect on receipt of the notice by the Monitoring Officer.

6. Withdrawal of nomination

6.1 A nominating body may at any time terminate its nomination of a non-constituent member or substitute nominated by it and nominate another one of its members in that person's place. Written notice shall be served on the Monitoring Officer of the Combined County Authority and the termination of membership of the Combined County Authority as a representative of the nominating body takes effect on receipt of the notice by the Monitoring Officer.

7. Dismissal

7.1 The Combined County Authority may dismiss a non-constituent member if they fail throughout a period of six consecutive months to attend any meeting of the Combined County Authority, unless their absence is due to a reason which has previously been approved by the Combined County Authority Board.

7.2 The Combined County Authority may dismiss a non-constituent member or substitute if there is a finding of breach of the Combined County Authority Code of Conduct by them.

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Part 7C - Members' Code of Conduct

1. Definitions

1.1 For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “Member” means a member of The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) including, Constituent Members, Non Constituent Members, Associate Members, Co-opted Members and Substitute Members.

A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

(a) is a member of any committee, sub-committee or advisory board of the authority, or;
(b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub- committee of the authority;

2. General Principles of Conduct

2.1 Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, Members, local authority officers and those who sit on any board, committee, or advisory board should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles below:

2.2 In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of Member.

2.3 In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with the Combined County Authority and in the public interest.

3. Application of the Code of Conduct

3.1 This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of office or are appointed as a member of the Combined County Authority and continues to apply to you until you cease to hold office or cease to be a member of the Combined County Authority.

3.2 This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity on the HSCAA.

3.3 The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

3.4 You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting on behalf of the HSCCA.

3.5 The CCA's Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct.

3.6 Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

4. General Conduct

Respect

4.1. All Members or representative of the HSCCA must treat other members and members of the public, employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the Combined County Authority with respect and respect the role they play.

4.2 Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a Member, you can express challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

4.3 In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's confidence in the HSCCA.

4.4 In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the Combined County Authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow Members, where action could then be taken under the Member Code of Conduct, and Combined County Authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the Combined County Authority's member-officer protocol.

5. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

5.2 Nobody acting on behalf of the HSCCA should:

- not bully any person.
- not harass any person.
- not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

5.3 The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

5.4 For the purposes of this Code, "harassment" has the meaning set out in the Equality Act 2010. Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. In assessing whether conduct has that effect, regard will be had to the member's perception of the behaviour, the wider circumstances of the case, and whether it is reasonable for the behaviour to have that effect. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

5.5 Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

5.6 The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Members have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the Combined County Authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

Impartiality of officers of the Combined County Authority

5.7 Any representative must not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the Combined County Authority**.**

5.11 Officers work for the Combined County Authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. Officers can be questioned in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

Confidentiality and access to information

5.12 Members or representatives of the HSCCA must:

1. not disclose information:

   a. given to them in confidence by anyone;

   b. acquired by them or which they believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless:

      i. consent has been received from a person authorised to give it;

      ii. they are required by law to do so;

      iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice, provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or

      iv. the disclosure is:
      - reasonable and in the public interest;
      - made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Combined County Authority; and
      - the Member has consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.

2. not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of their role as a Member or representative for the advancement of themselves, their friends, family members, employer or business interests.
3. not prevent anyone from obtaining information they are entitled to by law.

5.13 Combined County Authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public except in certain legally defined circumstances. Members and representatives should work on this basis, recognising that there will be times when discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the HSCCA must be treated as confidential. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information concerning ongoing negotiations.

Disrepute

5.14 Members or representatives must not bring their role or the Combined County Authority into disrepute.

5.15 Members or representatives are trusted to make decisions on behalf of their communities, and their actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than those of ordinary members of the public. They should remain aware that their conduct may have an adverse impact on other Members and/or the Combined County Authority, and may lower public confidence in the Member or in the Combined County Authority's ability to discharge its functions. Behaviour that is dishonest or deceitful, for example, can bring the Combined County Authority into disrepute.

5.16 Members or representatives are entitled to hold the Combined County Authority and fellow Members to account and to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes, while continuing to adhere to the requirements of this Code of Conduct.

Use of Position

5.17 Members or representatives must not use, or attempt to use, their position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of themselves or anyone else.

5.18 A Members or representatives position within the Combined County Authority provides opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and their choices may affect others. Members must not take advantage of their position to further their own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

Use of Combined County Authority Resources and Facilities

5.19 Members or representatives must:

- not misuse Combined County Authority resources; and
- when using, or authorising the use of, Combined County Authority resources:
  (a) act in accordance with the Combined County Authority's requirements; and
  (b) ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless

such use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the Combined County Authority or the office to which the Member has been elected or appointed.

5.20 Members or representatives may be provided with resources and facilities by the Combined County Authority to assist them in carrying out their duties. Examples include office support, stationery, phones, computers, transport, and access to Combined County Authority buildings and rooms.

5.21 These resources are provided to support Members or representatives in their official duties and must not be used for personal or business gain. They should be used only for their intended purpose and in accordance with the Combined County Authority's policies.

Complying with the Code of Conduct

5.22 Members or representatives must:

- undertake Code of Conduct training provided by the Combined County Authority;
- cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation or determination;
- not intimidate, or attempt to intimidate, any person who is likely to be involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings;
- comply with any sanction imposed following a finding that they have breached the Code of Conduct.

5.23 It is essential that Members and representatives demonstrate high standards, remain open to scrutiny, and avoid actions that could undermine public trust in the Combined County Authority or its governance. Any Member who does not understand, or has concerns about, the Combined County Authority's processes for handling complaints should raise this with the Monitoring Officer.

6. Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the Combined County Authority

Interests

6.1 Members or representatives must register and disclose their interests.

6.2 Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority.

6.3 You need to register your interests so that the public, Combined County Authority employees and fellow representatives know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public

document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. All members and representatives are responsible for disclosing an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other representatives when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

6.4 You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

6.5 Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

Interests arising from appointment by a Constituent Council

6.6 For the avoidance of doubt, a member does not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest solely by virtue of—

(a) being nominated, appointed or designated by a Constituent Council; or

(b) participating, in their capacity as a Member of the Combined County Authority, in the consideration of matters which affect one or more Constituent Councils generally or strategically as part of the exercise of the Combined County Authority's functions.

Dispensations: matters affecting Constituent Councils

6.7 Where a matter directly affects the financial or well-being interests of a Constituent Council to which a Member belongs, and the application of this Code would otherwise require the Member to withdraw from participation, the Member may apply for a dispensation.

The Monitoring Officer may grant a dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 where the Monitoring Officer considers that—

(a) the dispensation is necessary to secure the effective transaction of the business of the Combined County Authority; and

(b) the granting of the dispensation is consistent with the purpose of the Members' Code of Conduct and the principles of public life.

Effect of a dispensation

6.8 A dispensation granted under this Code may authorise the Member—

(a) to participate in discussion of the matter;
(b) to vote on the matter; and
(c) to remain in the room while the matter is being considered.

Conditions and recording of dispensations

6.9 Any dispensation granted under this Code shall—

(a) be proportionate and limited to the extent necessary;
(b) be time-limited or restricted to a specified matter or class of matters; and
(c) be recorded in writing and retained by the Monitoring Officer.

Gifts and Hospitality

6.10 Members or representatives:

- must not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the Combined County Authority or from persons who may apply to the Combined County Authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.

- Must register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.

- Must register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.

6.11 In order to protect your position and the reputation of the Combined County Authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a Member. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case, you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a Member, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. If you are unsure, contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

Appendices

A The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness
Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity
Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity
Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability
Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness
Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty
Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership
Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

B Registering Interests (elected members only)

1 Within 28 days of becoming a Member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests).**

2 **"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest"** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

3 **"Partner"** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

a) You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.

b) A 'sensitive interest' is an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the Member, or a person connected with the Member, being subject to violence or intimidation.

c) Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non-participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4 Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

5 Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a member of the combined member in exercise of your role within the combined authority must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6 Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7 Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest.

8 You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

9 Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –

a. your own financial interest or well-being;
b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2** you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

10 Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above*)* ***affects*** the financial interest or well-being:

a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the area affected by the decision and;
b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

11 You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

12 If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

13 Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 12 above) affects the financial interest or well-being:

a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the area affected by the decision and;
b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

14 You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion

or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

15 If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Combined County Authority) made to the Member during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a Member, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the Member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the Member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the authority (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Combined County Authority. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the Member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the Member is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with

	another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the Combined County Authority for a month or longer

* ‘director’ includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society. * ‘securities’ means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You must register as an Other Registerable Interest:

a) any unpaid directorships;

b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority;

c) any body:

i. exercising functions of a public nature
ii. directed to charitable purposes or
iii. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

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Part 7D - Officer Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

1.1 As an officer of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County (HSCCA) team you must adhere to the following principles – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership - in your conduct at all times. These are known as the 'Nolan principles'.

2. Policy Purpose

2.1 The public are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all officers. The role of officers is to serve the Combined County Authority in providing advice, implementing its policies and delivering services to the local community. In performing their duties, they must act with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity. This document sets out the standards expected of all the Combined County Authority's officers. Guidance in relation to the acceptance of gifts and / or hospitality by officers, is detailed in the Gifts and Hospitality Policy which forms part of the Code of Conduct. All officers of the HSCCA must abide with all policies of the HSCCA.

2.2 This code of conduct provides officers of the Combined County Authority with an effective ethical framework within which to work; and give the public confidence that the Combined County Authority's officers are working on their behalf in an appropriate manner; and provides guidance to officers on the possible consequences of breaches of this code.

2.3 The Combined County Authority expects all officers to be accountable for their actions and to act in accordance with the principles set out in this Code, recognising the duty of all public sector officers to discharge public functions reasonably and according to the law.

2.4 The Combined County Authority expects officers to follow every policy/procedure of the Combined County Authority and not to allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work. Where officers are politically restricted, by reason of the post they hold or the nature of the work they do, they must comply with those restrictions.

2.5 Mutual respect between officers and members is essential to good working relationships at the Combined County Authority and each should handle work matters on a professional basis. Officers of the Combined County Authority should deal with the public, Members, and other officers

respectfully, efficiently and without bias. The Combined County Authority endeavours to avoid a situation where officers are either directly managed by, or responsible for, the recruitment and selection of someone with whom they have a personal relationship, e.g., a member of the same family.

2.6 Officers must ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner and in accordance with standing orders and financial regulations. Officers must not utilise property, vehicles or other resources or facilities of the Combined County Authority for personal use unless authorised to do so.

2.7 Officers must not allow their private interests or beliefs to conflict with their professional duty. Additionally, officers must not misuse their official position or information acquired in the course of their employment to further their private interest or the interests of others. Officers should abide by the rules of the Combined County Authority about the declaration of gifts or hospitality offered to, or received by, them from any person or body seeking to do business with the Combined County Authority or which would benefit from a relationship with the Combined County Authority. Officers should not accept benefits from a third party unless authorised to do so by a manager at the appropriate level in accordance with the Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

2.8 Where an officer becomes aware of activities which they believe to be illegal, improper, unethical or otherwise inconsistent with the Code of Conduct for officers, they should report the matter in line with the Combined County Authority's Confidential Reporting ("Whistleblowing") Policy and associated documents. The Whistleblowing Policy reflects the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which protects officers from dismissal or victimisation if they disclose information about wrongdoing by the Combined County Authority or colleagues.

2.9 Officers must not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for or on behalf of the Combined County Authority, either directly or as a response to pressure from others. An officer should not attempt to force other officers to take action or change advice if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

2.10 Officers must not use, or attempt to use, their position improperly either for their own or anybody else's advantage or disadvantage.

2.11 If an officer seeks advice, or advice is offered to them, on aspects of how the Code of Conduct applies, the officer must have regard to this advice.

2.12 Registration of any such interest protects the Combined County Authority and its officers by giving early warning of any potential areas of conflict of interest. That the Combined County Authority has this policy provides

assurance to the public that the Combined County Authority is acting in the public interest. The Combined County Authority requires officers to register personal interests in areas where there are clear grounds for concern, that such an interest could give rise to accusations of bias in decision making and working practice.

2.13 An officer may seek to exempt their personal interests from the register if they consider, for instance, that having this information on record might put themselves or others at risk. In such cases, the officer should discuss the matter with the Monitoring Officer.

2.14 In certain circumstances an officer's personal or prejudicial interest may be found to be inappropriate or incompatible with their duties or their role within the Combined County Authority. Appropriate steps might be required to be taken. Ultimately, if an officer does not agree to take the appropriate steps required by the Combined County Authority, this might result in formal action being taken and could amount to gross misconduct leading to dismissal.

2.15 The Combined County Authority's registers of officers' personal and prejudicial interests are not matters of public record. The information contained in them will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. However, it is possible that the Combined County Authority could be compelled to divulge certain information from the registers under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Officers must advise when their circumstances change to update or remove records from the register. The register will be reviewed annually by the Monitoring Officer to ensure it is up to date and in compliance with the Information Commissioner's requirements.

2.16 Officers:

- Must not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the Combined County Authority or from persons who may apply to the Combined County Authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.

- Must register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.

- Must register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.

To protect your position and the reputation of the Combined County Authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you. The

presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case, you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as an officer of the HSCCA.

2.17 Employees should note that any breaches of this code may be considered either misconduct or gross misconduct and may lead to action within the Combined County Authority's Formal Action Policy and Procedure.

3. Investigations by the Monitoring Officer

3.1 The role of the Monitoring Officer is a requirement for the Combined County Authority. Where the Monitoring Officer is undertaking an investigation in accordance with the Combined County Authority's procedure for dealing with allegations, officers must comply with any requirement made by the Monitoring Officer in connection with such an investigation.

4. Changes to the Officer Code of Conduct

4.1 The Combined County Authority reserves the right to amend the details of this code as required. This code will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis, to ensure that it meets the needs of the Combined County Authority and ensure compliance with relevant legislation. A written request can be made to review this policy at any time, by any of the signatories, giving appropriate reasons for requesting the review.

The Hampshire & The Solent Combined County Authority

Officer Code of Conduct

Appendix 1: Notification of Officer Interests

In accordance with the Officer Code of Conduct, all officers must declare any financial or business interests that they consider could bring about conflict with the interests of the HSCCA when being involved in an official capacity with an outside organisation; that may adversely affect the performance of their duties or that may lead to an appearance of bias.

Notes:

- The term spouse or partner includes a civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband and wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners. Where your spouse or partner has recently been involved in any activity which would have been declarable, this should be mentioned with the date the activity ended.

- When completing your declaration, state 'None' where appropriate, do not leave boxes blank.

- Where you have a new interest that needs to be declared, you should declare it immediately by updating this form.

Your full name:	
Your job title:	
Who you report to:	

Section 1: Business and financial interests		
You should declare any employment outside of the HSCCA, any consultancy work, if you are a director of, or partner in, a business, if you hold shares in a business or are engaged on a retainer by a business. If you have a declaration to make, you should include the name, address and nature of business.		
1.1	Your (or your spouse/partner's) paid employment and association with businesses outside of the HSCCA.	

1.2	Other roles for which you (or your spouse/partner) receive financial benefit (this includes remunerated roles, for instance as an elected councillor).	

You must declare any financial interest you have in any contract whether it has been, or is proposed to be, entered into by the HSCCA.		
1.3	Any financial interests you (or your spouse/partner) may have in HSCCA contracts:	

Section 2: Beneficial interests in land and property

You should declare any beneficial interest in land or property within the area of the HSCCA including your own home, any properties you may own and rent out, any land owned by the HSCCA and whether you intend to bid for land or property owned by the HSCCA. You must declare the address of the land or property and the nature of your interest, for example that you live there.

2.1	Any beneficial interests you (or your spouse/partner) have in land and property in the HSCCA area.	

Section 3: Relationships

You should declare all close personal relationships (regardless of whether or not you can see a potential conflict of interests) with other HSCCA employees, staff you manage or who manage you, members or representatives of the HSCCA, members of committees, sub-committees and advisory boards, and members of constituent or non-constituent local authorities within the HSCCA area.

3.1	Any close personal relationships you (or your spouse/partner) may have with members, employees, staff you manage or who manage you.	

3.2	Any close personal relationship you (or your spouse/partner) may have with anyone who is applying for something from the HSCCA which people might perceive you are in a position to influence (e.g. a loan, grant, or contract).	
3.3	Any personal relationships you (or your spouse/partner) may have with contractors or suppliers of goods or services to the HSCCA.	

Section 4: Your membership of organisations

You should declare any organisations of which you are a member, in a position of general control, a trustee, or participate in the management of, including bodies exercising functions of a public nature, charities, a body whose principal purpose is to influence public opinion. For example: a school governor.

4.1	Your (or your spouse/partner's) membership of organisations	
4.2	Any other interest which you (or your spouse/partner) may hold which could give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest with your role or with decisions or recommendations which you might make as part of your work for the HSCCA.	

Gifts and Hospitality

You are required to provide notification of any offers of gifts and hospitality (whether accepted or declined) above the value of £50 which are made to you in your role as an officer of the HSCCA.

The Monitoring Officer maintains a central register of offers of gifts and hospitality.

Sensitive interests - request for exemption from registration
If you feel that there are good reasons why any information you are asked to provide should be exempt from registration, and not held on record, for example for your own personal safety or that of others, you should set out the details below. **I request that the details of my financial or other interest be exempt from registration for the following reasons:**

Officer's Declaration and Signature	
I confirm that the information given above is a true and accurate record of my relevant interests, given in good faith and to the best of my knowledge.	
Date:	
Name:	
Signature:	

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Date:	
To be of effect from:	

Part 7E - Member/Officer Protocol

Introduction

1. This protocol applies to Combined County Authority Members and non-constituent, associate and co-opted members as well as those on any working group or committee created by the Combined County Authority (together referred to, for the purposes of this protocol, as “Members”).

2. It also applies to officers of the Combined County Authority.

3. This protocol is not prescriptive, and it may not cover all situations. However, it does provide guidance on some of the issues that most commonly arise. The approach to these issues will serve as a guide to dealing with other issues.

4. This protocol is a written statement of current practice and convention. It seeks to promote greater clarity and certainty.

5. It also seeks to reflect the principles underlying the respective rules of conduct that apply to members and officers. Its purpose, therefore, is to enhance and maintain the integrity (real and perceived) of local government.

6. Members and officers are servants of the public and they depend on each other in carrying out the work of the Combined County Authority. Members who are elected are responsible to the electorate. All members serve only so long as their term of office or co-option lasts, while officers are accountable to the Combined County Authority as their employer. Their job is to give advice to the Combined County Authority, as well as to individual members, and to carry out the Combined County Authority’s work under the direction and control of the Combined County Authority.

7. Mutual respect between members and officers is essential to good local government. However, close personal familiarity between individual members and officers can damage this relationship and prove embarrassing to other members and officers.

8. The relationship has to function without compromising the ultimate responsibilities of officers to the Combined County Authority as a whole, and with due regard to such technical, financial, professional and legal advice that officers can legitimately provide to members. The protocol seeks to set a framework that assists the working relationships between members and officers.

Roles Of Members

9. Members undertake many different roles. Broadly these include:

- Elected members may express political values and supporting the policies of the party, authority, sector or group to which they belong (if any) – see further the section entitled “Political Activity” at paragraph 46 onwards,
- representing their area and advocating for the citizens who live in the area,
- participation in active partnerships with other organisations as community leaders,
- contributing to the decision-making by the Combined County Authority, or any committees, advisory bodies outside bodies and partnership organisations to which the member has been appointed,
- developing and reviewing policy and strategy, and
- monitoring and reviewing policy implementation and service quality

Roles Of Officers

10. Officers have the following main roles:

- implementing agreed policy,
- ensuring that the Combined County Authority always acts in a lawful manner,
- managing and providing the services for which the Combined County Authority has given them responsibility and being accountable for the efficiency and effectiveness of those services,
- providing advice to the Combined County Authority and to individual members in respect of the services provided (see further the section entitled “Provision of Advice and Information to members” from paragraph 21 onwards below and the section entitled “confidentiality” from paragraph 35 onwards), and
- initiating policy proposals.

Respect and Courtesy

11. For the effective conduct of the Combined County Authority business there must be mutual respect, trust and courtesy in all meetings and contacts, both formal and informal, between members and officers. This plays an important part in the Combined County Authority's reputation and how it is seen in public. It is very important that both members and officers remember their respective obligations to enhance the HSCCA’s reputation and to do what they can to avoid criticism of other members, or other officers.

Undue Pressure

12. It is important in any dealings between members and officers that neither should seek to take unfair advantage of their position.

13. In their dealings with officers (especially junior officers) members need to be aware that it is easy for them to be overawed and feel at a disadvantage. Such feelings can be intensified where members hold senior and/or political office. Certain statutory officers, the Head of Paid Service, the Section 73 Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer have specific roles which Members must understand and respect. Members should have particular regard to any advice given by them.

14. A member should not apply undue pressure on an officer either to do anything that they are not empowered to do or to undertake work outside normal duties or outside normal hours. Particular care needs to be taken in connection with the use of Combined County Authority property and services.

15. Similarly, an officer must neither seek to use undue influence on an individual member to decide in their favour, nor raise personal matters to do with their job, nor make claims or allegations about other officers.

Familiarity

16. Close personal familiarity between individual members and officers can damage the principle of mutual respect. It could also, intentionally or accidentally, lead to the passing of confidential information or information which should not properly be passed between them, such as personal details.

17. Such familiarity could also cause embarrassment to other members and/or other officers and even give rise to suspicions of favouritism.

18. For these reasons close personal familiarity must be avoided, and members and officers should address each other formally in public (whether in person or in writing).

Breach of Protocol

19. If a member considers that they have not been treated with proper respect or courtesy, they may raise the issue with the officer's line manager. If direct discussion with the manager does not resolve the complaint it should be referred to the Head of Service or Director responsible for the officer concerned. Breach of the protocol may give rise to formal action being taken against an officer if the circumstances warrant it.

20. If an officer considers that a member has contravened the protocol, they should consult their line manager who will, if necessary, involve the Head of

Service or Director. In certain circumstances breach of the protocol may also constitute a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct. If the breach is sufficiently serious this may warrant a formal reference to the Monitoring Officer as a complaint. Many complaints will be capable of informal resolution. The Monitoring Officer or the Head of Paid Service will assist in this process if necessary. Nothing in this protocol shall prevent an officer expressing a relevant concern under the Combined County Authority's Whistleblowing Policy.

Provision of Advice and Information to Members

21. Members are free to approach officers of the Combined County Authority to provide them with such information and advice as they may reasonably need in order to assist them in discharging their role as member. This can range from a request for general information about some aspect of Combined County Authority 's activities to a request for specific advice on a matter.

Information

22. Officers should always endeavour to respond to requests for information promptly and should in any event inform the member if there is likely to be any appreciable delay in dealing with an enquiry.

23. The legal rights of members to inspect Combined County Authority documents are covered partly by statute and partly by common law. The Access to Information Rules in Part 5 of the Constitution explain the position with regard to access to papers relating to the business of the Combined County Authority.

24. The exercise of the common law right depends upon a member's ability to demonstrate a "need to know". In this respect a member has no right to "a roving commission" to examine any documents of the Combined County Authority. Mere curiosity is not sufficient.

25. The information sought by a member should only be provided by officers if it is within the limits of the resources available. For their part, members should seek to act reasonably in the number and content of the requests they make.

26. It is important for officers to keep members informed both about the major issues concerning the Combined County Authority and, more specifically, about issues and events affecting their area of competence. Members should be informed about proposals that affect their area of competence and should also be invited to attend Combined County Authority initiated events related to this.

27. Members may be entitled under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 to receive information which falls outside their common law rights based on the "need to know". Officers are encouraged to supply documents to members without the need for a formal FOI request if it is apparent from the member's enquiry that any individual would be entitled to receive such documentation. The Combined County Authority's Data Protection Officer will be able to advise in consultation, if necessary, with the Monitoring Officer on whether any request would fall within the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Advice

28. Officers are responsible for the provision of professional expertise to the Combined County Authority and members are entitled to ask relevant questions and seek advice on available courses of action as they discharge their role as a member. The response of an officer to a member would not usually be shared with other members without specific agreement, however members should remember that the officer's primary duty is to the Combined County Authority as a whole and officers will therefore share their advice if they consider it appropriate to do so.

29. Sometimes officers will need to advise members that a certain course of action cannot be carried out. Members sometimes assume that this is a case of officers deliberately obstructing the wishes of politicians. Officers are employed to give unbiased professional advice even if it is not what members want to hear. They do this as much for the protection of members as for any other reason. In the event that an officer has to provide negative advice, this will be accompanied by suggestions as to how members might achieve some or all of their objectives in other ways..

Members with Special Responsibilities

30. Combined County Authority Members and other members who hold additional responsibilities (such as committee chairs) will receive additional information from senior officers to help them discharge their responsibilities. This is likely to take the form of briefings on service issues, proposals and policy development. The frequency of briefings will depend on the issues concerned and the requirements of the member involved, and the content of the informal briefing will remain confidential between the officers and member concerned.

31. Senior officers will always be fully responsible for the contents of any report submitted in their name and reports will be amended only where the amendment reflects the professional judgement of the author of the report.

32. Members who have additional responsibilities are likely to work more closely with officers but must still respect the impartiality of officers. Officers and members who work closely together must ensure that they do not publicly give the appearance of personal familiarity.

Confidentiality

35. Members are entitled to access information to enable them to discharge their responsibilities. The Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution, set out the basis on which information can be accessed by members and the public generally, but do not affect any other rights to information arising under standing orders or by law. They also set out the difference between confidential information and exempt information.

36. Members must ensure that they comply with data protection arrangements and not disclose information given to them in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which they believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where:

    - they have the consent of a person authorised to give it,
    - they are required by law to do so,
    - the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person, or
    - the disclosure is –
        - reasonable and in the public interest, and
        - made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority.

37. Committee reports included in the private part of an agenda are to be treated as exempt information under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, unless the committee, having applied the public interest test, resolves to admit the press and public. The report author makes the initial assessment of whether the information falls within the Schedule 12A exemptions. However, the final decision on whether the papers remain exempt rests with the committee, having heard and given due regard to legal advice.

38. Information and correspondence about an individual's private or business affairs will normally be classed as exempt or confidential.

39. Officers should make it clear to members if they are giving them confidential or exempt information. If a member is not sure whether information is confidential or exempt from disclosure, they should ask the relevant officer and not disclose the information in the meantime.

40. Any Combined County Authority information provided to a member must only be used by the member in connection with the proper performance of the member's duties.

41. If a member receives exempt or confidential information and considers it should be disclosed to another person because it is reasonable and in the public interest to do so, then they must first consult with the Monitoring

Officer and shall not disclose the information without having regard to any advice given by that officer.

Provision of Support Services to Members

42. The only basis on which the Combined County Authority can lawfully provide support services (for example stationery, printing, photocopying, transport, etc) to members is to assist them in discharging their role as members of the Combined County Authority. Such support services must therefore only be used on Combined County Authority business. They should never be used in connection with party political or campaigning activity or for private purposes.

Correspondence

43. Official letters on behalf of the Combined County Authority should be sent in the name of the appropriate officer, rather than in the name of a member. There are circumstances where a letter sent in the name of a member is perfectly appropriate, for example, in response to a letter of enquiry or complaint sent direct to that member. Letters which, for example, create obligations or give instructions on behalf of the Combined County Authority should never be sent out in the name of a member.

Media

44. Communication with the media can be an important part of a member's workload. In general, members provide comment and views while officers provide factual information. If a member is unsure about the circumstances of a particular issue, they should contact the appropriate Director or Head of Service concerned.

The Combined Authority's Role as Employer

45. In their dealings with officers, members should recognise and have regard to the Combined County Authority's role as employer. Members should be aware that officers could rely on inappropriate behaviour of a member in an employment case against the Combined County Authority.

Political Activity

46. There are a number of constraints that apply to an officer who occupies a post that is designated as "politically restricted" under the terms of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

47. In summary, politically restricted officers may be prevented from:

    - being a Member of Parliament, or a local authority,

- acting as an election agent or sub-agent for a candidate for election as a member of any of those bodies,
- being an officer of a political party or any branch of a political party or a member of any committee or sub-committee of such a party or branch, if their duties would be likely to require them to:-
  - participate in the general management of the party or branch; or
  - act on behalf of the party or branch in dealings with persons other than members of the party;
- canvassing on behalf of a political party or a candidate for election to any of those bodies,
- speaking to the public with the apparent intent of affecting public support for a political party, and
- publishing any written or artistic work of which they are the author (or one of the authors) or acting in an editorial capacity in relation to such works, or to cause, authorise or permit any other person to publish such work or collection - if the work appears to be intended to affect public support for a political party.

48. It is common for party groups to give preliminary consideration to matters of Combined County Authority business in advance of such matters being considered by the relevant decision-making body. Officers may properly be called upon to support and contribute to such deliberations by party groups provided they maintain a stance which is politically impartial. Support may include a range of activities including briefings for members relating to their roles, for example chairperson or spokesperson. Officers should be required to give information and advice to political groups on Combined County Authority business only and not on matters which are purely of a party-political nature. Such advice should be available to all party groups and not solely to the majority group. It is important that the political neutrality of officers is preserved, and that group confidentiality is maintained by officers.

49. Usually, the only officers involved in attending group meetings will be the Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Directors or Heads of Service and they will generally leave the meeting after making their presentation and answering questions.

50. Officers are employed by the Combined County Authority as a whole. They serve the Combined County Authority and are responsible to the Chief Executive and their respective Executive Director, and not to individual Members, whatever office they might hold.

51. Both members and officers are subject to their own Codes of Conduct which can be found in Part 7 of the Constitution. This Protocol provides guidance on working relationships between members and officers. It is essential that both are familiar with the detailed obligations in their respective Codes of Conduct which will prevail in the event of any conflict between the Codes and this Protocol.

Complaints

52. Complaints about any breach of this protocol by a member may be referred to the Monitoring Officer. It should be noted that certain breaches may also amount to breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct.

53. Complaints about any breach of this protocol by an officer may be referred to the Chief Executive or the Monitoring Officer.

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Part 7F - Whistleblowing Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) believes that a culture of openness and accountability is essential and is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability in all its practices. This policy is here to help you as an employee raise a concern about wrongdoing in a safe, confident, and early stage without fear.

1.2 We all have at one time or another experienced concerns about what is happening at work. Usually, these concerns are easily resolved. However, when the concern is about illegal, unethical or immoral conduct, i.e. malpractice, it can be difficult to know what to do. You may feel worried about raising an issue and decide to keep the concern to yourself, perhaps feeling that it is none of your business, only a suspicion or possibly a misunderstanding or misinterpretation. You may feel that raising the matter may be disloyal to colleagues, managers, or HSCCA itself. Or perhaps you have tried to raise the matter but found you have spoken to the wrong person or raised the issue in the wrong way and are not sure what to do next.

1.3 HSCCA would prefer you raise any concern about such malpractice when it is just a concern, rather than wait for proof. This policy aims to help you raise any concern about malpractice in the right way. It explains the routes open to all staff, including employees, temporary workers, agency staff, and people working for contractors. It complements HSCCA Complaints Procedure and Grievance Policy which cover individual employment matters.

2. Scope of this policy

2.1 This whistleblowing policy is primarily for a serious concern which affects the interests of others, such as service users, the public, colleagues, or HSCCA itself. Concerns may include but are not excluded to:

- Breach of the law or criminal activity
- Misuse or misappropriation of public funds
- Suspected fraud, corruption, or bribery
- Health and safety risks
- Deliberate concealment of wrongdoing
- Safeguarding failures or abuse of vulnerable individuals

2.2 If you're unsure whether your concern qualifies, we encourage you to raise it anyway. Early reporting protects everyone.

2.3 This policy is not designed to question financial or business decisions taken by HSCCA, nor should it be used to reconsider any matters which have already been addressed under the disciplinary, grievance, equality or other employment related procedures.

2.4 If you want to bring a complaint or grievance about your employment or the way you have been treated, please use the Grievance Procedure.

If in doubt – please raise it!

3. Definitions and Legal Protection

3.1 Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information that is in the public interest and relates to suspected wrongdoing. You are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 if your disclosure meets legal criteria: made in good faith, in the public interest, and to an appropriate person or body.

Our assurances to you

4. Your safety

4.1 We recognise it may be difficult to raise concern.

4.2 If you raise genuine concern under this policy, you will not be at risk of losing your job or suffering any reprisal as a result. Provided that you raise the matter honestly, it does not matter if you are mistaken. Of course, we do not extend this assurance to someone who maliciously raises a concern they know is untrue. Any such conduct may be liable to disciplinary action or other appropriate action.

4.3 If disciplinary action or redundancy procedures have already been started, raising a concern will not, in itself, halt them.

Your confidence

4.4 We will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern. However, we recognise that there may be some circumstances when you would prefer to speak to someone confidentially under this policy. If this is the case, please say so at the outset. If you ask not to disclose your identity, we will not do so without your consent unless required by law. You should understand that there may be circumstances when we are unable to resolve a concern without revealing your identity (for instance where your personal evidence is essential) and in such cases we will discuss with you whether and how best we can proceed.

Anonymity

4.5 Please remember that if you do not tell us who you are it may be more difficult for us to look into the matter, as further clarification may be needed in relation to the concerns raised. In addition, we will not be able to protect your position and or be able to provide you with the same support and assurances if you report a concern anonymously.

5. How to raise a concern

5.1 Please remember that you do not need to have firm evidence of malpractice before raising a concern. However, we do ask that you explain as fully as you can the information or circumstances that gave rise to your concern. Remember, the earlier you raise a concern the easier it is to resolve it. If you wish, you may be accompanied by a union or professional association representative or a work colleague**.**

Option One

5.2 We hope that you will feel able to raise your concern openly with your manager. This may be done orally, or if you prefer, in writing.

Option Two

5.3 If you feel unable to raise the matter with your manager for whatever reason, or if you think the concern has not been properly addressed, please raise it with a senior manager in your area or contact:

Whistleblowing line on ……..email:
Whistleblowing@

Or via post (marked Private & Confidential) to:

Internal Audit
xxxxx
xxxxx

Or contact one of the following officers:
Xxxx, Deputy Chief Internal Auditor (xxxx) email:
xxxx

xxxx, Chief Internal Auditor (xxxx) email:
xxxx

xxxx Monitoring Officer (xxxx) email:
xxxx

These people have been given special responsibility and training in dealing with whistle blowing concerns.

NB: The role of the Monitoring Officer is to be responsible for making sure that all HSCCA actions are lawful and to report any unlawful acts or maladministration to the HSCCA.

6. How we will handle the matter

6.1 Once you have raised your concern, we will acknowledge (within 5 working days) that it has been received and confirm our understanding of the issues raised to ensure that your concern is fully understood.

6.2 Initial enquiries will then be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. All whistleblowing investigations undertaken within HSCCA are directed by the 'Investigations Steering Panel' whose panel members include Monitoring Officer, Section 73 Officer and the Chief Internal Auditor or Deputy. If deemed appropriate, the concern raised may be:

- Investigated by Audit & Counter Fraud or Management.
- Referred to the Police
- Referred to the External Auditor
- The subject of an independent inquiry
- A combination of the above

6.3 While we cannot guarantee that we will respond to all matters in the way that you might wish, we will handle the matter fairly and properly. We will not be able to disclose specific details of how this will be achieved. We will, however, give you limited feedback on the outcome of any investigation. Please note that we will not be able to tell you about disciplinary or legal action, when it infringes a duty of confidence we owe to third parties.

6.4 HSCCA in issuing this policy is mindful of its responsibility under the General Data Protection Regulations, Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts. These pieces of legislation impose an obligation on PCC to allow access to information held in relation to such investigations (subject to legal exemptions) whilst protecting the rights of individuals whom the data is about.

6.5 If you have any personal interest in the matter, we do ask that you tell us at the outset. If we think your concern falls more properly within the Grievance Procedure, we will tell you.

7. Independent advice

7.1 If you are unsure whether to use this policy or you want independent advice at any stage, free advice is available from:

- Your Trade Union, if applicable
- Protect, either by telephone on 020 3117 2520 or by email at whistle@protect-advice.org.uk

8. External contacts

8.1 The aim of this Policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases, you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

8.2 While we hope this policy gives you the reassurance you need to raise a concern internally, we recognise that there may be circumstances where you can properly report matters to outside bodies, such as:

- External Audit
- Relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
- Police

8.3 Protect, or if applicable, your union will be able to advise you on such an option and on the circumstances in which you may be able to contact an outside body safely.

8.4 It will very rarely, if ever, be appropriate to alert the media. Before reporting a concern to anyone external we strongly encourage you to seek advice from your manager, an officer listed in section 5 of this policy or, if applicable, your union, who will be able to advise you on such an option if you wish.

9. Administration

9.1 If you have any questions about the whistleblowing policy and how it applies, you can contact Internal Audit or the Monitoring Officer who will be pleased to answer your questions.

9.2 The Chief Internal Auditor has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy and will report to the Governance and Audit Committee annually on the application of this policy. The Chief Internal Auditor maintains a record of concerns raised and the outcomes (but in a form which does not endanger staff confidentiality).

9.3 This policy will be reviewed annually against CIPFA standards and reported for approval to the Governance and Audit Committee.

See also the: -

- Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Code of Conduct for Employees and Members
- Grievance Procedure and Raising a Grievance Informally

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Municipal Year:	
Version:	
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To be of effect from:	

Members Code of Conduct complaints case handling procedure

Standards arrangements

These arrangements set out how you may make a complaint that an elected or co-opted Member of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority, which includes the elected Mayor has failed to comply with the Combined County Authority's Code of Conduct for Members.

These arrangements are made under Sections 28(6) and (7) Localism Act 2011.

1 Independent Person

The Combined County Authority shall appoint Independent Persons whose views must be sought by the authority before it takes any decision on an allegation which has been decided should be investigated. The Independent Person's views can also be sought by the authority at any other stage or by the Member against whom an allegation has been made (the Subject Member).

2 Making a Complaint

If someone considers there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct by a Member, and wants to make a complaint, they should write or send an email to:

The Monitoring Officer
HSCCA, Southampton Civic Centre, Civic Centre Road, Southampton, SO14 7LY

email: HSCCA@southampton.gov.uk

The standard complaint form should be used, which is available from the Monitoring Officer at the above address or can be viewed online at [to be confirmed]

It is important to provide a name and contact address. The Combined County Authority will not investigate anonymous complaints unless there is a significant public interest in doing so.

3 Timescales

We aim to deal with any complaint, so far as possible, within three months of receipt, or as soon as possible thereafter.

The Monitoring Officer will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within five working days.

4 Assessment for Investigation or Other Action

Every complaint relating to the Code of Conduct will be received by the Monitoring Officer.

The Member who is the subject of a complaint ('the Subject Member') will be advised of the complaint and copied into any relevant correspondence or complaint form received from the Complainant. The Monitoring Officer will review complaints and consult with the Independent Person in doing so and will decide whether a complaint merits formal investigation or any other action. Where there is a difference of opinion between the Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person, then the allegation will be investigated.

This assessment will take place, where possible, within 28 working days of receipt of the complaint or as soon as possible thereafter. The Monitoring Officer may request more information to assist the decision as to whether investigation is appropriate.

The Subject Member may also be requested to provide information about the matter.

The Monitoring Officer will advise you, in writing, of their decision about whether or not the matter should be investigated.

If the complaint identifies criminal conduct or breach of other regulation, the Monitoring Officer will consult the Police and/or such other regulatory agencies as they consider appropriate.

The Monitoring Officer will not refer for investigation matters which are, in their opinion, and after consultation with the Independent Person, vexatious, offensive, trivial or politically motivated.

If the Monitoring Officer has a conflict of interest or does not for any other reason consider it appropriate that they undertake initial assessment of a complaint, it will be referred to the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

5 Informal Resolution

Wherever possible the Monitoring Officer will seek to resolve a complaint informally without the need for formal investigation. This may involve trying to mediate between the parties, aiming to clarify misunderstandings, or encouraging discussion between the Complainant and Subject Member to enable a resolution between them, or where appropriate, an apology. It may also involve other remedial action by the Combined County Authority.

If the Subject Member makes a reasonable offer of local resolution but the Complainant is not willing to accept the offer, the Monitoring Officer will take this into account in deciding whether a complaint merits formal investigation.

6 Investigation

If the Monitoring Officer concludes that a matter merits investigation, the complainant will be invited to submit all information they wish to submit in support of their allegation within 10 working days of request.

Once the information is received it will be sent to the Subject Member who will also be invited to submit all information they wish to be considered in response within 10 working days.

Throughout the process the Monitoring Officer will ensure the Subject Member and complainant receive appropriate support and assistance.

The Monitoring Officer may also appoint someone to oversee the gathering of information relating to the matter which will comprise the investigation. This officer will consider whether any further information is needed and take steps so far as possible to secure its production. A report containing the information provided by the complainant and Subject Member will be prepared by the officer and copied to both parties and sent to the Monitoring Officer. The report will conclude with a recommendation as to whether it is considered that there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct.

7 Conclusion of no evidence of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct

The Monitoring Officer will receive and review the report and consult the Independent Person. If satisfied that the report is sufficient, the Monitoring Officer will write to the complainant and the Subject Member notifying them that they are satisfied that no further action is required.

8 Conclusion that there is evidence of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct

The Monitoring Officer will look at the complaint and speak to the Independent Person to decide whether the issue can be resolved informally. If an informal solution is suggested but not accepted by either the complainant or the Subject Member, the case will be passed to the Governance & Audit Committee to consider.

If the Monitoring Officer believes the matter can be settled without a formal hearing, they will talk with the Independent Person, the complainant, and the Subject Member to try to agree a fair outcome. Any resolution should be fair to everyone and help improve standards of conduct in the future

As with initial assessment this can include the Subject Member accepting that conduct was unacceptable and offering an apology, and/or other remedial action by the Authority. If the Subject Member complies with the suggested resolution the matter will be reported to the Governance & Audit Committee but no further action will be taken.

9 Hearing

If local resolution is not appropriate, or the complainant or Subject Member are not satisfied with the proposed resolution, or the Subject Member is not prepared to undertake any proposed remedial action, the report will be reported to a Hearings Panel ('the Panel') of 3 Members from the Governance & Audit Committee. The Independent Person will attend all panel meetings and will be consulted by the panel in making its decision about whether there has been a breach of the code and any action to be taken.

The panel will meet to decide whether the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and, if so, what action should be taken.

The report will be presented to the panel. The complainant and the Subject Member will be invited to attend the panel to present information and make representations in relation to the allegations that there has been a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct. The Independent Person will be present. The panel can proceed in the absence of either the Subject Member or the complainant where it deems this to be appropriate.

The panel shall consult with the Independent Person and be advised by the Monitoring Officer. It may conclude:

(a) that the Subject Member did not fail to comply with the Code of Conduct;

(b) that the Subject Member failed to comply with the Code of Conduct; and, if it so concludes, the panel may determine what action or sanction is appropriate.

10 What actions can the Panel take if there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct?

The Panel may:

(a) issue a letter of censure to the Member and where appropriate require an apology to be given to the complainant;
(b) recommend to the HSCCA Board or nominating body, as appropriate, that they be removed from any or all committees, sub-committees or advisory board of the Combined County Authority;
(c) instruct the Monitoring Officer to arrange training for the Member.

The panel has no power to suspend or disqualify the Member or to withdraw allowances.

The panel shall consult the Independent Person and decide what, if any, publicity should be undertaken regarding the outcome of the matter. Options for such publicity include a notice on the Combined Authority's website or a press release.

11 What happens at the end of the hearing?

The Chair of the panel will announce the decision of the panel as to whether the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and as to any action it deems necessary. The Monitoring Officer will prepare a Decision Notice which will be given to the subject Member and the Complainant within 10 working days. The outcome will be reported to the next meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee.

12 Revision of these arrangements

The Combined County Authority may by resolution agree to amend these arrangements and delegates to the Chair of the Panel the right to depart from these arrangements where they consider it expedient to do so to secure the effective and fair consideration of any matter.

13 Appeals

There is no right of appeal for the complainant or the Subject Member against a decision of the Monitoring Officer or panel.

If the complainant feels that the Council has failed to deal with the complaint properly they may make a complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

ANNEX A – Jurisdiction and Local Assessment Criteria

Jurisdiction

Before assessment of a complaint begins, the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person, should be satisfied that the complaint meets the following tests:

a. it is a complaint against one or more named Members or representatives of the Combined County Authority ("Members")

b. the named Member was in office at the time of the alleged conduct and the relevant Code of Conduct was in force at the time;

c. the complaint, if proven, would be a breach of the Code under which the Member was operating at the time of the alleged misconduct.

If the complaint fails one or more of these tests it cannot be investigated as a breach of the Code, and the complainant must be informed that no further action will be taken in respect of the complaint.

Assessment Criteria

All complaints falling within the jurisdiction of the standards regime will be assessed by the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person, in accordance with the criteria below.

More than one criteria may be applicable to a complaint.

1. Capacity

Was the Member acting in their official capacity at the time of the alleged conduct?

If the answer is no, then unless there is some direct link between the activity and the Member's office, the Code did not apply to the Member at the time of the alleged conduct and therefore there can be no breach of the code. The response should therefore be: "The Member concerned was not acting in their official capacity at the time of the alleged conduct and therefore the Code of Conduct for Members did not apply to the Member at that time. Consequently, no potential breach of the code has been disclosed and no action may be taken in respect of the complaint."

The code does not currently apply to Members' conduct outside of the performance of their functions as Members. Only if they have engaged in private conduct/activity

which has a link with the functions of the office of member, might the conduct in question be covered by the code.

For elected members, their public role often makes them identifiable as councillors. Because of this, people are likely to believe that they are acting in their official capacity, even when the elected member believes they are acting in a personal capacity. An example of this is when using social media.

2. Triviality

Is the complaint too trivial to warrant further action?

If the answer is yes: “The matter is not considered to be sufficiently serious to warrant further action.”

3. Sufficient Information

Has the complainant submitted enough information to satisfy the Monitoring Officer assessing the complaint that the complaint should be referred for investigation or other action?

If the answer is no, the response should be: “The information provided was insufficient to make a decision as to whether the complaint should be referred for investigation or other action. So unless, or until, further information is received, the Monitoring Officer is taking no further action on this complaint.”

4. Current Membership

Is the complaint about someone who is no longer a Member of the Combined County Authority, but is a member of another authority? If so, does the Monitoring Officer wish to refer the complaint to the Monitoring Officer of that other authority?

If the answer is yes: “Where the member is no longer a member of our authority but is a member of another authority, the complaint will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of that authority for consideration.”

5. Prior Investigation/Action

Has the complaint already been the subject of an investigation or other action relating to the Code of Conduct? Similarly, has the complaint been the subject of an investigation by other regulatory authorities?

If the answer is yes: “The matter of complaint has already been subject to a previous investigation or other action and there is nothing more to be gained by further action being taken.”

6. Passage of Time

Is the complaint about something that happened so long ago that there would be little benefit in taking action now?

If the answer is yes: “The period of time that has passed since the alleged conduct occurred was taken into account when deciding whether this matter should be referred for investigation or further action. It was decided under the circumstances that further action was not warranted.”

7. Underlying Motivation

Does the complaint appear to be simply malicious, vexatious, politically motivated or tit-for-tat?

If the answer is yes: “The matter appears to be simply malicious, vexatious, politically motivated or tit-for-tat, and not sufficiently serious, and it was decided that further action was not warranted”.

8. Anonymous Complaints

Is the complaint under consideration anonymous?

If the answer is yes, the Monitoring Officer will only refer such a complaint for investigation or some other action if it includes documentary or photographic evidence indicating an exceptionally serious or significant matter and/or if there is a significant public interest in doing so.

9. Requests for Confidentiality

Has the complainant asked for their identity to be withheld?

If the answer is yes, the Monitoring Officer will need to consider the request by the complainant for confidentiality alongside the substance of the complaint itself.

As a matter of fairness and natural justice, Members will usually be told who has complained about them. Requests for confidentiality should only be granted in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person.

The following considerations may assist the Monitoring Officer’s deliberations in this respect:

1. Whether the complainant has reasonable grounds for believing that they will be at risk of physical harm if their identity is disclosed;

2. Whether the complainant is an officer who works closely with the subject Member and they are afraid of the consequences to their employment or of losing their job if their identity is disclosed (this should be covered by the Combined County Authority's Whistleblowing Policy);

3. Whether the complainant suffers from a serious health condition and there are medical risks associated with their identity being disclosed. In such circumstances, the Monitoring Officer may wish to request medical evidence of the complainant's condition. In such cases, the Monitoring Officer may give the complainant the option of requesting a withdrawal of their complaint;

4. Whether the disclosure of the complainant's identity is necessary for the investigation of the complaint; for example, this may be relevant in a bullying allegation. In such cases, the Monitoring Officer may give the complainant the option of requesting a withdrawal of their complaint;

5. Whether it is possible to investigate the complaint without making the complainant's identity known;

6. Whether the public interest in proceeding with an investigation outweighs the complainant's wish to have their identity withheld from the subject Member.

Where the Monitoring Officer decides to refuse a request by a complainant for confidentiality, the Monitoring Officer may, in the particular circumstances, decide to offer the complainant the option to withdraw the complaint, rather than proceed with their identity being disclosed.

10. Withdrawal of Complaints

Has the complainant indicated that they wish to withdraw their complaint?

If the answer is yes, the Monitoring Officer will need to decide whether to grant the request. The following considerations may assist the deliberations in this respect:

1. Does the public interest in taking some action on the complaint outweigh the complainant's desire to withdraw it?

2. Is the complaint such that action can be taken on it, for example, an investigation, without the complainant's participation?

3. Is there an identifiable underlying reason for the request to withdraw the complaint? For example, is there information to suggest that the complainant may have been pressured to withdraw the complaint?

11. Possible decisions

The Monitoring Officer assessing a complaint may decide to refer the complaint for investigation or other action (for example, training, conciliation); or may decide that no action should be taken in respect of the complaint.

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Members' Code of Conduct Complaint Form

This complaint form should be used if you wish to make a complaint about a **Member of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority**.

Your Details: *Please provide us with your name, address, contact telephone number and email address.*	
Are you:	☐ A Member of the Combined County Authority ☐ An officer of the Combined Authority ☐ A member of the public ☐ Other, please state: _____
Who was involved? *If you are unsure of the Member's name, please provide information about their role or the capacity in which they were acting at the time of the incident.*	
What happened? *Please describe the incident or alleged misconduct.*	
When and where did it happen? *Please provide dates if you can recall them.*	
How would you like your complaint to be resolved?	
Do you have any concerns about sharing this information? *The information provide in this form will normally be shared with the person who the complaint is about. If you have concerns about any/all of the information being shared, please provide reasons for this. These will be considered by the Monitoring Officer. By submitting this form, you acknowledge that a decision regarding the sharing of information will sit with the Monitoring Officer.*	

Please submit this form to the Monitoring Officer for initial assessment

By post: HSCCA, Southampton Civic Centre, Civic Centre Road, Southampton, SO14 7LY

By email: HSCCA@southampton.gov.uk

Part 7H - Consultation and Engagement Protocol

Introduction

This document outlines the principles and practices for effective consultation and engagement tailored to support the Hampshire & The Solent Combined County Authority in fostering meaningful dialogue with stakeholders and the public.

1. Genuine Exchange of Views

Consultation is defined as:

“The dynamic process of dialogue between individuals or groups, based upon genuine exchange of views, with the objective of influencing decisions, policies or programmes of action.” — The Consultation Institute.

2. Formative Stage Engagement

Consultations should be conducted at the formative stages of proposals, ensuring that:

- Issues and options are clearly explained.
- Stakeholders are engaged before decisions are made.
- There is transparency about decisions that are outside the authority’s control.

3. Accessibility and Inclusion

Efforts must be made to ensure consultations are accessible to all, including:

- Use of plain English and alternative formats (e.g., braille, audio, easy read).
- Targeting seldom-heard communities.
- Monitoring and reporting diversity statistics of participants.

4. Quality and Coordination

To maintain high standards:

- Staff should receive appropriate training.
- Quality control processes must be in place.
- Joint activities with partners should be coordinated to avoid duplication.

5. Feedback and Transparency

Consultation outcomes should be handled with integrity:

- Responses must be interpreted objectively.
- Reports should be delivered to decision-makers in a timely manner.
- Participants should be given the option to receive summaries of outcomes.

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Part 7I - Conflicts of Interest Policy

To be updated

Part 7J - Mayoral Scheme of Allowances

The first Mayoral Allowances Scheme will appear here following the Independent Remuneration Panel review, proposal and endorsement by the Combined County Authority.

Hampshire and the Solent
COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY

Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority

Local Assurance Framework 2026

Contents

1 Purpose 4

1.1 Updating the Assurance Framework 4

1.2 About the region 5

2 The Mayoral Combined County Authority 6

2.1 Areas of competence 6

2.1.1 Transport and local infrastructure 6

2.1.2 Skills & employment support 6

2.1.3 Housing & strategic planning 6

2.1.4 Economic development and regeneration 7

2.1.5 The environment and climate change 7

2.1.6 Health & Wellbeing 7

2.1.7 Public Safety 7

2.1.8 Culture 7

2.1.9 Rural affairs and coastal communities 7

2.1.10 Further powers 7

2.2 Regional and local leadership 9

2.2.1 Board Membership 9

2.2.2 Constituent Councils 9

2.2.3 Other membership 9

3 Governance and accountability 11

3.1 Governance structure 12

3.1.1 The Governance framework 12

3.1.2 The Mayor 14

3.1.3 The HSCCA Board 14

3.1.4 Transport Committee 15

3.1.5 Member Advisory Boards 15

3.1.6 Business Advisory Board 15

3.1.7 Investment Board 16

3.1.8 Statutory Officers 16

4 Checks and balances 18

4.1 Summary 18

4.2 Overview & Scrutiny arrangements 18

4.2.1 Overview and Scrutiny committee 18

4.3 Governance and Audit 20

4.3.1 Governance & Audit Committee 20

4.3.2 Internal audit *20*
4.3.3 External audit *20*
4.4 Adult Skills 21
5 Transparency 22
5.1 Government and public accountability 22
5.1.1 Decision meetings and funding decisions *22*
5.1.2 Publication of other information *22*
5.1.3 The HSCCA Constitution *22*
5.2 Communication and engagement 23
6 Financial management and assurance 25
6.1 The role of the Accountable Body 25
6.1.1 Funding of the HSCCA *25*
6.2 Value for Money 27
7 Project management and assurance 28
7.1 Introduction 28
7.1.1 Project identification and initiation *29*
7.1.2 Project assessment and prioritisation *29*
7.1.3 Business cases *30*
7.1.4 Appraisal and assurance *31*
7.1.5 Approval and funding allocation *31*
7.1.6 Delivery monitoring and control *31*
7.1.7 Risk management framework *32*
7.1.8 Monitoring and Evaluation *32*
7.2 Transport projects 32
8 Organisational policy framework 33
Appendix A – Project assessment criteria 34
Appendix B - Transport process and governance 36
Appendix C – Consolidated Adult Skills Funding 40

1 Purpose

The purpose of the Local Assurance Framework is to set out how Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) will be transparent, accountable, and effective in its use of devolved powers and funding across the region. The framework supports the delivery of strategic priorities and statutory duties under the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026.

This Assurance Framework is a guideline for HSCCA Board Members, Officers, Local Authority partners, businesses, and residents. It explains the systems and processes that the Authority will follow to make sure public money is spent properly, legally, and according to best practice.

The framework shows that there are strong procedures to manage investment programmes well, and that funds are used legally, honestly, and efficiently, providing best value for money while achieving intended outcomes.

This framework applies to all new decisions, approvals, funding requests, and project delivery.

It covers:

- The roles and responsibilities of the Combined County Authority Board and other decision-making and delivery structures.
- The key processes to ensure accountability, fairness, transparency, legal compliance, and value for money.
- How the CCA will engage with the public; the business, public, voluntary and third sector organisations, and other key stakeholders.
- How proposed investments/projects will be prioritised, assessed, approved, and delivered.
- How the progress and results of these investments/projects will be monitored and evaluated.
- How decisions and performance (including project delivery) will be communicated

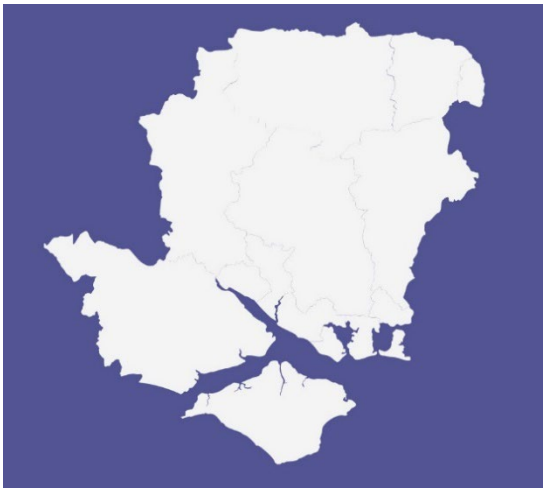
The Assurance Framework works alongside other key governance and policy documents including but not limited to the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act, the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, the Railways Bill, the Bus Services Act 2025, the HSCCA Constitution, Financial Regulations, and the HSCCA Performance Framework (once agreed).

1.1 Updating the Assurance Framework

The Local Assurance Framework will be reviewed annually; it will be agreed in draft by the HSCCA Board before submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) who will co-ordinate reviews with other departments as appropriate. The framework may be amended and re-published before the annual review date if improvements are needed, or significant changes are made to the HSCCA or its governance and assurance structures and processes, or if new guidance is received from the Government.

The Assurance Framework will also need in to be updated in advance of the transition of the Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIWFRS) and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) in 2028.

1.2 About the region



Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority covers the geographical counties of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. This currently includes 15 Local Authorities. Of these, the four 'upper tier' authorities are Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council. There are also 11 district and borough councils, a single Fire and Rescue Service and one Police & Crime Commissioner across the region.

HSCCA covers a population of over 2 million people with an annual economic output of over £72.6bn each year.

Hampshire and the Solent feature diverse coastlines, forests, and historic landscapes. Located on England's southern coast, it has over 230 miles of shoreline and includes the ports of Southampton and Portsmouth worth £21.7 billion each year, particularly to markets in the Far East. The UK's maritime hubs connect Hampshire with the Isle of Wight, Europe, and beyond. Inland, Hampshire features two national parks: the New Forest, known for its woodland wildlife and ponies, and the South Downs, notable for its chalk hills and countryside. Winchester, England's historic capital, is also located here.

With four universities, the region has a reputation for innovation, home to cutting edge businesses like the Ordnance Survey and Ocean Infinity as well as the National Oceanographic Centre. It also has strong aerospace, maritime, logistics, sustainable technology, and tourism sectors with key players such as BAE Systems, Carnival, and Vestas. The Solent Freeport presents a major opportunity to further strengthen the area's trading position through Customs Sites and Tax Sites, and co-ordinating growth-industry efforts especially around trade and investment.

There are around 90,000 businesses here, creating over 1 million jobs for our 2 million residents, with 1.3 million people of working age. Productivity is also high - about 13% above the UK average. Education levels in Hampshire and the Solent are above the national average, with a high proportion of residents holding Level 3 qualifications (A-level or equivalent) and a considerable number progressing to higher education, supported by the presence of four universities in the region.

The region performs strongly economically and generally has slightly better health outcomes and life expectancy than the UK average. However, some communities continue to face long-standing challenges and deprivation. The creation of the HSCCA will help bring investment and positive impacts that benefit all parts of the region.

2 The Mayoral Combined County Authority

Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) was established on 4 June 2026 following Parliamentary approval of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Regulations. The first meeting of the Combined County Authority should take place within 3 weeks of this vesting day, although local elections and political selection processes may impact the timing.

The first Mayor of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority will be elected on 4 May 2028 and will take office on 8 May 2028. Until then, the Combined County Authority will carry out all relevant duties and responsibilities. Powers that are reserved solely for the Mayor will only apply once the Mayor has been elected unless otherwise specified by the establishing Statutory Instrument or other regulations.

2.1 Areas of competence

The Combined County Authority will have nine areas of responsibility (also known as areas of competence), that are set out in the 2026 English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act. It will have powers or statutory duties across these areas which will be updated as the Devolution Framework is updated. They are the areas where the HSCCA should act and deliver benefits for the region and its residents.

2.1.1 Transport and local infrastructure

Local Transport Authority (LTA) strategic powers will transfer to the Combined County Authority (HSCCA) over the course of two years through to 2028 (during this period some transport powers will be held concurrently between the Constituent Authorities who are also LTAs, and the CCA). This is to support investment in transport and improved transport services. Key responsibilities include:

- setting and delivering a transport strategy for the region, maximising opportunities for transport investment, providing oversight and assurance of investment delivery, establishing a Key Route Network comprising the most important local roads and a single asset management policy.
- development of public transport services across the region, facilitating the delivery of public transport improvements including, bus services, information, infrastructure, incentivised ticket schemes, concessionary fares and smart, integrated ticketing, influencing and enabling rail investment and powers relating to bus partnerships and franchising.

2.1.2 Skills & employment support

Responsibility to produce a Strategic Skills Plan and accountability for the delivery of the devolved Adult Skills Funding from 2027. Responsibility to work in partnership with the Employer Representative Body to inform the Local Skills Improvement Plan and to develop and deliver a local Get Britain Working Plan aligned with national and regional plans.

2.1.3 Housing & strategic planning

Responsibility to produce a Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) for the region that reflects, in spatial terms, the priorities in the Local Growth Plan. This will set out where new homes, and strategic growth will be located and what infrastructure is needed to support the region.

2.1.4 Economic development and regeneration

HSCCA will produce a Local Growth Plan and an investment pipeline that will plan how funds are spent and attract new investment to the region. It will agree a set of strategic priorities with government, which will be a focus for joint investment. A key objective for devolution is increasing regional growth and prosperity and attracting greater inward investment.

2.1.5 The environment and climate change

HSCCA will have opportunities to shape environmental strategy, strengthen resilience to climate change and drive sustainable development in the region. As a public body it will have responsibilities to support partners such as the National Park Authorities in furthering their aims. It will also have a role in delivering the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and may take on accountability for the LNRS in future.

2.1.6 Health & Wellbeing

The mayor will have statutory health improvement duties to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities across the region. The mayor will play a role in working with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) on shared health and wellbeing priorities and initiatives to achieve these. The Mayor and Combined County Authority will also seek opportunities for public service reform.

2.1.7 Public Safety

It is expected that in April 2028 the HIWFRS, the Fire and Rescue Service, will become part of the Combined County Authority. In 2028 in line with the mayoral elections, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner will also become part of HSCCA.

2.1.8 Culture

Culture is a new area of competence for strategic authorities, added as an amendment to the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026. There are no immediate powers or statutory duties that come with the power of competence for culture, but there are a number of benefits that highlight culture as an area the Combined Authority should be involved in.

2.1.9 Rural affairs and coastal communities

'Rural affairs and coastal communities' was a late addition to the strategic authority competencies in the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026. The HSCCA does not currently have dedicated powers or responsibilities in this area of competency but has a responsibility to consider the issues and needs specific to these communities in its wider decision-making.

2.1.10 Further powers

As and when Government officially devolves further powers to the Combined County Authority to deliver against its policy agenda, this will be reflected in revisions to the Assurance Framework at the appropriate review period.

To support the delivery of projects, HSCCA will have a confirmed investment fund of £44.6m per annum for 30 years from the election of the Mayor in 2028. For the first two years (2026/27 and 2027/28) an investment fund of £17.84m per annum has been confirmed. These funds are split 50% capital and 50% revenue. The funds will be subject to a review every five years to confirm that the investment has contributed to economic growth and increased prosperity. An Investment Strategy will be developed in the first year of operation that will set out the region's priorities and approach to investment including core principles for the distribution and management of the fund.

More information on the areas of responsibility and opportunities through devolution are available on the HSCCA website hantsandsolent-ca.gov.uk.

2.2 Regional and local leadership

HSCCA operates with a clear mandate to invest in and deliver for local communities. It will have two sets of functions: Combined County Authority functions and Mayoral functions. The Combined County Authority Board is the principal decision-maker and provides the strategic direction of the Combined County Authority.

Prior to the Mayoral election, HSCCA will have up to 10 Members as shown below. These Members are made up of, and representatives from, a number of different organisations and will form the HSCCA Board.

Member	Post	Membership type
Hampshire County Council	Leader	Constituent
Hampshire County Council	Elected Member	Constituent
Isle of Wight Council	Leader	Constituent
Portsmouth City Council	Leader	Constituent
Southampton City Council	Leader	Constituent
District/Borough Councils rep	Nominated representative	Non-constituent
Business Advisory Board	Chair of Business Advisory Board	Associate
TBC		Non-constituent/Associate
TBC		Non-constituent/Associate
TBC		Non-constituent/Associate

2.2.1 Board Membership

The following are the different types of Members of a combined county authority:

- **Constituent Members** - these are the nominated representatives of the Upper Tier Local Authorities (UTLAs) that set up the Mayoral Combined County Authority.
- **Non-Constituent Members** - these are Members that are representatives of organisations that the MCCA has designated as a nominating body for Membership (with their agreement). Such Members are non-voting Members unless the Constituent Members decide otherwise
- **Associate Members** - these are Members that are individuals as opposed to representing an organisation and they cannot have a vote on the MCCA

2.2.2 Constituent Councils

The Constituent Councils are the councils that formally came together to create the combined county authority. They are full voting members of the HSCCA. Each of the Constituent Councils must appoint one Constituent Member (Hampshire County Council must appoint two) creating a total of five. The Chair of the MCCA Board will be one of the Constituent Council Leaders (tbc).

2.2.3 Other membership

HSCCA expects to have up to 5 Non-Constituent or Associate (NC&A) Members in total, although not all positions are expected to be filled from the outset. The NC&A members will be required to appoint substitute members if they are not able to attend meetings. Any agreed NC&A members will sit alongside the five constituent members (one each from Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth CC and Southampton CC and two from Hampshire CC). The Constituent

Members make up will be reviewed when Local Government Reorganisation is undertaken to ensure a balance of membership across the new unitary authorities.
Two of the 5 positions are expected to be filled as outlined below:-

2.2.3.1 District/Borough representation

There are 11 district and borough councils across the region who between them will nominate one Non-Constituent Member to represent the interests of the district and borough councils on the HSCCA Board.

2.2.3.2 Business interests

A key area of focus for the HSCCA will be the economy, industry and business, as such the voice of business will be an important factor. The HSCCA will also establish a Business Advisory Board that will be part of the formal governance arrangements and will provide advice to the HSCCA on all relevant issues of business and economy. The HSCCA will appoint the Chair of that Advisory Group to the HSCCA as an Associate Member to represent the views of Business Advisory Board.
This Local Assurance Framework will be updated to reflect the establishment decisions taken by the Board in relation to the full N&CA Membership once agreed.

3 Governance and accountability

HSCCA is subject to the s27 Localism Act 2011 (duty to promote and maintain high standards) and will adopt a code of conduct that is consistent with the Nolan principles.

The Nolan principles are the guiding principles for the HSCCA. These principles apply to anyone who works in or is delivering public services. These are:-

1. **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. **Integrity** - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
3. **Objectivity** - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. **Openness** - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. **Honesty** - Holders of public office should be truthful.
7. **Leadership** - Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority is committed to making open, honest decisions that are easy for everyone to understand. This framework makes sure that all major investments and policy decisions are subject to robust scrutiny, with clear lines of accountability and inclusive engagement opportunities. The HSCCA will operate openly, holding meetings in public in line with its legal obligations. It will publish agendas, minutes, decision records and performance data. Regular reports, independent audits, and following national standards (including the HM Treasury Green Book and the English Devolution Accountability Framework) will ensure transparency and consistency. These principles are designed to ensure public money is spent wisely, and to encourage good working relationships between local government, businesses, and the community.

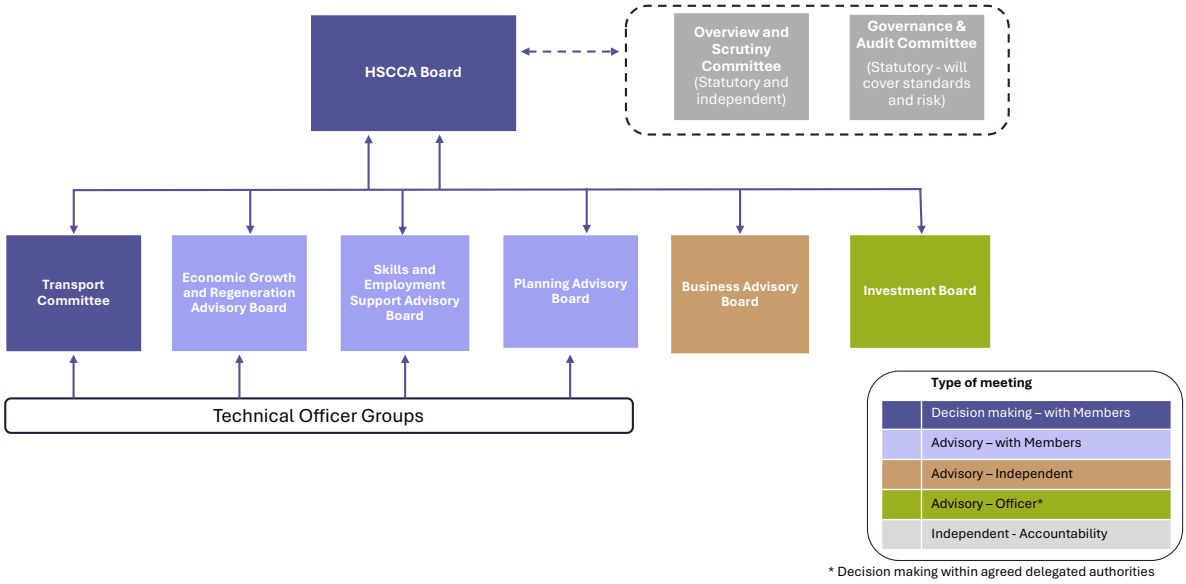
3.1 Governance structure

3.1.1 The Governance framework

Robust systems for effective delivery, risk management, and financial stewardship will be established and detailed within the HSCCA Constitution and this first Local Assurance Framework. These governance arrangements will be formally agreed at the inaugural meeting of the Combined County Authority, providing a strong foundation for responsible use of public funds and alignment with national standards.

The Members of the HSCCA will be the main decision-making body known as the HSCCA Board. The HSCCA Board will have the power to establish boards, committees and sub-committees to exercise HSCCA functions. An initial structure is shown below.

The Members of the Combined County Authority are expected to act in the interests of the Hampshire and Solent area as a whole when making investment decisions. A variety of controls are in place to ensure that decisions are appropriate and free from bias and/or the perception of bias.



The following summarises the purpose of the groups within the governance structure:

Type of meeting	What they're for
Decision Making – HSCCA Board	• Main decision-making body for the HSCCA. • Sets the strategic objectives, vision and Corporate Plan. • Approves strategy, key policy and frameworks. • Sets the budgetary framework and the Medium Term Financial Plan. • Power to establish committees and sub-committees to exercise HSCCA functions. • Agrees the scheme of delegation/authorisation for the rest of the governance and organisation.

Decision making – Transport Committee	• Has the power to make decisions within the remit as outlined in Terms of reference within the Constitution • Develops strategy, framework and policy proposals
Advisory Boards – with Members	• Offer guidance within their specialist area • Develop strategy, framework and policy proposals • Make recommendations to the HSCCA Board • Have representation from the HSCCA Members' constituent authorities on the board • Can have wider relevant representation
Advisory Boards - Independent	• Offer guidance and advice across their specialist area • Receive other relevant policy in development within the HSCCA for comment • Make recommendations to the HSCCA Board • Are independent of any HSCCA Board constituent authority
Investment Board	• Make recommendations to the HSCCA Board • Made up of HSCCA Officers with appropriate specialisms • Make decisions within parameters agreed by the HSCCA Board and by a nominated officer as outlined in the scheme of delegation.
Independent – Accountability	• Provide independent assurance that agreed frameworks and protocols are implemented, that decisions are made based on evidence, and that appropriate governance is being applied.

It is our intention that Advisory Boards and/or Committees within the governance framework have a Technical Officer Group (TOG) that provides technical expertise, support and guidance to help shape the policy and programme of the CCA. Not all advisory boards will have members on; however, in appointing members to advisory boards there may be no requirement for political balance if this is agreed by the HSCCA Board.

Four of the Advisory Boards or Committees relate directly to four of the nine areas of competence for the HSCCA. The other five areas of competence are not prescribed at this stage because arrangements will be developed by the HSCCA Board, and with engagement from relevant stakeholders, once the organisation has been legally established.

3.1.2 The Mayor

In May 2028 the first Mayor of the Combined County Authority will be directly elected by the region, on a manifesto of commitments and priorities. The Mayor executes certain powers and functions that have been devolved to HSCCA by the UK Government, to deliver their manifesto commitments and to enact functions reserved for the Mayor as detailed in the Combined County Authority Constitution and the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.

Once elected, the Mayor will assume the role of Chair of Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) and its Board. The Mayor will provide strategic leadership, including proposing a Mayoral budget for consideration as part of the Board's process for agreeing revenue and capital budgets. This role will ensure that resources are allocated appropriately and used effectively to deliver the Authority's priorities.

The Mayor can nominate Board Members for Portfolio Lead positions, nominations must be considered and approved by the Combined Authority Board. The Mayor can also appoint Commissioners.

Elections for the position of Mayor of the Combined County Authority are held every 4 years.
The government legislation that sets out Mayoral Powers is linked below:
English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament

The government has also provided a simple summary of Mayoral Strategic Authority responsibilities which helps explain where the mayor's powers extend beyond the responsibilities of the HSCCA as an organisation:
Devolution Framework Explainer - Mayoral Strategic Authorities

3.1.3 The HSCCA Board

The HSCCA Board will agree clear roles and responsibility for decision making on strategy and budgets, supported by a comprehensive governance framework. The Board will be responsible for:-

- Setting the strategic objectives, vision and agreeing the Corporate Plan
- Approving strategy, key policy and frameworks
- Approving the budgetary framework and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

The voting requirements are as set out in the Statutory Instrument that creates the HSCCA and the HSCCA Constitution.

At the first meeting of the Board a Chair and Vice-Chair will need to be elected. This will be a straightforward election from the Constituent Members present with each Constituent Member given one vote. Each person proposed for election as Chair or Vice Chair should be proposed by a Constituent Member (noting that this can be from the same constituent council as the nominee). Self-nominations are not permitted. Positions will be elected annually at the start of each municipal year on a simple majority basis.

3.1.4 Transport Committee

HSCCA can establish committees where it believes it in the interest to inform the efficient delivery of services. In the first instance it is intended to create a Transport Committee to enable wider involvement and interaction between the HSCCA and the individual Local Transport Authorities through the first two years of concurrent powers, that can help deliver key priorities. These authorities will remain Highways Authorities even when the HSCCA is the sole Local Transport Authority for the region, so collaborative working will remain integral to the successful delivery of transport functions.

The Transport Committee oversees the transport functions that are exercised concurrently, in accordance with and reflecting the requirements set out in the Statutory Instrument.

3.1.5 Member Advisory Boards

HSCCA will create Advisory Boards with Member representation for economic development and regeneration, skills and employment support and for planning as part of its governance framework. These arrangements will be confirmed and formally adopted at the inaugural meeting of the Combined County Authority following vesting.

The Planning Advisory Board will have representation from all Local Planning Authorities in the region, covering district and boroughs, all upper tier authorities and the two National Parks.

These Boards will have operational and delivery oversight of their relevant areas.

3.1.6 Business Advisory Board

The Business Advisory Board will be a business led board building on the Solent Growth Partnership Business Board and the Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Business Board. The Chair will be appointed through an open recruitment process and will be a non-voting Associate Member of the HSCCA Board. The Business Advisory Board will have a strong, independent and diverse local business voice. It will represent key sectors across Hampshire & the Solent, the different geographies and the different types of enterprises across the region.

The role of the BAB will be to provide advice and recommendations to the HSCCA Board, representing the perspective of business across the region. The focus of the BAB will be to inform HSCCA decisions and priorities by developing and shaping strategy on a range of topics relevant to the regions business base and its economic growth. The BAB will also play a role in sharing business intelligence to inform the HSCCA approach to relevant activity, including business support, skills development and delivery of digital and physical infrastructure. The BAB will also provide a forum for debate, highlighting issues affecting the business community that the HSCCA and in time the Mayor may need to address. The BAB may also be asked to comment on aspects of policy developed through other forums in the HSCCA.

In future the region's two Growth Hubs will be consolidated into the HSCCA, further cementing its role in providing holistic and consistent support to regional businesses.

The membership of the Business Advisory Board will be agreed through further engagement with the business community, the constituent councils and the mayor (once elected).

3.1.7 Investment Board

The Investment Board (IB) will be an officer only group chaired by the Chief Executive and will include the Section 73 officer as well as members of the HSCCA Executive Leadership Team. The relevant representatives from across the MCCA area will be invited to attend as contributors to the discussion. A nominated officer on the Investment Board will have decision making authority as determined by the scheme of delegation. It will ensure any statutory requirements are met when considering proposals and recommending or making delegated decisions. They will also ensure that these decisions are made/recommended with appropriate checks and balances particularly when assessing the merits of (potentially competing) business cases.

Investment decisions must be informed by and made within the strategic decision-making framework for investment, particularly the Local Growth Plan which will set out the Combined County Authority's investment priorities for the region and the benefits sought from them and the strategic priorities agreed between the HSCCA and government, against which investment impact will be measured. It is an objective of the Combined County Authority to develop its Local Growth Plan within year one, 2026/27 to provide the strategic framework for investment decisions.

The net impact of the overall programme of investments will be considered to ensure that projects work together when assessed cumulatively.

3.1.8 Statutory Officers

The HSCCA will appoint Statutory Officers as follows:

3.1.8.1 Head of Paid Service

At HSCCA the Chief Executive will fulfil the role of the Head of Paid Service. The Head of Paid Service discharges the functions in relation to the Combined Authority as set out in section 4, Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The duties and responsibilities of the post include but are not limited to:

- The statutory responsibilities of the Head of Paid Service to manage the budgets and funding allocations available to the Combined County Authority, in partnership with the S73 officer.
- Leading the Senior Leadership Team to deliver the strategic direction for the Combined County Authority as outlined by the Mayor and Board
- Co-ordinate strategy, development and delivery ensuring a joined-up partnership approach to deliver the aspirations of the Combined County Authority
- Champion the delivery of the strategic priorities of the Combined County Authority and its Strategic Framework and put in place the resources necessary to achieve the efficient and effective implementation of the HSCCAs programmes and policies across all services and the effective deployment of the authority's resources to those ends.
- Advise the Combined County Authority Mayor and its Board on all matters of general policy and matters upon which their advice is necessary, with the right attendance at Board and other meetings as appropriate.
- Advising the elected Mayor on the delivery of strategic priorities

- Represent the Combined County Authority at local, regional and national level in partnership with the Mayor.
- Act on advice given by the Monitoring Officer on any situations that could put the Combined County Authority in jeopardy of unlawfulness or maladministration.
- Seek to protect the Combined County Authority against any reputational risks.
- Exercise urgency powers to make decisions in emergency situations.
- The Chief Executive will Chair the Investment Board

3.1.8.2 Section 73 Officer

The Combined County Authority will appoint a statutory Chief Finance Officer (CFO) under section 73 of the Local Government Act 1985, to administer the financial affairs of the Combined County Authority.

The Section 73 officer is responsible for providing the final sign off for funding decisions.

The Section 73 Officer will be a member of the HSCCA Executive Leadership Team and have oversight and an ability to influence all major decisions of the Combined County Authority. They will ensure that the Combined County Authority has robust systems of internal controls and appropriate separation of duties to ensure the legality and probity of financial transactions.

These processes will be set out in the Combined County Authority's Financial Regulations and the Contract Standing Orders. Other policies such as the Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy will also be included in the Constitution and published on the HSCCA website.

3.1.8.3 Monitoring Officer

The HSCCA Monitoring Officer discharges the functions in relation to HSCCA as set out in section five of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Their responsibilities regarding the Assurance Framework are as follows:

- Providing advice on, and maintaining an up-to-date version of the Constitution and ensuring that it is widely available for consultation by members, employees, and the public
- After consulting with the Head of Paid Service and Section 73 Officer, report to the Authority if they consider that any proposal, decision, or omission would give rise to or has given rise to unlawfulness or maladministration. Such a report will have the effect of stopping the proposed decisions being implemented until the report has been formally considered by the Combined County Authority
- Ensuring that decisions, together with the reasons for those decisions and relevant officer reports and background papers are made publicly available as soon as possible
- Advising whether decisions are within budget and policy framework and whether any decisions or proposed decisions constitutes a key decision
- Providing advice on the scope of powers and authority to take decisions, maladministration, financial impropriety, probity and budget and policy framework issues to the Mayor (when elected), members and officers, and generally support and advise members and officers in their roles.

3.1.8.4 Other statutory roles

In addition to the three roles above, the HSCCA will have an appointed Scrutiny Officer and Data Protection Officer.

4 Checks and balances

4.1 Summary

HSCCA is committed to making decisions that are transparent, evidence-based, and outcome-driven. Recognising the importance of earning the trust and confidence of our communities, stakeholders and members, making sound decisions on the investment of public funds must be clear and accountable. All proposals and strategic initiatives requiring investment will be subject to rigorous appraisal processes that include robust data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and alignment with regional priorities.

Decision-making will be conducted in an open and transparent way in line with legal obligations, with clear documentation and rationale published to ensure public accountability in accordance with the HSCCA Constitution.

The Authority will apply consistent evaluation criteria to assess the potential impact, value for money, and long-term benefits of each intervention. By embedding these principles into its governance model, the HSCCA will ensure that resources are allocated effectively, outcomes are measurable, and decisions contribute to inclusive and sustainable long-term growth across the region.

The Combined County Authority's approach to Overview and Scrutiny will build upon the statutory guidance, the Scrutiny Protocol and guidance from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, and best practice from other Mayoral Combined Authorities.

4.2 Overview & Scrutiny arrangements

4.2.1 Overview and Scrutiny committee

This is a regulatory committee of the HSCCA. The role of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is to hold the HSCCA to account for all decisions taken, including devolved powers and funding. The Committee will have the power to review and scrutinise any decision made, or action taken by the HSCCA, or the Executive Management Team of the HSCCA.

The Committee is also responsible for ensuring the accountability of the HSCCA in the delivery of its policies, strategies and plans and ensuring that decision making is made in the best interests of residents and other stakeholders within the HSCCA area.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will play a central role in ensuring accountability and transparency. It is responsible for holding the Board to account for their decisions and performance.

The HSCCA must operate in accordance with the terms of reference and the Procedure Rules detailed in Part 5 of the Constitution.

The committee may appoint one or more sub-committees for the purpose of discharging any of the Committee's functions.

Members and councils can require items to be put on the agenda as outlined in paragraph 6 of The Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017

Membership and Chair:

- The Chair will not be a member of the same political party as the Chair of the HSCCA Board.
- Four representatives from Hampshire County Council.
- Two representatives from Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council.
- At least two representatives from the District and Borough councils.

The Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 requires that the majority of members come from the Constituent Councils and that the political balance of the committee should reflect the political balance of the Constituent Councils. It also requires the appointment of at least one independent member.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will undertake the following core responsibilities to fulfil its statutory functions:

- Hold the Lead Members, and the Combined County Authority Board to account for delivering agreed priority objectives
- Once elected, hold the Mayor and mayoral decision making to account.
- Conduct pre-decision scrutiny of proposals before Board decisions are taken.
- Exercise the Call-In power where decisions appear inconsistent with the principles of decision-making set out in the Constitution.
- Review policy when requested or where gaps/issues are identified through performance monitoring and accountability processes.
- Undertake strategic performance reviews of corporate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Hold focused sessions on cross-cutting issues or matters of significant public concern.
- Scrutinise budget proposals, including alignment and delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and associated consultations.
- Carry out deep-dive reviews or establish task-and-finish groups or working groups as required.

4.3 Governance and Audit

4.3.1 Governance & Audit Committee

The Governance and Audit Committee is a regulatory committee of the HSCCA. The Committee provides oversight and assurance of standards and the Constitution. It also provides oversight and assurance of governance, assurance, risk and supporting frameworks.

The Committee is responsible for enhancing public trust and confidence in the delivery of HSCCA functions and compliance with the HSCCA's core governance structures and Codes of Conduct.

The Combined County Authority must appoint a Governance and Audit Committee which will operate in accordance with these terms of reference and the procedure rules detailed in part 5 of the Constitution.

The functions of the Audit & Governance Committee will be to:

- Provide oversight and assurance of standards and the Constitution
- provide oversight and assurance on the Combined County Authority's financial affairs
- review and assess the Combined County Authority's risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements
- review and assess the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which resources have been used in discharging the Combined County Authority's functions
- make reports and recommendations to the Combined County Authority in relation to reviews conducted
- implement the obligation to ensure high standards of conduct of and amongst Members.

4.3.2 Internal audit

Internal Audit services will be established to provide a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. The internal audit provision will conform to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards which are intended to promote further improvement in the professionalism, quality, consistency and effectiveness of internal audit across the public sector.

4.3.3 External audit

It is a requirement for the Combined County Authority to have independent external auditors appointed. The audit landscape is changing for local government and the appointment of auditors will become the responsibility of the Local Audit Office once this is established in the coming year. The appointment of the external auditors will be undertaken by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA), (or its successor Local Audit Office) a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee incorporated by the Local Government Association (LGA) which operates independently of both the LGA and PSAA's sole member and guarantor (the Improvement & Development Agency (IDeA)) which is itself a subsidiary of the LGA.

PSAA is specified by government as an appointing person for principal local government and police bodies under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015. As such it both appoints auditors and sets the scale of audit fees for principal authorities (such as the Combined County Authority) who have opted into the National Scheme.

The role of the external auditors is to:

Express an opinion on:

- The Authority's financial statements for each financial year audited.
- Conclusions relating to going concern; and
- The consistency of other information published with the financial statements, including the narrative statement
- The authority's ability to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness on its use of resources

Reporting by exception:

- If the Governance Statement does not comply with relevant guidance or is not consistent with their understanding of the Authority
- If they identify a significant weakness in the Authority's arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- Any significant matters that are in the public interest.

4.4 Adult Skills

The Government will fully devolve the Consolidated Adult Skills Fund (CASF) to the Combined County Authority from the academic year 2027/28. The CCA will work with Government to ensure its preparedness through the use of the readiness checklist. The Governance structures, system, process, and policies that will be developed and implemented by Combined County Authority as the accountable and decision-making body, will provide the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) with confidence that it has in place all relevant infrastructure to effectively manage the processes and risks associated with the allocation of devolved Adult Skills funding, including accountability to:

- The public, via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee, including scrutiny of the accounts and local audit reports.
- The UK government - The Combined County Authority will also discharge, on an annual basis its responsibilities to devolved Adult Skills Funding as set out in the English Devolution Framework and produce an Annual Assurance Report alongside other yet to be agreed documents set out in the CASF devolution readiness checklist.

5 Transparency

5.1 Government and public accountability

5.1.1 Decision meetings and funding decisions

This Local Assurance Framework explains how the Authority will make sure that strong safeguards and standards are built into the way programmes and projects are developed and delivered. It also sets out how devolved funding will be managed carefully and in line with all legislative requirements.

Once the HSCCA is operational, it will put clear processes and controls in place to manage all funding properly. Many of these funds come from government grants and loans with specific conditions, and HSCCA will make sure those conditions are met. These arrangements will follow best practice and legal requirements, including the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

When funds are distributed to external parties, including through open competition, HSCCA will publish its decision-making criteria in advance to ensure transparency and fairness. Decisions about whether funding is managed directly by HSCCA or by external fund managers will be based on the terms of the funding agreements and an assessment of HSCCA's own capability and expertise.

In some cases, HSCCA may use funding to run investment programmes that generate a financial return. The returns may be reinvested into future programmes. These investment approaches may develop over the medium to long term, but they will always meet the minimum requirements set out in government funding agreements. Spending may be subject to internal and external audits to make sure public money is used lawfully, efficiently and effectively.

HSCCA will operate openly and in line with legal requirements and best practice. A schedule of meetings for each calendar year will be published on the HSCCA website.

Notices of meetings, along with agendas and papers for formal Board and Committee meetings, will be published at least five clear working days in advance.

Decision reports will be published in advance of meetings, and decision records will be published afterwards so that people can clearly see how and why decisions have been made. Where papers contain commercially sensitive information or fall under legal exemptions, they will not be published. The Monitoring Officer will advise on whether information should be treated as confidential.

5.1.2 Publication of other information

HSCCA commits to publish all relevant data in line with the local government transparency code 2015. This includes (but is not limited to): Expenditure over £500; procurement information on invitation to tender for contracts above £5,000; Grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations; the organisational structure chart and Pay Policy.

5.1.3 The HSCCA Constitution

The constitution sets out in detail how the HSCCA operates. It covers who is responsible for making decisions and how decisions are made, procedural matters (set out in the 'standing orders') the role of officers and standards and ethical governance. The constitution will be reviewed annual in line with good practice. A copy of the most recent constitution will be published on the HSCCA website: hantsandsolent-ca.gov.uk

5.2 Communication and engagement

The HSCCA is committed to regular and meaningful engagement and communication with partners, businesses and residents across the region. All communications will be accessible, transparent and factual, supporting residents to easily understand the work of HSCCA and how decisions are made. We will also promote public and stakeholder engagement and participation, giving partners and residents the opportunity to express their views and inform key decisions and future strategy development.

The HSCCA will develop and maintain a strategic communications and engagement plan that sets out the communications priorities for the organisation and the channels it will use to communicate. It will be developed with input from stakeholders, to understand their preferred means of communication and how they want to engage with the HSCCA on the issues that are important to them, ensuring accessibility considerations are met in line with the public sector equality duty.

Initially the primary channels for HSCCA communication will be:

- Website: Primary comprehensive source of information about the HSCCA, including FAQs
- Social media: SM accounts for the HSCCA to share news, updates and publicise events, and respond to residents' questions
- E-newsletter: Available for residents and partners to subscribe to
- Public meetings: Available to attend and watch online; reports published in advance of decision days

There will be an essential link between the Combined County Authority and the Upper Tier Local Authorities who have a responsibility for neighbourhood engagement that is being enhanced by the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026. The HSCCA will work with the Local Authorities across the region to obtain insights and hear the voices of local communities, and particularly hard to reach groups, that come through this route.

Stakeholder engagement will be central to decision-making in the Combined County Authority, with committees and advisory boards having responsibility to engage with stakeholders as appropriate to the work they do and the advice they develop for the HSCCA Board to consider.

The Combined County Authority has a website which will be an ongoing source of public information on the work of the Combined County Authority, its purpose and objectives and its progress. Residents will be able to sign up for newsletter updates from the HSCCA.

Appropriate social media accounts will be created for the HSCCA elected members and a social media plan will be created to build the HSCCA's organisational presence on social media channels (LinkedIn and Instagram initially). Residents will be able to interact with these accounts.

Wherever formal public consultation is required this will be published on the HSCCA website, including the results from the consultation once it has closed. The website will also provide the public with easy access to both current and past statutory and non-statutory consultations.

As part of public consultation and engagement, frequently asked questions will be published online and where relevant, the public will be able to submit questions. Details of public face-to-face consultation events held across the region, as well as online drop-in sessions, will also be

featured and promoted online. Recordings of these events will be made available online after they have taken place.

Where formal public consultation is not required, alternative public engagement activities may be used to ensure that the voice of the public is heard and fully considered.

When a mayor is elected, they will determine the way they wish to engage personally with other organisations and with local residents; this approach will be developed in preparation for when the mayor takes office, and in conjunction with the mayor. Other combined authorities have run virtual and face to face question and answer sessions with the mayor on a quarterly basis, and options like these will be recommended.

6 Financial management and assurance

6.1 The role of the Accountable Body

Hampshire and the Solent Mayoral Combined County Authority will be the Accountable Body for all funds and will be responsible for the proper administration and financial probity of all funds received.

The HSCCA will ensure the effective use of public money and have responsibility for the proper administration of funding received and its expenditure.

As the Accountable Body, the Combined County Authority will be responsible for overseeing policy, the prioritisation of funding, ensuring value for money, evaluating performance and managing risk.

The HSCCA will:

- Hold investment programme funds and make payments in accordance with the decisions of the HSCCA or relevant decision-making body.
- Ensure that funding is approved and allocated in a manner that is lawful, transparent, evidence-based, consistent and proportionate.
- Ensure that the decisions and activities conform to the legal requirements with regard to procurement, subsidy control, equality and diversity (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), environmental regulations and other relevant legislation and guidance.
- Ensure through its s.73 officer that the funds are being used appropriately, prudently and are in accordance with decisions made by the HSCCA or relevant decision-making body, or through delegation, together with adherence to relevant guidance/legislation for the intended purpose.
- Record and maintain the official record of formal meetings relating to decisions made on all investment projects.
- Should a decision relating to funding not conform to this assurance framework, e.g., not meeting legal requirements or representing inappropriate use of funds, then the Combined County Authority, as accountable body, will not action this decision
- Set its budget each year in line with the agreed timetable to ensure UTLA's can include the requirements in their annual budget setting and any mayoral precept can be included in council tax bills as per final date for receiving these bills.

6.1.1 Funding of the HSCCA

Capacity funding has been agreed with central Government to cover the financial years 2025/6-2028/9.

In addition, the Mayor has powers to issue a precept and impose a levy, and the HSCCA has powers to borrow. In practice it is expected that the running costs of the HSCCA will be met by either continued central government support through capacity funding, the investment fund, the mayoral precept and/or alternate investment sources. Government's expectation is that the role of Accountable Body for the Freeport will transfer to the HSCCA within two years of its establishment; the Freeport has its own funding stream from Retained Business Rates.

The significant costs associated with major projects and schemes across the HSCCA footprint may be funded from other sources. The HSCCA has powers to borrow whilst significant funding needed for the HSCCA/Mayor will be provided by Government for the next thirty years. Government has committed to investment of £44.6 million per year for the next 30 years into the region through the Mayor/HSCCA on the basis of an equal split between revenue and capital investment.

The general powers the HSCCA has around finance and funding are expected to be substantially the same as local authorities. The section 73 officer will play a key role in and must (taken from CIPFA's Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government):

- be a key member of the leadership team, helping it to develop and implement strategy and to resource and deliver the organisation's strategic objectives sustainably and in the public interest
- be actively involved in, and able to bring influence to bear on, all material business decisions to ensure immediate and longer-term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered, and alignment with the organisation's financial strategy
- lead the promotion and delivery by the whole organisation of good financial management so that public money is safeguarded at all times and used appropriately, economically, efficiently and effectively.

To deliver these responsibilities the CFO:

  - must lead and direct a finance function that is resourced to be fit for purpose
  - must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced

- **Annual budget:** After the first year (2026/27) an annual budget setting out planned expenditure and sources of funding will be approved by the HSCCA board annually in February. This will include setting the level of any relevant precept or local levies. The Section 73 officer has a duty to ensure that this budget is both balanced and robust and in line with the operating principles set out above.
- **Monitoring of spend** against the annual budget will be carried out and reported at least quarterly to the HSCCA board. This reporting will include mitigating actions to address any forecast overspends.
- A **capital programme**, including planned schemes and funding sources will be presented annually as part of the budget setting process. Regular reporting of spend on the capital programme will also be provided to the HSCCA board.
- **Controls:** The specific controls over expenditure, including mechanisms for changing planned budgets and delegations governing spend will be covered in the detailed financial regulations and scheme of delegation of the HSCCA. No officer of the HSCCA has the delegated power to incur an overspend against any budget.
- **Recharges from Constituent Authorities** – recharges from Constituent Authorities will be specifically identified as part of the annual budget setting process and must be agreed by all Constituent Authorities. Should a change to any recharge be needed outside of the budget setting cycle, this must be agreed by all Constituent Authorities.
- **Submission of proposals** – the annual plan for setting the HSCCA budget will identify key deadlines for the submission of proposals for consideration in the forward year budget and capital programme. Generally, decision making on major proposals is expected to follow this

annual cycle, to provide clarity, to allow comparison between proposals and to assess the impact of the overall revenue budget and capital programme in delivering the HSCCA's responsibilities and priorities.

- **In year variations to the programme** – there may be exceptional opportunities that do not fit the standard annual approach. These opportunities will need to be considered and approved formally by the HSCCA via a vote in the same way as the annual budget. The same approval levels and rigour of business case will be needed for in-year proposals as those set out as part of the annual budget setting process.
- **Commitments that exist prior to establishment –** there will be occasion where commitments against grant funding have been made when setting budgets for the year prior to establishment of the organisation. In order to allow the UTLA's to set their budgets, all funding related to these schemes will be passported to the UTLA's. This particularly applies to transport and highways maintenance funding. The MCCA will not be liable for any overspends to schemes that are related to this funding.

6.2 Value for Money

The HSCCA will ensure that all decisions, expenditure and investments deliver value for money and contribute to the strategic priorities of the region. All proposals will be subject to proportionate assessment to ensure that funds are used lawfully, transparently, and efficiently, and that the benefits of each intervention are clearly demonstrated.

Value for money considerations will apply throughout the project lifecycle. Business cases must follow national guidance, including the HM Treasury Green Book and any relevant departmental frameworks, and must show clear strategic alignment, affordability, deliverability, and expected outcomes. Independent appraisal will provide assurance that proposals are robust, evidence-based and represent appropriate use of public resources.

The value for money assessment considers the potential costs, benefits, risks, uncertainties and impacts. A Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) will be calculated for the project wherever possible, this is one of a number of metrics considered in the assessment. All the wider monetised and non-monetised impacts and benefits of a project are quantified wherever possible and non-quantifiable benefits will be assessed qualitatively. Non-monetised costs and disbenefits will also be qualitatively assessed.

Decisions will be taken within the governance and financial framework of the HSCCA, with the Investment Board and Section 73 Officer ensuring that assessments of cost, benefit, risk and long-term impact are fully considered. Where appropriate, the HSCCA may approve schemes that provide wider strategic benefits, provided the rationale is clearly set out and consistent with the Assurance Framework.

Monitoring and evaluation arrangements will ensure that delivery remains on track and that projects continue to provide value for money. Where underperformance is identified, projects may be subject to enhanced scrutiny, mitigating actions, clawback or re-profiling in line with HSCCA governance processes.

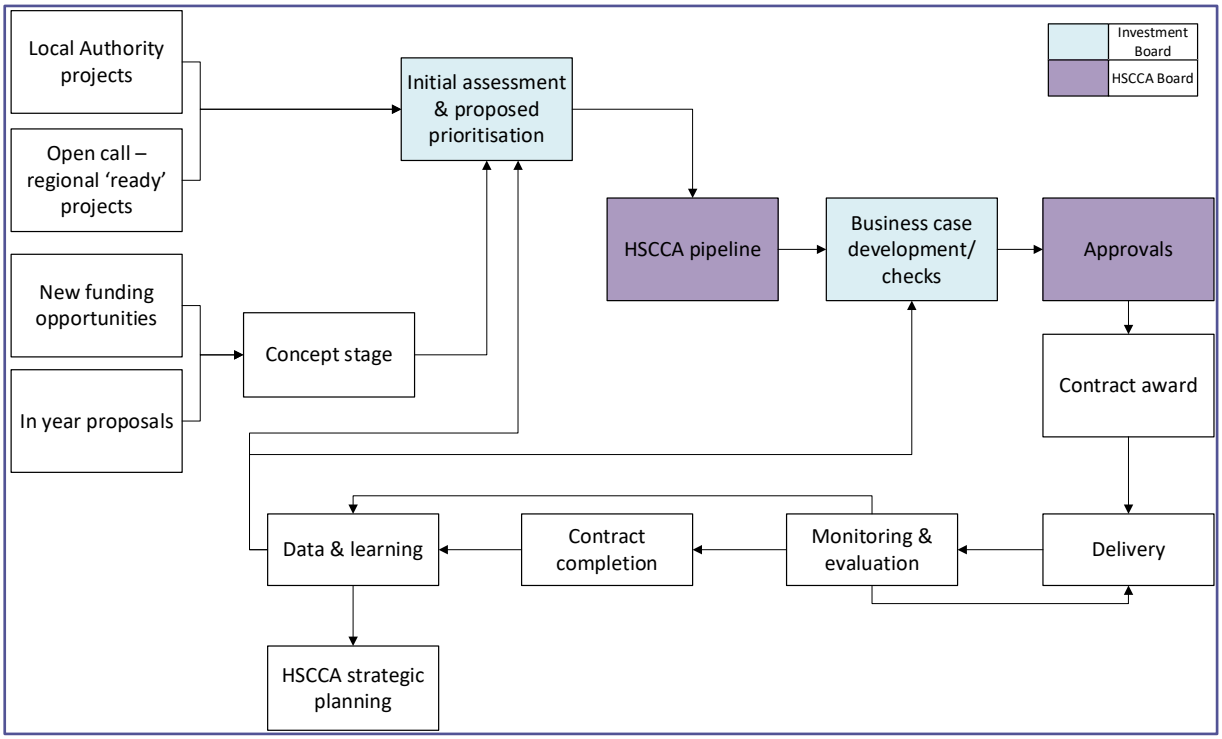
7 Project management and assurance

7.1 Introduction

The P3 model of project management (Project, Programme, Portfolio) is adopted as part of the overall project framework. This section outlines complementary project lifecycle approaches designed to guide projects funded by HSCCA. Our approaches align with established sequential/waterfall approach and with more flexible project management methodologies such as Agile or hybrid methods such as Iterative or Spiral (promoting risk-based decisions), allowing for flexibility while ensuring certainty, rigorous governance, and accountability throughout the project lifecycle. The approach employed will be dependent on the type of project, and in every event will embed critical assurance checks, return on investment (ROI) assessments, and clear success criteria essential for sustainable and impactful investment.

HSCCA will follow the Government's approach to project delivery The Teal Book - Government Project Delivery.

The diagram outlining the approach to year 1 is shown below. This will evolve as HSCCA becomes operational, with a continuous data and learning loop throughout the project pipeline and management process.



7.1.1 Project identification and initiation

For a project or programme to form part of the HSCCA pipeline, there are a number of entry routes:-

In year 1

a. Existing Local Authority projects that are unfunded or have a funding gap and meet the prioritisation criteria
b. Open call for regional 'ready' projects
c. New funding opportunities
d. In-year proposals

Year 2 onwards

a. Inclusion in the Corporate Plan
b. New funding opportunities
c. Open call/Expression of interests
d. In-year proposals

7.1.2 Project assessment and prioritisation

Initial feasibility assessments will be used at the concept stage to confirm strategic fit, project relevance, initial assessment and readiness to proceed to the pipeline and potential business case development.

To be considered part of the HSCCA pipeline, projects will be initially appraised against the criteria below, more details can be found in Appendix A.

Project assessment criteria for 2026/27 – 2027/28	
Strategic alignment	Projects must align to one or more of the seven areas of competence
Wider economic impacts	Considerations of the wider impact on the regional economy
Social impacts	Articulation of positive social and environmental impacts
Place-based impacts	Impact on the location itself
Deliverability	Clarity around all delivery aspects including timescales
Collaboration and engagement	Levels of engagement/consultation to date and/or plans to include further engagement.
Leverage	Potential additional financial benefits that could be leveraged as a result.
Additionality	What is the impact of funding on project delivery, benefits realisation etc.
Equalities	Compliance with obligations under the Equality Act 2010
Value for money	Any project must be able to demonstrate the potential for positive return on investment from the concept stage.

Once the Local Growth Plan is adopted this will define agreed outcomes against which all projects and potential projects will be assessed. In the interim HSCCA will establish an economic framework to support decision making criteria.

The project pipeline will be reviewed quarterly with a formal annual review aligned to the budget process. Subject to available resources (funding and otherwise), there will be flexibility to introduce new projects during the year should opportunities arise.

7.1.3 Business cases

All business cases will be completed using HSCCA business case templates and adhere to the HMT five case model as follows:

Five case model	Description
Strategic case	The strategic case sets out the rationale for the proposal; it makes a compelling case for change at a strategic level. It should set out the background to the proposal and explain how the project provides fit with the HSCCA strategic objectives, as well as any relevant local and/or national strategic priorities.
Economic case	The economic case is the essential core of the business case and should be prepared according to HMT's Green Book guidance. This section of the business case assesses the economic costs and benefits of the proposal to society as a whole, and spans the entire period covered by the proposal.
Commercial case	The commercial case is concerned with issues of commercial feasibility and sets out to answer the question "can the proposed solution be effectively delivered through a workable commercial deal or deals?". The first question therefore is what procurement does the proposal require, is it crucial to delivery, and what is the procurement strategy?
Financial case	The financial case is concerned with issues of affordability, and sources of budget funding. It covers the lifespan of the scheme and all attributable costs. The case needs to demonstrate that funding has been secured and that it falls within appropriate spending and settlement limits.
Management case	The management case is concerned with the deliverability of the proposal and is sometimes referred to as a programme management or project management case. It confirms that the capacity is available and proportionate to the delivery requirements. The management case must clearly set out management responsibilities and governance and reporting arrangements. If it does not, then the business case is not yet complete. The Senior Responsible Officer should be identified.

A proportionate approach will be taken to the development of business cases and the overall level of appraisal to reflect the financial ask and risk levels. Early engagement with the appropriate officers will be key to ensure any recommendations can be addressed and business cases can be updated within the timescales agreed.

7.1.4 Appraisal and assurance

The operating model of the HSCCA is designed to build healthy tensions between areas to ensure appropriate levels of check and challenge. The model includes the development of an analysis and assurance team, with the capacity to have an independent call off panel for use where appropriate. Assessment will follow HM Treasury's Green Book guidance and relevant departmental frameworks (e.g., Department for Transport's TAG for transport projects).

The S73 officer, along with the Investment Board will have a lead role in appraising value for money (VfM), risk exposure, and strategic fit, with reports signed off by designated finance officers and through the agreed governance process.

For transport schemes, business cases will use the templates and approach provided in DfT guidance. For these purposes, a transport scheme is defined as any scheme that significantly changes the transport network infrastructure, whatever its objectives. Details are provided in Appendix B.

7.1.5 Approval and funding allocation

The Investment Board will recommend funding allocation for projects based on the prioritisation criteria. In the first instance all funding decisions will be made through the HSCCA Board. Over time and within agreed parameters, some decisions will be delegated to a nominated officer through the scheme of delegation.

Successful projects will receive written confirmation of funding allocation stipulating:

- Financial profiles and expenditure schedule.
- Output and outcome milestones.
- Monitoring and evaluation obligations.

All project funding will be logged on a central database.

7.1.6 Delivery monitoring and control

Regular highlight reporting and RAG-rated issue tracking will be undertaken. The programme management system will track:-

- Progress against milestones, resources and spend.
- Risk status with escalation procedures for projects at risk of underperformance.
- Benefits tracking, and realisation.

All project delivery is expected to follow the agreed project governance, and project assurance audits will form a regular part of our internal audit plan (determined both by regularity of review and risk).

Underperforming projects (including those at risk of slippage/underperformance) will be subject to a more rigorous process, with mitigating actions being tracked to assure improvement. Once agreed thresholds have been determined, projects or programmes falling outside these will be escalated to the Investment Board for review.

A communications and engagement plan will be developed as standard for each project, with appropriate mechanisms for communicating openly to stakeholder groups including public updates.

7.1.7 Risk management framework

Risk identification, assessment, and treatment are integrated into project, programme and portfolio levels, based on the HMT Orange Book principles.

Regular reporting to Audit and Governance and to the Main HSCCA Board will ensure transparency and continuous improvement in risk handling.

7.1.8 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Combined Authority will develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework in line with HMT's Green and Magenta Books. It will ensure:

- Consistent, locally defined reporting to the Leadership Team
- Proportionate and meaningful evaluation
- Data collected once and reused across key documents
- Consistent baselines for initiatives
- Monitoring and evaluation embedded in all activities
- Lessons learned inform future policy and projects

All funded schemes will have to include an M&E Plan at the business case stage. Plans will set out how objectives, outcomes, and impacts will be measured and meet both local and government requirements (such as DfT Local Authority Major Schemes Guidance and TAG Unit E-1 evaluation). They will follow relevant guidance and be signed off through governance processes.

M&E ensures accountability to the public and government, demonstrates impact, supports reinvestment decisions, and builds an evidence base for future funding. Outputs and outcomes will be published for transparency.

Lessons learned will be reported to the Board and published where appropriate. The M&E Framework will complement the Assurance Framework, providing a consistent and streamlined approach

- Monitoring and evaluation plans underpin all projects with clear success criteria based on strategic objectives, defined financial and non-financial benefits, and delivery outcomes.
- Lessons learned will be captured and appropriately disseminated throughout the project lifecycle with a formal project closure gateway ensuring that these inform future investment decisions and policy refinements, building continuous enhancement of programme effectiveness.
- Project closure may occur months or years before benefits are fully realised. Benefits tracking mechanisms will be implemented to ensure that long term benefits realisation is monitored and integral to the HSCCAs reporting.

A full project management framework will be developed within the first six months of operation.

7.2 Transport projects

For transport schemes, business cases will use the latest DfT guidance. For these purposes, a transport scheme is defined as any scheme that significantly changes the transport network infrastructure or its operation, whatever its objectives.

For all transport infrastructure schemes, the HSCCA will ensure that modelling and appraisal is sufficiently robust and fit for purpose for the scheme under consideration. This will be achieved

by following all aspects of the DfT's TAG process and by verification from the externally independent Transport Assurance Panel.

To ensure that the scope of the business case meets the requirements of relevant funding streams, those involving Transport will ensure that project business cases will be developed in accordance with DfT requirements and that those projects are managed in delivery to the same standards.

Value for Money (VfM) will be assessed based on the HM Treasury Five case model, DfT TAG for transport appraisal and the DfT's value for money framework

The Combined County Authority will retain the flexibility to exceptionally approve transport schemes with lower NPSV/BCR having regard to specific circumstances such as:

- The ability of the scheme to address multiple Combined County Authority policy objectives.
- Significant levels of match funding being provided by the scheme promoter and/or third parties.
- Unlocks a major development site.
- Stimulates significant land value uplift which can subsequently be captured.
- Where an overall scheme has multiple parts and one element has a low NPSV/BCR but is part of a wider overall scheme that can evidence a 'high' BCR as a minimum.

All justifications will be clearly set out in reports to the Combined County Authority or at the point of decision making. The recommendations to the Combined County Authority or relevant decision-making Board will clearly explain the rationale for approving a scheme with medium or worse value for money, and the implications of the recommendation.

8 Organisational policy framework

As an organisation committed to good governance assurance and to ensure our corporate assurance and annual governance statement is grounded in a solid organisational framework, HSCCA will establish a robust policy framework and internal assurance mechanism with the first phase ready for operational establishment.

Appendix A – Project assessment criteria

Project assessment criteria for 20026-27-2027/28	

Strategic alignment	○ Projects must align to one or more of the nine areas of competence for the Combined Authority, which are: Transport; Housing and Strategic Planning; Economic Development and Regeneration; Skills and Employment Support; Health and Wellbeing and Public Service Reform; Public Safety; Environment and Net Zero; Culture; Rural affairs and coastal communities.
	○ Where proposals support more than one area of competence this should be highlighted.
	○ To what extent does the project deliver benefits aligned to these e.g. value (permanent) and number of jobs directly created or safeguarded; delivery of skills outcomes such as learner completions; apprenticeships aligned to regional economic needs, etc.
	○ Does the project demonstrate how it contributes to the CCA's strategic areas of competence?
	○ Does the project align to relevant existing local, regional or national plans or strategies e.g. the Modern Industrial Strategy; Local Skills Improvement Plans; adopted Local Transport Plans?
	○ Estimated scales and levels of impact:
	  ○ Local: (catchment scale <5 km and/or population affected <50,000)
	  ○ Sub-regional: catchment scale 5km-30km and/or population affected 50,000 - 500,000
	  ○ Regional: catchment scale >30km, and/or population affected >500,000

Wider economic impacts	○ What is the wider impact on the regional economy? i.e. will the project help unlock or bring forward other development sites or economic activity; will it help grow priority sectors; spill over benefits to other companies in the local/regional supply chain; induced benefits. ○ How, and to what extent does the project reduce or mitigate economic deprivation in the region?
Social impacts	○ To what extent will the project have wider social or environmental benefits to the region? E.g. health benefits, climate change mitigations, natural environment enhancement and protections ○ What are the scale of its positive impacts in terms of population benefits? ○ To what extent does the project reduce or mitigate other aspects of deprivation? E.g. lack of access to public transport; affordable housing; support into employment.

Place-based impacts	○ To what extent will the project have a positive impact on its location? E.g. reach across multiple wards or districts; improved connectivity; safer public spaces
Deliverability	Projects must demonstrate they are deliverable in the identified timescale. Considerations include: ○ Clear proposals with a defined set of outcomes and the ability to achieve those in full for the funding sought ○ Robust project management arrangements including governance and resourcing ○ Adequate risk identification, mitigation and proposed management ○ The extent to which planning conditions are in place and any planning conditions have been resolved (if applicable) ○ Adequate financial forecasting and contingency ○ The financial standing of delivery partners ○ Credible plans for meeting any outstanding requirements to enable the project to proceed, and a clear start date
Collaboration and engagement	○ Projects will be assessed to determine whether customers, residents and other stakeholders have been effectively engaged to date? Does the project achieve benefits from collaboration between partners
Leverage	○ To what extent will the project unlock further private investment or attract more public funding from sources other than the HSCCA? ○ What is the scale of the funding that is expected to be leveraged from other sources?
Additionality	○ To what extent will the project's benefits be realised without the funding (deadweight) and how is this minimised? ○ What is the impact of the funding on speed of project delivery and benefits realisation? ○ To what extent will the project shift economic activity from other areas (displacement) and how is this minimised?
Equalities	○ Projects will need to demonstrate compliance with the obligations under the Equality Act 2010, particularly the impact of project proposals on groups with protected characteristics. ○ An Equalities Impact Assessment form would need to be completed.
Value for money	○ Any project must be able to demonstrate the potential for positive return on investment from the concept stage.

Appendix B - Transport process and governance

Scope

A transport scheme is defined as any scheme that significantly changes the transport network infrastructure or its operation whatever its objectives.

- All transport capital and revenue programmes funded or endorsed by HSCCA.
- Strategy, pilot initiatives, and operational changes (e.g. Enhanced Partnerships or franchising).
- Major schemes (e.g. new bus rapid transit corridors), medium schemes (e.g. junction improvements), and minor/localised interventions (e.g. stops/ shelters, wayfinding, safety enhancements).

Principles

- Value for Money (VfM): Decisions based on the HM Treasury Five Case Model and DfT TAG for transport appraisal.
- Transparency & Accountability: Public documentation and clear lines of approval, with scrutiny and robust audit trails.
- Inclusivity & Accessibility: Apply Public Sector Equality Duty, inclusive design standards, and statutory consultation.
- Net Zero & Resilience: Prioritise decarbonisation, air quality, safety, and climate resilience.
- Proportionality & Pace: Streamlined processes for low-risk interventions; deeper assurance for major/novel projects.
- Consistent Standards: Harmonised technical standards across Hampshire & Solent for data, design, and procurement.

Governance & Roles

Transport Committee for the transition period until 8th May 2028

- Has the power to make decisions within the remit as outlined in Terms of reference within the Constitution;
- The HSCCA may establish committees where it believes it in the interest to inform the efficient delivery of services.
- The Transport Committee oversees transport functions exercised concurrently, reflecting the requirements of the Statutory Instrument.

Technical Officer Groups

- As established by the HSCCA

Transport Assurance Panel (Independent):

- Multidisciplinary experts external to HSCCA covering the following disciplines - economics/appraisal, engineering, operations, equality/accessibility, environmental/air quality, safety, digital/ITS, commercial/procurement.
- Provides independent review at stage gates; advisory but recorded.
- This panel would be analytical in nature, providing expert input on best practice, policy, design, implementation, procurement etc.

Overview & Scrutiny:

- Interrogates key decisions and ensures transparency.

Audit & Risk:

- Oversees risk management, internal audit findings, control improvements.

Programme Management Office (PMO):

- Operates the framework, maintains scheme pipeline, stage-gates, dashboards, reporting, lessons learned.

Delivery Partners:

- Constituent councils, transport operators, Network Rail, National Highways, Active Travel England (ATE), Bus Centre of Excellence, Freeport bodies, universities/businesses.

Scheme Pipeline Management

Stages:

The stages below will follow HMT's Green Book process of establishing a rationale for change, defining critical success factors and generating a longlist of options.

1. Pipeline**:** Log proposals, confirm policy fit (e.g. Local Transport Plan, BSIP, decarbonisation strategy, safety targets).
2. Prioritisation: Score against the HSCCA objectives (VfM, carbon, inclusion, reliability, deliverability, network resilience, place-shaping).
3. Resourcing: Assign Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), sponsor, and delivery team.
4. Programme Alignment**:** Integrate with city/borough plans, utilities, streetworks, and operator timetables.
5. Business Case Development

Outputs:

- Scheme Pipeline register; prioritisation matrix; indicative funding allocation; high-level risk & dependency map.

Appraisal & Value for Money (VfM)

- All aspects of the DfT's TAG process will be followed for all schemes, covering demand, time savings, reliability, user benefits, wider impacts, safety, environment, and distributional effects.
- The VfM category will be stated in all appraisals.
- Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Accessibility Appraisal.
- Additional information eg. Cost saving categories, may also be relevant, especially for situations where revenue exceeds costs.

Risk, Dependencies & Controls

- Integrated Risk Register: Design, construction, statutory approvals, funding, operator participation, technology integration, communications.
- Gateway Reviews: Proportionate review for major schemes.
- Change Control: Documented change requests with cost/time/benefit implications; approval thresholds aligned to scheme size.

- Contingency & In-Year Flexibility: Programme-level management to re-profile and optimise outcomes.
- Stakeholder Management: Utilities, Network Rail possessions, highway authorities, data feeds (RTI).

Procurement & Commercial

- Compliant with Public Contracts Regulations, concession rules, and local standing orders.
- Use frameworks where efficient.
- Market engagement and testing prior to procurement to test deliverability and innovation.
- Enhanced Partnership (EP) / Franchising implications: define operator roles, service standards, data obligations, performance regimes, revenue risk.
- Contract Management: KPIs eg, linked to contractors performance, journey time reliability, patronage, customer satisfaction

Funding, Finance & Affordability

- Confirm funding certainty, cash flow, and match funding.
- Lifecycle cost coverage (maintenance, operations, renewals).
- Revenue support guardrails (time-limited, tapering, trigger points for change).
- S73 and s151 statement on affordability and compliance with Managing Public Money.

Benefits, Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

The Combined Authority will develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan in line with HMT's Green and Magenta Books and DfT's Local Authority Major Schemes Benefits Management and Evaluation Framework.

Monitoring and evaluation will be embedded from the outset of programme and scheme delivery. Transport metrics will align with the Department for Transport's Local Transport Outcomes Framework, with each programme and scheme including the relevant metrics within its specific M&E plan.

This approach will ensure:

- consistent and defined reporting to the HSCCA TOG and Committee
- proportionate and meaningful evaluation
- consistent data sets across key documents
- consistent baselines
- monitoring and evaluation embedded in all transport activities
- lessons learnt to inform future policy and scheme development

All projects and programmes will adopt a proportionate monitoring and evaluation approach, planned from the earliest stages. Funded schemes will submit a M&E plan at business case stage, ensuring that evaluation objectives are directly linked to the business case. Plans will set out baseline data, monitoring cadence, objectives, outcomes and impacts and evaluation methodology. They will be aligned with local and Government requirements, including DfT Local Authority Major Schemes Guidance and TAG Unit E-1 evaluation standards.

Schemes over £5m will follow DfT evaluation requirements and all plans will be signed off through established governance processes.

HSCCA will apply a tiered approach to transport monitoring and evaluation to ensure proportionality while meeting national expectations for evidence of outcomes and value for money. Thresholds and methodologies will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain appropriate and effective. Monitoring and evaluation will also align with the Risk Management framework to ensure timely identification and mitigation of delivery risks.

All transport programmes and schemes will be categorised into one of three tiers at the earliest appropriate stage. The assigned tier determines the minimum monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements, though evaluations should always be tailored to the characteristics of each scheme.

M&E ensures accountability to the public and government, demonstrates impact, supports reinvestment decisions, and builds an evidence base for future funding. Outputs and outcomes will be published for transparency.

Lessons learned will be reported to the Board and published where appropriate. The M&E Framework complements the Assurance Framework, providing a consistent and streamlined approach

Statutory Compliance & Standards

- Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), planning, environmental consents, Equality Act duties, bus lane enforcement legality, safety standards (DfT, LTN guidance where appropriate).
- Design Standards: e.g. Inclusive mobility (DfT), BS 8300, tactile paving guidance, LTN 1/20 for cycling.
- Security/Safety: Safeguarding principles for stations/stops, road safety audits.

Communications, Engagement & Stakeholder Management

- Stakeholder Map: Operators, passenger groups, disability forums, businesses, universities, health sector, schools, freight, taxi/private hire, parish/town councils.
- Consultation Plans: Statutory and non-statutory, accessible formats, iterative engagement.
- Public Transparency: Publish pipeline, business case summaries, decisions, performance dashboards.

Appraisal

The assessment requirement will be proportionate to the scale of the investment as set out in the table below:

Scale of Scheme	Business Case Assessment
< £500,000	Business Justification Case
£500k - £2.5m	Single Case (FBC)
2.5m - £5m	Strategic Outline Case (SOC), Outline Business Case (OBC) and then Full Business Case (FBC)
> £5m	Strategic Outline Case (SOC), Outline Business Case (OBC) and then Full Business Case (FBC) + Risk & Investment Appraisal

Appendix C – Consolidated Adult Skills Funding

This appendix is set out to demonstrate readiness for the devolution of the Adult Skills Budget to the HSCCA. The following is set out to apply following the successful devolution of the Adult Skills Budget. The Consolidated Adult Skills Fund (CASF) will be fully devolved to Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority once it has met the readiness conditions set by the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP).

1. The Governance structures, system, process, and policies that will be developed and implemented by the Combined County Authority as the accountable and decision-making body, will provide the DWP with confidence that it has in place all relevant infrastructure to effectively manage the process and risks associated with the allocation of devolved Adult Skills Fund funding, including accountability to:

    - the public, via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee, including scrutiny of the accounts and local audit reports.
    - the UK government. The Combined County Authority will also discharge, on an annual basis its responsibilities to devolved Consolidated Adult Skills Funding as set out in the English Devolution Framework and produce an Annual Assurance Report alongside other yet to be agreed document such as an Consolidated Adult Skills Fund (CASF) Assurance Framework document, including project appraisal and value for money processes.

2. The following Annex is set out to demonstrate readiness for the devolution of the Adult Skills Budget to the HSCCA. The following is set out to apply following the successful devolution of the Adult Skills Budget.

    Adult Skills: Following devolution of the Consolidated ASF

3. All investment decisions made in relation to this funding will be undertaken having considered:

    - Statutory duties relating to adult education and training which have been transferred to the Combined County Authority under the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Act and any relevant Statutory Instruments.
    - Statutory entitlements to education and training of adults living in the HSCCA devolved area, and policy entitlements where relevant.
    - Statutory and non-statutory guidance.

4. The CASF Strategic Skills Plan will set out the strategic vision and priorities for CASF skills funding and provision. There will be an implementation plan that provides clear direction of how devolved funds should be commissioned. The CASF Strategic Skills Plan will support the Local Growth Plan (when developed), Corporate and Investment Plans as well as key priorities in the region's Local Skills and Improvement Plans (LSIPs).

Annual Assurance Report

5. The Combined County Authority will produce an Annual Assurance Report on the delivery of its Consolidated Adult Skills Fund functions in line with wider monitoring and evaluation requirements and the English Devolution Accountability Framework. This will be reported to DWP by 31 January each year and published in line with EDAF requirements on the HSCCA website.

6. The Combined County Authority will also submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the DWP in July each year following consideration by the Skills & Employment Committee.

Funding Requirements

7. HSCCA will publish its Funding & Performance Management Rules specific for each academic year. This document will set out the conditions of ASF funding and apply to all providers who receive CASF funding from the Combined County Authority.

Stakeholder Engagement

8. HSCCA will regularly consult with its key stakeholders, including learning organisations and learners, in order to best inform policy direction and decision making.

Local Skills Implementation Plan (LSIP) and Get Hampshire and Solent Working Plans

9. Alongside the CASF Strategic Skills Plan, LSIPs will also set out the current and future skills needs of the region and how local provision can help people develop the skills they need to get good jobs and increase their prospects. HSCCA will work with the designated Employer Representative Bodies (ERB's) across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, utilising and sharing local labour market intelligence and analysis to inform the commissioning approach for CASF. HSCCA will also ensure that the CASF responds to the employer feedback contained within the LSIPs for our region. Additionally, the regional Get Hampshire Working and Get Solent Working Plans set out regional plans for increasing skills and addressing barriers to increase access to quality, sustained employment and will also be considered as part of the HSCCA approach to Adult Skills and Employment Support,

Monitoring and Evaluation

10. The Consolidated Adult Skills Fund budget reporting will operate in line with the English Devolution Accountability Framework; it will be included within HSCCA monitoring and evaluation submissions as required under the devolution agreement. The Combined County Authority will submit required policies for adult education; these are required as part of the readiness conditions and will be published as part of the commissioning process.
11. The Combined County Authority's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework will be used for the Consolidated Adult Skills Fund Budget activity. It will meet the national requirements together with locally determined requirements so that it can be used to inform and shape the criteria for future funding awards. This formal evaluation is undertaken on an annual basis.

Assurance

12. The Combined County Authority is responsible for assuring the use of funds by all learning organisations delivering the Consolidated Adult Skills Fund budget. Wider assurance includes internal controls such as provider performance management and monitoring, risk management and quality assurance reviews.

Hampshire and the Solent
COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY

Data Protection Policy

Document Control

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Table of Contents

Document Control 2
1. Purpose 4
2. Scope 4
3. Data Protection Principles 4
4. Lawful Bases for Processing 4
5. Data Subject Rights 5
6. Data Collection and Use 5
7. Data Security 5
8. Data Breaches 5
9. Data Sharing and Third Parties 6
10. Data Retention 6
11. Roles and Responsibilities 6
12. Training and Awareness 6
13. Monitoring and Review 6
14. Contact 7

1. Purpose

1.1. The purpose of this Data Protection Policy is to ensure that Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) processes personal data in full compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, following the standards and expectations set out by the ICO. This policy establishes how we collect, use, store, protect, and dispose of personal data.

2. Scope

2.1. This policy applies to:

- All employees, contractors, volunteers, members and temporary colleagues
- All personal data processed by the organisation, whether digital, paper-based, or stored in any other format
- All systems, processes, and activities involving personal data

3. Data Protection Principles

3.1 In line with ICO best practice, Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority commits to processing personal data according to the following principles:

- Lawfulness, fairness, transparency — We process data only where a lawful basis exists and provide clear information to individuals.
- Purpose limitation — Data is collected for specific, explicit, and legitimate purposes.
- Data minimisation — We collect only the data necessary for our operations.
- Accuracy — We keep data accurate and up to date.
- Storage limitation — We retain data only for as long as necessary.
- Integrity and confidentiality — We ensure appropriate security of personal data.
- Accountability — We maintain records and evidence of compliance.

4. Lawful Bases for Processing

4.1 We process personal data under one or more lawful bases defined by the UK GDPR, including:

- Consent
- Contractual necessity
- Legal obligation
- Vital interests
- Public task (if applicable)
- Legitimate interests

Where consent is used, it is:

- Freely given
- Specific
- Informed
- Unambiguous
- Easy to withdraw

5. Data Subject Rights

5.1 In accordance with ICO guidance, individuals have the right to:

- Access their personal data
- Rectify inaccurate data
- Erase data ("right to be forgotten")
- Restrict processing
- Object to processing
- Data portability
- Withdraw consent
- Not be subject to automated decision-making without safeguards

We will respond to all rights requests within one month, as recommended by the ICO.

6. Data Collection and Use

6.1 We will:

- Collect only the minimum data required
- Explain why data is being collected
- Use data only for the stated purpose
- Avoid processing data in ways incompatible with the original purpose

Special category data is processed only where strictly necessary and with appropriate safeguards.

7. Data Security

7.1 Following ICO best practice, we implement appropriate technical and organisational measures, including:

- Access controls and role-based permissions
- Encryption of data in transit and at rest
- Secure passwords and multi-factor authentication
- Regular security audits
- Colleagues training on data protection
- Secure disposal of data and devices

8. Data Breaches

8.1 We maintain a Data Breach Response Procedure that includes:

- Immediate containment and assessment

- Investigation and documentation
- Notification to the ICO within 72 hours where required
- Communication with affected individuals when there is a high risk to their rights

All breaches, regardless of severity, are recorded in our internal breach log.

9. Data Sharing and Third Parties

9.1 We will only share personal data with:

- Third parties who have a legitimate need
- Organisations that provide sufficient guarantees of data protection
- Parties covered by a written data processing agreement

International transfers are made only where adequate safeguards exist and have been approved by the senior information governance lead.

10. Data Retention

10.1 We maintain a Data Retention Schedule that:

- Defines how long each category of data is kept
- Ensures data is securely deleted or anonymised when no longer needed
- Aligns with ICO expectations for storage limitation

11. Roles and Responsibilities

- Data Protection Lead / Data Protection Officer (if applicable): Oversees compliance, training, and breach management
- Managers: Ensure colleagues follow this policy. Ensure all colleagues complete mandatory training on Data Protection
- All colleagues: Must handle personal data responsibly and report any concerns immediately

12. Training and Awareness

12.1 All colleagues receive:

- Induction training on data protection
- Annual refresher training
- Additional training where roles involve high-risk processing

13. Monitoring and Review

13.1 This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- ICO guidance updates
- Significant organisational changes occur

14. Contact

14.1 For questions or concerns about this policy or data protection practices, contact the Data Protection Officer.

Equal Opportunities & Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EEDI) Policy

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Table of Contents

Document Control 2

1. Purpose 4

2. Scope 4

3. Definitions 5

4. Policy Statement 6

5. Roles and Responsibilities 6

6. Procedures 7

7. Reporting Concerns 8

8. Support available 8

9. Diversity Monitoring 8

10. Related Policies 9

1. Purpose

1.1. This policy sets out the organisation's commitment to ensuring that everyone who comes into contact with us is treated with fairness, dignity and respect. HSCCA is an anti-discriminatory organisation with inclusive practices across all of our activities.

1.2. Its purpose is to:

1.2.1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment.

1.2.2. Prevent unlawful discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 which relate to

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

1.2.3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination in pay, benefits, recruitment, training, promotion, redundancy, flexible working, and all other employment practices.

1.2.4. Promote a positive, inclusive culture where everyone can contribute and thrive.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to:

- All employees (permanent, fixed-term, part-time)
- Trustees and volunteers
- Contractors, subcontractors and agency workers
- Service users, beneficiaries, visitors and event attendees.
- Members and regional partners who work alongside us will be made aware of this policy.

2.2 The commitments and responsibilities within this policy are fully supported by our senior leadership but are everyone's responsibility as detailed in our Public Sector Equality Duty.

2.3 **Public Sector Equality Duty**

2.3.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) The Public Sector Equality Duty is a duty on public authorities to consider how their policies and decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. Those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. These are sometimes referred to as the three aims or arms of the general equality duty. The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

2.3.2 For further information and the latest version of the Public Sector Equality Duty see: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149.

3. Definitions

3.1 **Equality -** Ensuring people have equal opportunities and are not treated less favourably because of protected characteristics.

3.2 **Equity -** Ensuring people are not unfairly prevented from accessing opportunities and that adjustments are made to achieve fair outcomes.

3.3 **Diversity -** Recognising and respecting differences in backgrounds, identities and experiences.

3.4 **Inclusion -** Creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued.

3.5 **Protected Characteristics -** As defined in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

3.6 **Definition of Discrimination -** Discrimination can occur in various forms, sometimes unintentionally, and the Equality Act defines seven specific forms of discrimination, as described below:

3.7 **Direct Discrimination** - Direct discrimination is where a person is directly treated less favourably than another person simply because of their protected characteristic. So, for example, refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant would be direct discrimination.

3.8 **Perceptive Discrimination** - Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against, victimised or harassed based upon on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she in fact does not.

3.9 **Harassment -** is defined as: 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'. For example, telling jokes about a person's religion or their sexuality, either directed to them or not, is considered harassment under the Equality Act. Employees can still make a complaint of harassment even if they do not possess the protected characteristic or the harassment is not directed at them.

3.10 **Indirect Discrimination** - Indirect discrimination is where a person or a group of people are treated less favourably because of a decision, provision, criterion or practice (PCP) has been applied such is that it would be to the detriment of those

people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

3.11 **Associative Discrimination** - Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against, victimised or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic. For example, if somebody treats you less favourably simply because your sister is gay, or your father is black, or your friend is disabled or because of any other protected characteristic then this is still discrimination against you.

3.12 **Victimisation** - occurs when an employee is treated less favourably because they have made or supported a complaint related to the Equality Act, or they are suspected of doing so. Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to compare his/her treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010.

3.13 **Antisemitism** - is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Appendix A provides more detail of the legal context for this policy

4. Policy Statement

4.1 The organisation aims to provide a welcoming environment that reflects cultural and social diversity and is equally accessible to all.

4.2 We commit to:

- Encouraging equality, equity, diversity and inclusion
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination
- Creating a workplace free from bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination
- Recognising and valuing individual differences
- Ensuring decisions are based on merit.
- Providing reasonable adjustments for disabled people
- Taking complaints seriously and acting promptly

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 **Colleagues**

- Treat colleagues, residents and all partners we work with, with dignity and respect.
- Uphold the values of this policy.
- Report concerns or incidents of discrimination.
- Participate in EEDI training.

5.2 **Managers**

- Apply this policy fairly and consistently.
- Lead by example and challenge inappropriate behaviour

- Support staff who raise concerns
- Ensure recruitment and selection processes are free from bias.

5.3 **HR**

- Provide guidance on equality, equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Ensure compliance with legislation.
- Monitor workforce data and identify barriers.
- Manage complaints and investigations.

5.4 Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

6. Procedures

6.1 In HSCCA we will ensure that we apply our policies and procedures relating to EEDI as below:

6.2 **Recruitment & Selection**

- No discrimination in recruitment or promotion
- Application processes that are free from bias
- Use lawful positive action where appropriate.
- Review job descriptions and adverts to remove barriers.
- Ensure diverse recruitment panels where possible.

6.3 **Training & Development**

- Training and development opportunities available to all
- Staff encouraged to develop their full potential
- Managers trained in inclusive leadership and bias awareness.
- All colleagues to complete mandatory training on EEDI.

6.4 **Employment practices and processes**

- HSCCA will avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination across all of our people policies relating to pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, requests for flexible working and leave and selection for redundancy.

6.5 Working in the region

6.5.1 The organisation will:

- Treat everyone with respect
- Avoid assumptions and treat people as individuals.
- Remove barriers to access.
- Ensure information and events are accessible.
- Consider cultural, religious and caring responsibilities in the way we work together facilitating a supportive environment as much as practically possible and in line with policy and legislation requirements.
- HSCCA will treat people fairly and according to their needs respecting people's culture, property, dignity and privacy.

6.6 Our disciplinary and grievance procedures

6.6.1 Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be shared via our HR team. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance this would usually be their line manager.

6.6.2 Use of the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of any alleged discrimination.

7. Reporting Concerns

7.1 If you believe that you have been unfairly or unlawfully discriminated against, harassed, victimised or that the Authority has failed to make reasonable adjustments in relation to your disability then you may submit a complaint or concern using our grievance and mediation policy and process.

7.2 HSCCA will take complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination seriously and will respond with appropriate response and action. Your concerns will be listened to with care, confidentiality as appropriate and an open mind and we will share the options available to you to resolve your concern.

7.3 In the first instance you may wish to speak confidentially with your line manager or another manager in seeking their advice and support and to discuss what steps you may want to take next.

Alternatively, you may wish to contact Human Resources or your Trade Union to obtain confidential advice and support.

7.4 An independent investigator will be appointed to complete the investigation in line with HSCCA policy and procedures and with reference to appropriate legislation. Appendix B shares more details for your information

8. Support available

8.1 It is important to have a diverse and inclusive workplace to promote collective strength and provide a sense of belonging. HSCCA have a range of provisions in place to support colleagues and enable them to feel respected in the workplace and valued for their contributions. Support will develop as HSCCA matures and currently includes:

- Bullying and Harassment policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

9. Diversity Monitoring

9.1 The organisation will:

- Collect and monitor diversity data with consent.
- Review workforce composition (age, sex, ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual orientation)

- Identify barriers to recruitment, retention and progression.
- Conduct staff surveys at least every three years.
- Review findings at board level and take action where needed.

9.2 Diversity monitoring will help us to understand where we are in our intention to be an inclusive and diverse employer and what actions we may need to take.

10. Related Policies

10.1 The policies you can refer to that are related are:

- Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Staff Handbook

10.2 Policy Review

10.2.1 This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or organisational needs. HR will lead the review in consultation with senior leadership, and updates will be approved through the HSCCA governance process.

Privacy Notice Policy

Document Control

Title	Privacy Notice
Document Type	
Author	
Owner	
Created	July 2026
Review Date	March 2027

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change

Governance Group

Version	Approving Body	Date Approved

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Table of Contents

Document Control 2
1. Introduction 4
2. Who We Are 4
3. What Personal Data We Collect 4
4. How We Collect Your Data 4
5. Why We Use Your Data 4
6. Lawful Bases for Processing 4
7. Sharing Your Data 5
8. International Transfers 5
9. How Long We Keep Your Data 5
10. Your Rights 5
11. How We Protect Your Data 5
12. Complaints 5

1. Introduction

1.1 Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority is committed to protecting your personal data and respecting your privacy. This Privacy Notice explains how we collect, use, store, and protect your information in accordance with the **UK GDPR**, **Data Protection Act 2018**, and Information Commissioners Office best practice.

2. Who We Are

2.1 Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority
Address: Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LY

2.2 If you have questions about this notice or your data, contact our Information Governance Lead / DPO at: [DPO Email]

3. What Personal Data We Collect

3.1 We may collect:

- Contact details (name, address, email, phone number)
- Identification details (Date Of Birth, ID numbers if required)
- Employment or financial information (where relevant)
- Website usage data (cookies, analytics)
- Special category data (only where necessary and with safeguards)

4. How We Collect Your Data

4.1 We collect data:

- Directly from you (forms, emails, phone calls, website submissions)
- Automatically via our website (cookies, analytics tools)
- From third parties (referrals, service providers, partners)

5. Why We Use Your Data

5.1 We process your data for:

- Providing services or fulfilling contracts
- Managing your relationship with us
- Legal or regulatory compliance
- Improving our services
- Marketing (only with consent or legitimate interest)

6. Lawful Bases for Processing

6.1 We rely on:

- Consent
- Contractual necessity
- Legal obligation

- Legitimate interests
- Vital interests (rare)

7. Sharing Your Data

7.1 We may share your data with:

- Service providers acting on our behalf
- Regulatory bodies
- Professional advisers
- Third parties where legally required

7.2 We ensure all third parties meet ICO (Information Commissioners Office) expectations for data protection.

8. International Transfers

8.1 If data is transferred outside the UK, we ensure:

- Adequacy regulations apply, or
- Appropriate safeguards (e.g., International Data Transfer Agreement, Standard Contractual Clauses)

9. How Long We Keep Your Data

9.1 We retain data only as long as necessary, following our Data Retention Schedule.

10. Your Rights

10.1 You have the right to:

- Access your data
- Correct inaccuracies
- Request deletion
- Restrict processing
- Object to processing
- Data portability
- Withdraw consent

Requests are handled within one month.

11. How We Protect Your Data

11.1 We use:

- Encryption
- Access controls
- Staff training
- Secure storage and disposal
- Regular audits

12. Complaints

12.1 If you are unhappy with how we handle your data, contact us first via our information governance lead (insert name and email). You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioners Office.

Hampshire and the Solent
COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY

Counter-Fraud, Bribery, and Corruption Strategy

Document Control

Title	Counter-Fraud, Bribery, and Corruption Strategy
Document Type	
Author	
Owner	Chief Finance Officer (Section 73)
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Table of Contents

Document Control 2

1. Statement on Fraud by the Executive Leadership Team, Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority 4
2. Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy 4
3. Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy 7

Appendix 1 - Known Fraud Risks remaining significant 14

Appendix 2 HSCCA Fraud Response Plan 17

1. Statement on Fraud by the Executive Leadership Team, Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority

1.1. The Corporate Leadership Team are committed to implementing and maintaining the highest standard of corporate and financial governance and ethical behaviour. We recognise the threats of fraud and corruption and the resulting harm to the citizens within the region and for that reason, fraud, bribery and corruption against the Authority will not be tolerated and all such occurrences will be investigated. Every pound should be invested in delivery of high-quality services and programmes for local communities and businesses, and actively identifying fraud and embedding a counter fraud culture is a priority.

1.2. We fully support the investigation of allegations of fraud, the continued development of a robust anti-fraud culture and framework within the Authority and a strong stance being taken where fraud is found. The policies and procedures we already have in place in support of our Local Growth assurance framework for the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) funding streams give us a firm grounding in building fraud resilience into our systems. We will ensure we understand the main fraud risks we face and set out how we protect against through active risk management as set out in our risk registers. We will strive to ensure that we have robust processes in place to prevent fraud in the first instance and that we do not forget the risk of fraud when introducing new services or programmes as they are devolved or funded by Central Government in the drive to improve the economic well-being of the region.

2. Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy

2.1. The Government has made it clear that it expects both central and local government departments to take the issue of fraud seriously and do more to tackle the losses to fraud from public sector funding.

2.2. This strategy is based on guidance and best practice relating to fraud and fraud and corruption in the public sector including;

- CIFAS Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally 2020
- CIPFA Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption

2.3. Providing an outline for a coordinated response to fraud and corruption perpetrated against local authorities with the support of those at the top, Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally (FFCL) sets out five pillars of activity;

2.4. **Protecting Itself and Its Residents**

2.4.1. Recognising the harm that fraud can cause in the community. Protecting itself and its residents from fraud.

2.4.1.1. GOVERN - Having robust arrangement and executive support to ensure anti-fraud, bribery and corruption measures are embedded throughout the organisation.

2.4.1.2. ACKNOWLEDGE - Accessing and understanding fraud risks. Committing the right support and tackling fraud and corruption. Demonstrating that it has a robust antifraud response. Communicating the risks to those charged with governance.

2.4.1.3. PREVENT - Making the best use of information and technology. Enhancing fraud controls and processes. Developing a more effective anti-fraud culture. Communicating its activity and successes.

2.4.1.4. PURSUE - Prioritise fraud recovery and use of civil and criminal sanctions. Developing capability and capacity to punish offenders. Collaborating across geographical and sectoral boundaries. Learning lessons and closing the gaps.

2.4.2. Govern

2.4.2.1. Those who are charged with governance support the activity by ensuring that there are robust arrangements and executive support to ensure counter fraud, bribery and corruption measures are embedded throughout the organisation.

2.4.2.2. The internal arrangements that are put in place should be communicated throughout the organisation and publicly available to demonstrate the culture and commitment to preventing fraud.

2.4.2.3. HSCCA will demonstrate this by:

- Developing a counter fraud and corruption strategy that is embedded into ways of working across all aspects of the CA's activities, which will be communicated throughout and acknowledged by those charged with governance.
- Briefing ELT and the Audit Committee on fraud risks and mitigation.
- Scrutinising weaknesses revealed by instances of proven fraud and corruption and feed back to service areas to fraud proof systems.

2.4.3. Acknowledge

2.4.3.1. In order to create a counter fraud response, the Combined Authority must acknowledge and understand fraud risks and then demonstrate this by committing the right support and appropriate resource to tackling fraud.

2.4.3.2. This means undertaking a risk assessment of fraud areas and vulnerabilities, having a plan to address it, and have access to resources with the right capabilities and skills.

2.4.3.3. HSCCA will demonstrate this by:

- Undertaking an assessment against the risks and horizon scanning of future potential fraud and corruption risks.
- Specifically considering the risks of fraud and corruption in the CAs overall risk management process.

2.4.4. Prevent

2.4.4.1. Fraud can be prevented and detected by making better use of information and technology, enhancing fraud controls and processes and developing a more effective anti-fraud culture.

2.4.4.2. HSCCA will demonstrate this by:

- Putting in place arrangements for monitoring compliance with standards of conduct covering: Codes of conduct including behaviour for counter fraud, anti-bribery and corruption, Register of Interests, Register of gifts and hospitality.
- Undertaking recruitment vetting of staff prior to appointment by risk assessing posts and undertaking the checks recommended.
- Ensuring that there is a zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption

and independent whistle-blowing policy which can also be accessed by contractors and third parties, is monitored for take up and can show that suspicions have been acted upon without discrimination.
- Ensuring that the CA actively takes part in mandatory National Fraud Initiative (NFI) exercises and promptly takes action arising from it.
- Ensure robust due diligence, legal contracts and agreements are in place together with effective claims and payments processes.
- Ensuring a mandatory training programme is rolled out that is regular and current.

2.5. **Pursue**

2.5.1. Punishing fraudsters and recovering losses by prioritising the use of civil and criminal sanctions, developing capability and capacity to investigate fraudsters and developing a more collaborative and supportive law enforcement response on sanctions and collaboration.

2.5.2. HSCCA will demonstrate this by:
- Developing a programme of proactive counter fraud work which covers risks identified in the fraud risk assessment – See Appendix 1.
- Collaborating with other Council services and external enforcement agencies, encouraging a corporate approach and co-location of enforcement activity
- Undertaking prevention measures and projects using data analytics where possible
- Ensuring the Internal Audit team have unfettered access to premises and documents for the purposes of counter fraud investigation.

2.6. **Protect**

2.6.1. The Combined Authority will protect public funds, protecting the CA from fraud and cyber-crime and also protecting itself from future frauds as well as protecting against serious and organised crime, protecting individuals from becoming victims of crime and protecting against the harm that fraud can do to the community.

2.6.2. HSCCA will demonstrate this by:
- Assessing fraud resources proportionately to the risk the CA faces and are adequately resourced.

2.7. **Monitoring and Review**

2.7.1. The HSCCA will consider its performance against each of the following key themes in line with FFCL:
- Culture – creating a culture where fraud and corruption are unacceptable and that is measurable.
- Capability – assessing the full range of fraud risks and ensuring that the range of counter fraud measures deployed is appropriate.
- Capacity – deploying the right level of resources to deal with the level of fraud risk that is monitored by those charged with governance.
- Competence – having the right skills and standards commensurate with the full range of counter fraud and corruption activity.
- Communication – raising awareness internally and externally, deterring fraudsters, sharing information, celebrating successes.
- Collaboration – working together across internal and external boundaries: with colleagues, with other local authorities, and with other agencies;

sharing resources, skills and learning, good practice and innovation, and information.

2.7.2. An overview of the Authority's arrangements to demonstrate our alignment to these core strands of the national strategy can be seen in the Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy. The progress against and effectiveness of this strategy will be reviewed annually and performance assessed by the Audit Committee.

3. Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy

3.1. **Purpose**

3.1.1. The purpose of this Policy is to set out clearly to the public and also to Elected Members, employees, contractors, and organisations who work with the Authority:

- The Authority's commitment to tackling fraud, bribery, and corruption.
- The responsibilities of Elected Members and employees to report any suspicions they have.

3.1.2. Other relevant policies include:

- Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Guidance
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Members' Code of Conduct
- Employees Code of Conduct
- Financial Regulations
- Procurement Regulations
- Due Diligence & Transaction Risk Management Policy (Grant & Procurement Awards)

3.2. **Key Principles**

3.2.1. The Authority will not tolerate fraud, bribery or corruption and if proved employees will face possible dismissal and/or prosecution.

3.2.2. The Authority expects that Members and officers at all levels will lead by example to ensure high standards of propriety, integrity and accountability.

3.2.3. The Authority will raise fraud awareness among employees both at induction and periodically throughout the period of employment.

3.2.4. The Authority expects Elected Members and Senior Officers to emphasise the importance of anti-fraud work and to actively promote the fight against fraud.

3.2.5. Employees will support the fight against fraud and that individuals and organisations with whom it comes into contact will act with integrity towards the Authority.

3.2.6. The Authority understands the fraud risks it faces and will implement policies and procedures to identify and prevent fraud, bribery and corruption, but will also take all action necessary to identify it.

3.2.7. The Authority will take appropriate action against those responsible for fraud and where possible recover losses incurred.

3.2.8. Employees and Members have a duty to report fraud and concerns should be raised when it is reasonably believed that one or more of the following has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur:

- A criminal offence.

- A failure to comply with a statutory or legal obligation.
- Improper or unauthorised use of public or other official funds.

3.2.9. Investigators must be fair, independent and objective. They must not let any political views or personal views about ethnic or national origin, sex, religious beliefs, or the sexual orientation of the suspect, victim or witness influence their decisions. They must not be affected by improper or undue pressure from any source.

3.3. **Definitions - What is Fraud, Bribery and Corruption?**

3.3.1. The Fraud Act 2006 (which became effective on 15 January 2007) created a general criminal offence of fraud and identified three main ways it can be committed:

- Fraud by false or misleading representation.
- Fraud by failing to disclose to another person information which he is under a legal duty to disclose.
- Fraud by abuse of a position of trust.

3.3.2. The Act also created four related criminal offences of:

- Possession of articles for use in frauds.
- Making or supplying articles for use in frauds.
- Participating in fraudulent business.
- Obtaining services dishonestly.

3.3.3. The Theft Act 1968 and the Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 define offences of:

- Theft
- False Accounting
- Forgery

3.3.4. The Bribery Act 2010 contains two general offences:

- Section 1 - the offering, promising or giving of a bribe (active bribery);
- Section 2 - and the requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting of a bribe (passive bribery) it also sets out two further offences which specifically address commercial bribery:
- Section 6 - creates an offence relating to bribery of a foreign public official in order to obtain or retain business or an advantage in the conduct of business;
- Section 7 - creates a new form of corporate liability for failing to prevent bribery on behalf of a commercial organization.

3.4. **Responsibilities**

3.4.1. The Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2011 require the Authority to have appropriate control measures in place to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud. The Authority is committed to an effective counter-fraud approach designed to reduce losses to fraud by:

- Acknowledging and understanding fraud risks faced.
- Preventing fraud happening and detecting it when it does occur.
- Pursuing and punishing fraudsters and recovering losses.

3.4.2. Detailed roles and responsibilities in relation to fraud are set out in Section C.

3.5. **Reporting Fraud**

3.5.1. The ultimate aim is to prevent fraud at the outset; however, despite our best attempts

determined fraudsters may succeed.

3.5.2. If fraud, bribery or corruption is suspected, it should be reported without delay to a line manager or other senior officer, or to Internal Audit.

3.5.3. Information can be reported by raising the issue with your manager or via the confidential Whistleblowing procedure. This can be done anonymously if required.

3.5.4. The investigation process will follow the procedure set out in Internal Audit's Investigation Protocol. The Authority will respond effectively to reports of corruption.

3.5.5. Useful contact numbers for reporting fraud are as follows;

- Chief Internal Auditor - details TBC
- Monitoring Officer Email address
- Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) Email Address
- Outside bodies e.g., Public Concern at Work will give free and independent advice on how to proceed 020 31172520

3.5.6. The Investigation Protocol is designed to ensure that Internal Audit:

- Applies a consistent approach.
- Assigns appropriately experienced staff to investigate fraud depending on the type and nature of the fraud.
- Maintains records of all fraud experienced to inform an assessment of the Authority's fraud risks.

3.5.7. The confidential nature of fraud investigations mean that updates cannot usually be provided to those who have reported allegations. All allegations will be taken seriously and where there is evidence to support an allegation, will be fully investigated. Police will be involved where appropriate.

3.5.8. Updates on progress will be provided to Managers where investigations have been commissioned internally. Updates cannot be provided to the public for reasons of confidentiality.

3.6. Investigation of Fraud

3.6.1. The investigation of fraud, bribery and corruption is a complex and specialist area and will usually be undertaken by staff in Internal Audit or, for less complicated cases, managers, under advice from Internal Audit.

3.6.2. To facilitate audit work and investigations, Internal Audit staff are accorded rights, by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2011, to access all necessary documents, records, information and explanations from any member of staff. These access rights are confirmed in Financial Regulations.

3.6.3. The investigation process is set out in the Investigations Protocol.

3.7. Actions Taken When Fraud is Established

3.7.1. Disciplinary, civil and criminal sanctions will be used, as appropriate to each case, in punishing fraud and recovering losses.

3.7.2. Fraud, bribery, corruption and theft by Members or staff will be regarded as gross misconduct. Disciplinary action will be taken against staff. Allegations of Members' misconduct will be referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation and, should the allegation warrant, further action including referral to the Police

3.7.3. One option available to the Authority is criminal prosecution. The decision to refer

cases for prosecution may involve Audit Management, Legal Services and Directorate Management.

3.7.4. The ultimate decision on prosecution will be taken by the prosecuting body, which in some cases will be the Authority or the Crown Prosecution Service. A Financial Investigator and/or the Police will be utilised in cases where their additional powers are required to secure evidence or recovery of funds, or where the matter cannot be fully pursued in-house.

3.7.5. In determining whether to prosecute each case will be considered on its own facts and merits.

3.7.6. Where necessary, the Authority will work in co-operation with other organisations such as the Police, Department for Work and Pensions, Home Office, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and other Local Authorities.

3.7.7. When considering a case for prosecution it is generally accepted that there are two "tests" to be applied – the evidential test and the public interest test. These are set out in The Code for Crown Prosecutors.

- Evidential Stage Test - Prosecutors must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction against each suspect on each charge. A case will not go forward for prosecution if it fails this test.
- Public Interest Test - A prosecution will usually take place unless the prosecutor is sure that there are public interest factors tending against prosecution which outweigh those tending in favour or is satisfied that the public interest may be properly served by offering the offender the opportunity to have the matter dealt with by an out-of-court disposal.

3.7.8. All avenues for recovering losses will be considered, including confiscation under the proceeds of crime act, civil claims, recovery from accrued pensions and appropriate insurance claims.

3.7.9. Publicity will be used as a deterrent and wider circulation of investigative reports and lessons learned will be an on-going consideration. Public statements and press releases must be made through the Authority's Communications Team.

3.7.10. HSCCA's Fraud Response Plan is shown at Appendix 2

3.7.11. To help ensure that the risk of fraud and corruption is minimised, Appendix 3 summarises the action that should be taken and what should not be done when fraud is suspected.

3.8. **Data-matching and Data-sharing**

3.8.1. The Authority will use information provided by Members, employees, service users and suppliers in the prevention and detection of fraud. Data matching and analysis exercises are undertaken, both internally, locally and nationally to facilitate investigation of fraud.

3.8.2. All data extraction and use adhere to Data Protection legislation, and has regard to the confidentiality of information.

3.9. **Review**

3.9.1. These arrangements will be reviewed annually to ensure the Authority remains resilient to the changing and growing fraud threat.

3.10. **Responsibilities under this Strategy & Policy**

3.10.1. Group/ Individual Responsibilities;

3.10.1.1. Mayor & Members

- A duty to the citizens of the region to protect the Authority and public money from any acts of fraud and corruption.
- Compliance with the Code of Conduct for Members, the Authority's Constitution, including Financial Regulations and Procurement Regulations, in particular, the requirements regarding interests, gifts, and hospitality.
- Avoid situations where there is a potential for a conflict of interest.
- Report fraud, bribery or corruption where it is reasonably suspected that the Authority is being targeted.

3.10.1.2. Audit Committee

- Provide assurance on the counter-fraud arrangements to the Authority and sign off the Annual Governance Statement regarding fraud issues specifically.
- Approval of the Counter-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Policy.
- Monitor performance against the fraud strategy.

3.10.1.3. Chief Executive & Directors

- Support the maintenance of a strong culture where fraud, bribery and corruption is unacceptable.
- Notify the Chief Internal Auditor immediately of any fraud or irregularity.
- Ensure that your authority is measuring itself against the checklist for FFCL

3.10.1.4. Chief Finance Officer (Section73)

- Ensure that effective procedures are in place for the prompt investigation of any fraud or irregularity.
- Ensure awareness of fraud risks is maintained through training, publicity, risk registers and fraud prevention work.
- Meet the annual publication requirements of details of the Authority's counter
- fraud work under the Transparency Code.
- Ensure that arrangements are in place to actively pursue fraud.
- A minimum of 2 meetings a year with key officers and internal audit specifically for fraud.

3.10.1.5. Managers

- Ensure that they, and their staff, understand the fraud risks faced in delivering services by maintenance of a fraud risk assessment.
- Implement and maintain an effective control environment to prevent fraud, commensurate with the level of risk identified.
- Communicate the requirements of this and related policies (see paragraph 1.2) in their work area
- Create an environment in which staff feel able to report concerns of suspected fraud.
- Advise Internal Audit of any suspected cases of fraud and carry out or assist in the investigation of it as required. Advise Internal Audit of the

outcome of any cases investigated.

- Ensure fraud prevention controls are built in to new service delivery methods, systems and processes.
- Ensure approvals of invoices contain sufficient and full details before providing approvals.

3.10.1.6. All Employees irrespective of status

- Be aware of the possibility that fraud, bribery, corruption and theft may exist in the workplace and report it where they reasonably suspect the Authority is being targeted.
- Avoid situations where there is a potential for a conflict of interest
- Comply with the Authority's policies and codes as detailed in paragraph 1.2.
- Employees are required to report any bribary attempts for example in letting a contract where a potential contractor offers inducements to employees.

3.10.1.7. Internal Audit

- Maintain an overall fraud risk assessment on behalf of the Authority and review the effectiveness of the Authority's response to the risks faced.
- Deliver an opinion to the S73 Officer and the Audit Committee on the
- Authority's fraud risk management, control and governance arrangements.
- Undertake an annual programme of pro-active fraud work designed to prevent and detect fraud.
- Ensure cases of suspected irregularity, fraud or corruption are effectively investigated and punished by appropriate sanctions in liaison with the Police, Legal Services and Human Resources.
- Instigate recovery action wherever possible to recoup the losses on behalf of the Authority.
- Advise management on procedural improvements required to prevent occurrence or recurrence of fraud.
- Develop and encourage the exchange of information on national and local fraud and corruption activity in relation to local authorities with external agencies.

3.10.1.8. Human Resources

- Provide timely advice and guidance on Authority Policies and procedures during investigations and any disciplinary action
- Ensure recruitment procedures to be applied by Managers are effective in the verification and validation of information submitted by applicants prior to appointment, e.g., eligibility to work, verification of qualifications and employment history, Disclosure & Barring Service checks where appropriate.

3.10.1.9. Title to be confirmed

- Advise Members of new legislative or procedural requirements regarding conduct and ethical matters.
- Maintain a register of Members and Officers interests, gifts and

hospitality declared whether accepted or not.

- Maintain and operate a Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, including monitoring for take-up.
- Take criminal and civil actions to ensure appropriate sanctions are applied.
- Provide advice on potential criminal cases.

Appendix 1 - Known Fraud Risks remaining significant

Fraud Risk	Prevention Measures
Procurement • Tendering issues, split contracts (value disaggregated to circumvent thresholds), double-invoicing, price fixing, bid rigging, cartels. Spanning whole period from agreeing a project to contract monitoring, extensions and reletting. Inflated claims by consultants. Staff collusion, fictitious entities and ID fraud.	• Create a procurement fraud map, defining stages that fraud can happen and highlighting low, medium and high potential risks. Suppliers' Code of Practice. Monitoring patterns of spending with suppliers. Authorised staff to sign contracts. Robust due diligence processes.
Payroll • False employees, fraudulent overtime, allowance and expenses claims. Management / staff collusion to facilitate fraud. Staff fraudulently claiming grants / procurement invoice payments.	• Strict controls on setting up of new staff, use of Authorised Signatories list, monthly payroll pre-checked & authorised prior to payment run. Robust audit reviews. Data match between payroll and supplier bank details to identify fraudulent transactions.
Grants • Staff collusion with 3rd parties across all stages of a grant programme (Application – claims). • Staff fraud across all stages of a grant programme (Application – claims). • Fictitious applicants, ID fraud, Phoenix winding-up practices, disqualified directors. • Misleading / False applications. • Financial control / Claims: (fabricated costs (invoices, bank statement, payroll records staff expenses, duplicate claims and individual costs, VAT irregularity claims, ineligibility costs. • Third party supplier failure / fraud.	• Ensure separation of duties are built into processes including independent scrutiny and verification of project outputs via site visits inspections and monitoring. • Ensure separation of duties are built into processes and deployment of analytical tools such as data matching bank details on all CA systems. • Robust governance on approvals of funding includes decision notices, highlight reporting and change request process. Due diligence framework which includes credit reference agency business reports, Companies House and insolvency register searches. • Effective project appraisal by delivery teams combined with Grant Management and Assurance Team due diligence to ensure applications are credible with risk flags and appraisal scores provided to relevant governance for informed decisions to be made.

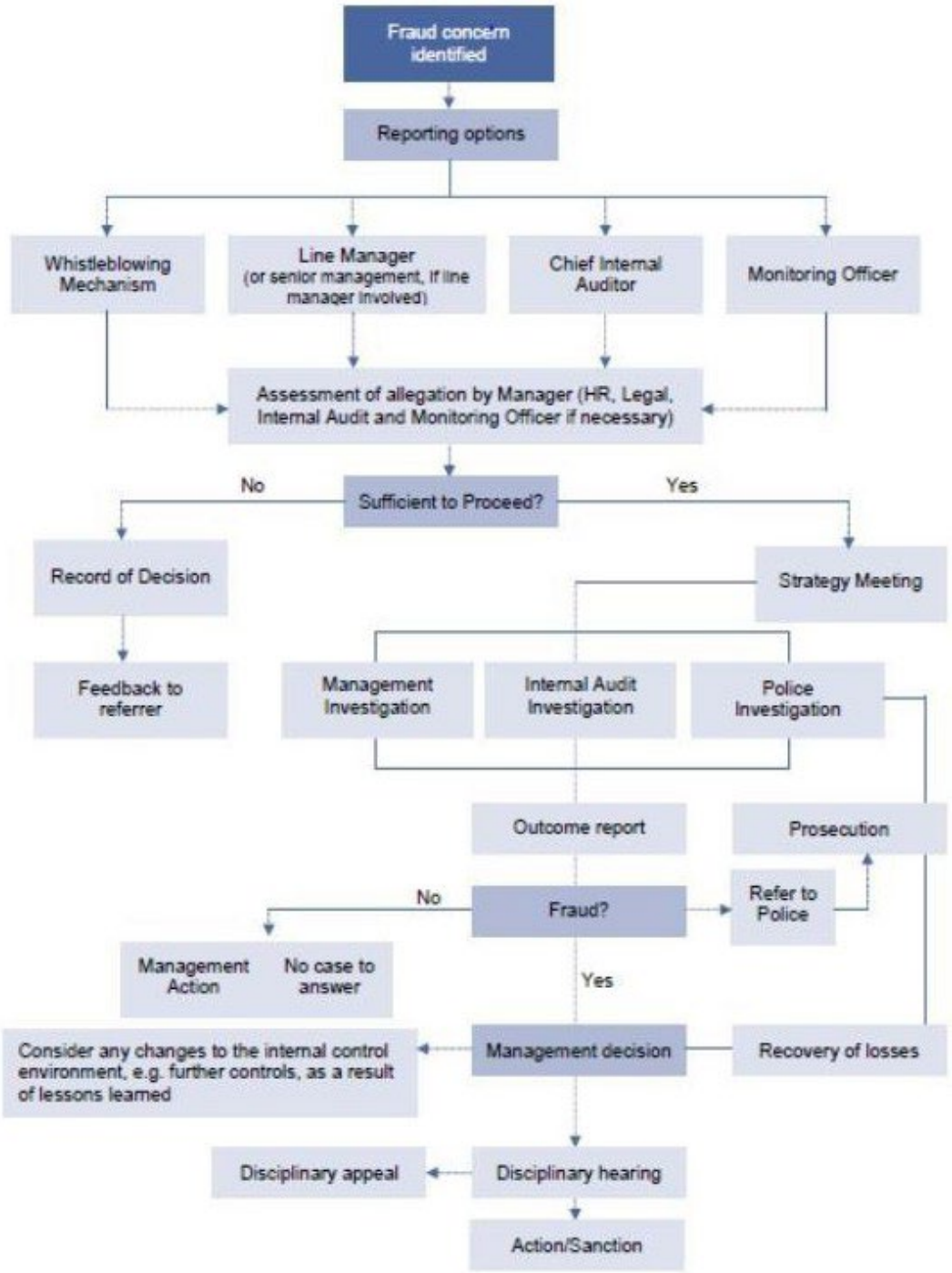
	• Effective and robust claims process using control check lists completed by two members of staff prior to approval, verification against grant offer letter, highlight & change request reports, audit reports, data matching and sample testing of invoices and payroll records corroborated by bank statements and / or contacting third party suppliers for verification. • Advise the grant beneficiary to conduct their own due diligence on key suppliers and procure using established frameworks with an SLA, JV agreement etc in place.
<u>Internal fraud</u> • Any employee might perpetrate fraud against his or her employer and delegation of responsibilities to officers brings inherent risks. Diverting monies to a personal account, accepting bribes, working elsewhere while claiming to be off sick, wrongfully claiming benefit while working, failing to declare conflicts of interest or acceptance of gifts and hospitality. Staff pre-employment fraud, where false information given to gain employment. Stealing property and selling it on for personal gain.	• Proper and adequate vetting, strong management-led anti-fraud culture. Managers should be made aware of their role in preventing and identifying employee fraud, ensuring clear controls and separation of duties. Employee Code of Conduct signposted as part of induction process.
<u>Debt fraud</u> • Fraudulently avoiding a payment of debt to the Authority.	• Official Write Off policy and procedure.
<u>Mandate fraud</u> • Change to a direct debit or bank transfer mandate by fraudster purporting to be an organisation you make regular payments to, for example, a subscription or membership organisation or business supplier.	• Centralised supplier maintenance team responsible for creating, validating and reviewing new supplier set-up. Strict controls over authority to set up new suppliers and approve same-day payments. Purchasing permission levels to raise purchase orders. Monthly control checks including duplication reports.
<u>Manipulation of data fraud</u> • Most commonly, employees changing data to indicate better performance than occurred and staff removing data from the organisation.	• Employee's Code of Conduct & Data Protection/Security Policies and training.

Concessionary travel scheme • Use of concession by ineligible person, bus operator claims.	• Prevention measures undertaken using data analytics where possible.

Emerging / Increasing Fraud Risks

Cyber dependent crime • Enables a range fraud types, including ransomware (including GDPR breaches), organised crime activity etc resulting in financial loss and reputational damage.
Money laundering • Exposure to suspect transactions from organised crime, companies and individuals.
Insurance fraud • False claims made against the Authority or its insurers.
Commissioning of services • Including joint commissioning, third sector partnerships – conflicts of interest, collusion.
Expansion of CA Activity • Significant new expenditure on grants/commissioned services increases risk of fraudulent activity, financial loss and reputational damage.

Appendix 2 HSCCA Fraud Response Plan



Appendix 3

Do	DON'T
Make a note of your concerns ▪ Write down the nature of your concerns ▪ Make a note of all the relevant details, such as what is said over the telephone or any other conversations ▪ Note the names and, if known, the position of those involved ▪ Notes do not need to be overly formal, but should be timed, signed and dated ▪ Notes should be held in a secure place ▪ Timeliness is most important. The longer you delay writing up, the greater the chances of recollections becoming distorted, and the case being weakened ▪ Note the date and time when the suspicion was reported onwards	**Be afraid of raising your concerns** ▪ The Public Interest Disclosure Act provides protection to employees who raise reasonably held concerns through the appropriate channels. ▪ The combined authority's whistleblowing provides guidance on how to do this. ▪ You will not suffer discrimination or victimisation as a result of following these procedures and the matter will be treated sensitively and confidentially. ▪ The Public can report concerns in confidence to the Internal or External Audit.
Report your concerns promptly ▪ In the first instance, for internal fraud report your suspicions to your line manager. If this action is inappropriate further guidance on disclosure can be found in the whistleblowing policy. ▪ All concerns must be reported to the Section 73 Officer – Director of Investments and Corporate Services.	**Convey your concerns to anyone other than authorised persons** ▪ There may be a perfectly reasonable explanation for the events that give rise to your suspicions. Spreading unnecessary concerns may harm innocent persons and the reputation of the combined authority. ▪ Don't discuss your suspicions with anyone other than the officer you formally raised the issue with.

Retain any evidence you may have ▪ The quality of evidence is crucial and the more direct and tangible the evidence, the better the chances of an effective action. ▪ Retain and keep all relevant records/evidence that may have been handed over or discovered as a result of the initial suspicion in a secure and confidential location.	**Approach the person you suspect or try and investigate the matter** ▪ There are special rules relating to the gathering of evidence for use in criminal cases and to protect human rights. Any attempt to gather evidence by persons who are unfamiliar with these rules may prevent appropriate action being taken. ▪ Don't interfere with or alter any documentary or computer-based evidence as a result of any suspicion ▪ Don't attempt to interview or question anyone unless authorised to do so. ▪ Do not attempt to gather evidence yourself.

Hampshire and the Solent
COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY

Anti-Money Laundering Policy

Document Control

Title	Anti-Money Laundering Policy
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Table of Contents

Document Control 2

1. Introduction and Scope 4
2. What is money laundering? 4
3. Obligations on the Authority 6
4. The Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO) 7
5. Reporting to the Money Laundering Reporting Officer 7
6. Responsibility of the Money Laundering Reporting Officer 8
7. Customer due diligence 9
8. Internal Clients 11
9. External Clients 11
10. Simplified due diligence 12
11. Enhanced customer due diligence and ongoing monitoring 12
12. Red flag indicators 13
13. Record keeping 13
14. Training and staff awareness 14
15. Risk management and internal control 14

Appendix A - Offences 15

Appendix B – Signs of money laundering 21

Appendix C - Red flags 24

Appendix D – Proforma Disclosure Report 26

1. Introduction and Scope

1.1 This policy explains what money laundering is and outlines the Hampshire and The Solent Combined County Authority's (HSCCA) commitment to comply with the Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Regulations 2019. It sets out the procedures and governance frameworks that must be followed (for example the reporting of any suspicions of money laundering activity) to enable the HSCCA to comply with its legal obligation to prevent and detect money laundering.

1.2 Local authorities are not directly covered by the requirements of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Regulations 2019, however, the consensus among financial and legal regulators/institutions (including the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting is that all public service organisations should comply with the underlying spirit of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Regulations 2019 and put in place appropriate and proportionate safeguards and reporting arrangements.

1.3 The Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Regulations 2019 imposes specific obligations on “relevant persons”. The term relevant person relates to the following activities carried out in the course of business; tax advice; accounting services; treasury management; investment or other financial services; credit institutions; audit services; legal services; estate agents; services involving the formation, operation or arrangement of a company or trust; dealing in goods wherever a transaction involves a cash payment equivalent to £12,000 (€15,000) or more.

1.4 Not all of HSCCA's business would fall under the definition of “relevant”, however, the safest way to ensure compliance with the law is to apply the definition of "relevant" to all areas of work undertaken by the HSCCA.

1.5 This policy therefore applies to all employees and members of HSCCA. The definition of employee includes casual/temporary employees, agency staff and any contractor acting on behalf of the HSCCA. The HSCCA will ensure its partners and all companies it is in contract with are informed of the procedures the HSCCA has in place to tackle money laundering.

1.6 This policy forms part of the HSCCA's wider commitment to tackle all forms of Financial Crime and should be read in conjunction with the HSCCA's Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption policy.

2. What is money laundering?

2.1 Money laundering in simple terms is a process that makes money with an illegal origin appear legal, or simply put to make "bad money appear good". The ultimate aim of a money launderer is to legitimise the criminal funds so they can spend it in

the mainstream wider economy without drawing the attention of law enforcement agencies to the original criminality.

2.2 Money laundering often involves 3 steps:

- Placement – cash is introduced into the financial system by some means
- Layering – a single or series of transactions to camouflage the illegal source
- Integration – the funds are reintroduced into the economy to appear legitimate, e.g., receiving an item, property, money or service in return

2.3 Money launderers are often intuitive and come across as very plausible in how they operate/ present themselves. They can use complex "cover stories" or even businesses to enable their activity and disguise their criminal intent. Their true motive is to establish a relationship with a legitimate business or organisation such as the HSCCA and use them to unwittingly “clean” their criminal funds. This exposes the HSCCA to the risk of being targeted by criminals.

2.4 Money laundering is a term used to describe several different offences that involve the proceeds of crime or terrorism funds. money laundering is defined as (further details in Appendix A):

- Concealing, disguising, converting, transferring criminal property, or removing it from the UK
- Entering into or becoming concerned in an arrangement which you know, or suspect, facilitates the acquisition, retention, use or control of criminal property by or on behalf of another person
- Acquiring, using, or possessing criminal property
- Failure to disclose knowledge or suspicion of another person(s) involvement in money laundering
- Tipping off or making a disclosure which is likely to prejudice an investigation being carried out by a law enforcing authority, knowing that such an investigation is in motion

2.5 Money laundering is included within the following pieces of legislation:

- Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (the POCA) (as amended by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005, Crime and Courts Act 2012, Serious Crime Act 2015 and Criminal Finances Act 2017)
- Money Laundering Terrorist Financing & Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017 (as amended by the money laundering & Terrorist Financing (amendment) Regulations 2019
- The Terrorism Act 2000 (as amended by the Criminal Finances Act 2017)

- Offences under the Bribery Act 2010 may also constitute money laundering

2.6 The legislation covers all criminal property where the alleged offender knows or suspects the property constitutes or represents benefit from any criminal conduct. Property is all property (including tax evasion) situated anywhere in the world for example:

- Money
- All real, personal, heritable or 'moveable property'
- Intangible and incorporeal property
- Property obtained by a person who has an interest in it
- Things in action and other intangible or incorporeal property

2.7 Whilst the risk to the HSCCA of contravening the legislation is low, it is extremely important that all employees are familiar with their legal responsibilities: serious criminal sanctions may be imposed for breaches of the legislation. The key requirement of employees is to promptly report any suspected money laundering activity to the Money Laundering Reporting Officer (as detailed in section 5 below).

2.8 It is impossible to give a definitive list of ways to spot money laundering or how to decide whether you need to make a report. Facts or just a gut instinct that something isn't quite right, can all lead you to the conclusion that you must report your concern. The law says this intangible feeling can be deemed sufficient to form a reasonable suspicion of money laundering. It is therefore important that in these circumstances you report your concerns. Failure to do so could lead to you committing an offence. Risk factors can either alone or cumulatively with other factors, suggest the possibility of money laundering activity and these are provided at Appendix B: Possible signs of money laundering.

2.9 It is important to understand that when an employee suspects money laundering (and reports it in line with this policy), or when an employee is aware that someone else has reported a concern in line with this policy, they must exercise caution in what is discussed with others, as this may be captured under the further offence of tipping off should it potentially prejudice an investigation. The offence of tipping off is taken very seriously by law enforcement and any employee who falls into this scenario could be subject to criminal prosecution. For this reason, it is strongly advised that employees refrain from talking to others about the suspicion/report and avoid engaging in gossip or reckless conversation.

3. Obligations on the Authority

3.1 Not all the HSCCA's business is "relevant" for the purposes of Money Laundering

and Terrorist Financing Regulations 2019. It is mainly accountancy, financial, company and property transactions that are deemed relevant.

3.2 The obligations of the HSCCA are to establish and maintain appropriate and risk-sensitive policies and procedures. The HSCCA must:

- Appoint a money laundering reporting officer to receive disclosures of money laundering activity
- Implement a procedure to enable reporting of suspicions of money laundering
- Apply due diligence measures in certain circumstances
- Know the intended nature of business relationships and undertake ongoing monitoring of them (to identify unusual transactions)
- Maintain client identification procedures in certain circumstances
- Maintain record keeping procedures retaining details of transactions for at least 5 years
- Conduct money laundering and terrorist funding risk assessment and adopt appropriate internal controls
- Train relevant staff

4. The Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO)

4.1 The HSCCA Financial Procedure Rules that assign the MLRO role to its Monitoring Officer. The Money Laundering Reporting Officer can be contacted at: Susan.Zeiss@southampton.gov.uk

5. Reporting to the Money Laundering Reporting Officer

5.1 Any employee who suspects money laundering activity is taking place must report/disclose this promptly in line with this policy. This includes when an employee becomes concerned that their involvement in a matter may amount to a prohibited act under the legislation.

5.2 The disclosure should be made using the proforma attached as Appendix C. As much detail as possible should be included in the report. This must be emailed to Susan.Zeiss@southampton.gov.uk

5.3 The employee MUST follow any subsequent directions from the MLRO and must NOT make any further enquiries into the matter. It is important that the employee takes no further steps in the transaction without authorisation from the MLRO. The MLRO may need to obtain consent from the National Crime Agency (NCA) before the transaction can proceed. If an employee was to allow the transaction to

proceed without the MLRO authorisation, then the employee would be in breach of the legislation.

5.4 The employee must not disclose or otherwise indicate their suspicions to the person(s) suspected of money laundering. They must not discuss the matter with others. They should refrain from putting any form of notes on a file that a report has been made as this could result in the suspect becoming aware of the concern. Please remember this could constitute the offence of tipping off.

6. Responsibility of the Money Laundering Reporting Officer

6.1 The MLRO will acknowledge receipt of the disclosure and will promptly evaluate the information to determine whether it is appropriate to report it to the NCA. The MLRO will also provide you with a predicted timescale for a response to your disclosure.

6.2 The MLRO will consider the report and other available internal material deemed relevant for example:

- Reviewing other transaction patterns and volumes
- The length of any business relationship involved
- The number of any on-off transactions and linked one off transactions
- Any identification evidence held

6.3 The MLRO will undertake such other reasonable enquiries they think is appropriate in order to ensure that all available information is considered when deciding whether a report to the NCA is required. The MLRO may also need to discuss the report with you for further information.

6.4 Once the MLRO has evaluated the disclosure report and any other relevant information, they must make a timely determination as to whether:

- There is actual or suspected money laundering taking place;
- There are reasonable grounds to know or suspect that is the case;
- They know the identity of the money launderer or the whereabouts of the property involved, or they could be identified or the information may assist in such Identification; and
- Whether the MLRO needs to seek consent from the NCA for a particular transaction to proceed.

6.5 The MLRO will promptly report the matter to the NCA through their website if they have concluded it meets the criteria of submitting a Suspicious Activity Report. The

MLRO is registered with the NCA and will log-in to submit any report themselves. This is likely to be done in liaison with the person raising the concern.

6.6 When the MLRO concludes that there are no reasonable grounds to suspect money laundering then consent will be given for any ongoing or imminent transactions to proceed. The reasons will be recorded on a log and disclosure form.

6.7 All disclosure reports referred to the MLRO and reports made to the NCA will be stored in a confidential file kept for that purpose for a minimum of 6 years.

6.8 If the MLRO concludes that a matter meets the criteria of submitting a Suspicious Activity Report, the MLRO must disclose the matter as soon as practicable to the NCA unless they have a reasonable excuse for non-disclosure to the NCA (e.g., if you are a lawyer and wish to claim legal professional privilege for not disclosing the information).

6.9 In such a scenario where a solicitor is claiming legal professional privilege a joint decision will be made between the Money Laundering Reporting Officer and the solicitor to agree if the legal professional privilege exemption applies. In the very unlikely event, a consensus decision is not met. The MLRO will seek to consult further to confirm whether legal professional privilege applies to the solicitor's actions. The right to seek external legal advice on the matter if they so wish is reserved. The Director of Legal and Governance should decide in a timely manner. If they determine legal professional privilege applies, then the MLRO will not report the matter to the NCA.

6.10 Where consent is required from the NCA for a transaction to proceed (and 6.8 does not apply), then the transactions in question must not be undertaken or completed until the NCA has specifically given consent, or there is deemed consent through the expiration of the relevant time limits without objection from the NCA.

6.11 The MLRO commits a criminal offence if he knows or suspects, or has reasonable grounds to do so, through a disclosure being made to him:

- That another person is engaged in money laundering of whom he knows the identity,
- The whereabouts of laundered property in consequence of the disclosure, that the person or property's whereabouts can be identified from that information,
- He believes, or it is reasonable to expect him to believe, that the information will or may assist in such identification and he does not disclose this as soon as practicable to the NCA (unless an exemption applies as per 6.8)

7. Customer due diligence

7.1 When the HSCCA is carrying out certain regulated business (accountancy, and

legal services re financial, company or property transactions) and as part of this;

a) Forms an ongoing business relationship with a client

b) Undertakes a one-off or occasional transaction amounting to €15,000 or more whether carried out as a single transaction or several linked ones

c) Suspects money laundering or terrorist financing

d) Doubts the veracity or adequacy of information previously obtained for the purposes of client identification or verification

7.2 Then the customer due diligence procedure must be followed before any business or transaction is undertaken for that client. This is covered in regulations 27-38 of the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations.

7.3 Customer due diligence means:

- Identifying the client/customer and verifying their identity based on documents, data, or information obtained from a reliable and independent source (e.g. conducting a search at companies house)
- Identifying the beneficial owner (where he/she or it is not the client) so that you are satisfied that you know who the beneficial owner is, including, in the case of a legal
- person, trust or similar legal arrangement, measures to understand the ownership and control structure of the person, trust or arrangement
- Obtaining information on the purpose and intended nature of the business relationship

7.4 Customer due diligence, including record keeping requirements, is set out in the following hyperlinks and relates to all customers:

- Your responsibilities under money laundering supervision - GOV.UK
- Quick guide to the Money Laundering Regulations 2017 | The Law Society

Please note that unlike the reporting procedure, the customer due diligence procedure is restricted to those employees undertaking relevant business.

7.5 In the above circumstances, employees in the relevant services of the HSCCA must obtain satisfactory evidence of the identity of the prospective customer/client, and full details of the purpose and intended nature of the relationship/transaction, as soon as practicable after instructions are received.

7.6 There is also now an ongoing legal obligation to check the identity of existing clients and the nature and purpose of the business relationship with them at appropriate

times. The opportunity should also be taken at times to scrutinise the transactions undertaken throughout the course of the relationship (including, where necessary, the source of the funds) to ensure they are consistent with your knowledge of the client, its business and risk profile. Particular scrutiny should be given to the following complex or unusually large transactions;

a) Unusual patterns of transactions which have no apparent economic or visible lawful purpose

b) Any other activity likely by its nature to be related to money laundering or terrorist financing

7.7 Once instructions to provide relevant business have been received, and it has been established that Paragraph 7.1 above applies or it is otherwise an appropriate time to apply due diligence measures to an existing client, evidence of identity and information about the nature of the work should be obtained/checked as follows.

8. Internal Clients

8.1 Under the legislation there is no need to apply customer due diligence (CDD) measures where the client is a UK public authority. So internal clients of HSCCA do not fall into the scope of these measures. If the client is not wholly owned by HSCCA, the identity of the other party who has interests should continue to be checked.

8.2 Appropriate evidence of identity will be placed on the HSCCA's client file along with a prominent note explaining which correspondence constitutes the evidence and where it is located.

8.3 If there is any ambiguity around the need for CDD a decision can be made on a case-by-case basis by consulting with the MLRO.

9. External Clients

9.1 When the HSCCA provides regulated business services to another UK public authorities, there is no need to apply customer due diligence measures. However, again as a matter of good practice, identity of external clients should be checked.

9.2 Appropriate evidence of identity will be placed on the HSCCA's client file along with a prominent note explaining which correspondence constitutes the evidence and where it is located.

9.3 With instructions from new clients, or further instructions from a client not well known to you, you may wish to seek additional evidence of the identity of key individuals in the organisation and of the organisation itself.

10. Simplified due diligence

10.1 Simplified due diligence is the lowest level of due diligence that can be completed on a customer. This is appropriate where there is little opportunity or risk of your services or customer becoming involved in money laundering or terrorist financing.

10.2 Where a customer is low risk (occupation; organisation; country; method of transacting; transaction value etc.) then simplified due diligence can be completed. Identity must still be confirmed but the ongoing requirements may be relaxed unless a change in circumstances occurs.

11. Enhanced customer due diligence and ongoing monitoring

11.1 It will, in certain circumstances, be necessary to undertake what is known in the regulations as enhanced customer due diligence. In summary, this will be necessary where:

- The customer has not been physically present for identification purposes
- The customer is a politically exposed person, typically, a non UK or domestic member of parliament, head of state or government, or government minister and their family members and known close associates
- There is a beneficial owner who is not the customer – a beneficial owner is any individual who: holds more than 25% of the shares, voting rights or interest in a company, partnership or trust
- When you enter into a transaction with a person from a high risk third country
- identified by the EU Register of Commission Documents - C(2016)4180 (europa.eu)
- In any other situation which, by its nature, can present a higher risk of money laundering or terrorist funding

11.2 Where this applies, the HSCCA will need to take adequate measures to compensate for the higher risk.

11.3 Money Laundering 2019 prescribes what is required at a minimum. When enhanced due diligence is performed, it must always involve:

a) Obtaining additional information on the customer and on the customer's beneficial owner

b) Obtaining additional information on the intended nature of the business relationship

c) Obtaining information on the source of funds and source of wealth of the customer and of the customer's beneficial owner

d) Obtaining information on the reasons for the transactions

e) Obtaining the approval of senior management for establishing or continuing the business relationship

f) Conducting enhanced monitoring of the business relationship by increasing the number and timing of controls applied and selecting patterns of transactions that need further examination

11.4 If, because of customer due diligence checks, there are any discrepancies identified when compared with the information held in the Companies House register, then this must be reported to Companies House.

12. Red flag indicators

12.1 Red flags is the term used to describe individual factors set by the HSCCA that indicates a higher risk of money laundering or terrorist financing. These should act as a warning that further investigation is necessary. Appendix D sets out examples of 'red flag indicators'.

12.2 Red flags should be used at all stages of compliance, from customer acceptance to exiting the relationship. Red flags fall into different categories but are usually centered around client behaviours or issues around the Authority, its finance, beneficiaries or trading connections to high-risk individuals or jurisdictions.

13. Record keeping

13.1 Each area conducting relevant business must maintain records of:

- Client identification evidence obtained
- Details of all relevant business transactions carried out for clients

13.2 For at least five years. This is to meet the requirements of the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations and may be used as evidence in any subsequent investigation/inspection by the relevant supervising body. Any record keeping should be in line with GDPR and the originating department's Privacy Statement.

13.3 In practice each area will be routinely making records of work carried out during normal business and these should suffice in this regard.

13.4 Each area of the HSCCA conducting regulated business must monitor, on an ongoing basis, their business relationships in terms of scrutinising transactions undertaken throughout the course of the relationship (including, where necessary, the source of funds) to ensure that the transactions are consistent with their knowledge of the client, its business and risk profile.

13.5 Individuals carrying out due diligence checks must retain the identification evidence and details of the relevant transaction(s) for that client for at least five years.

13.6 The MLRO will keep a record of all referrals received and any action taken to ensure an audit trail is maintained.

14. Training and staff awareness

14.1 The HSCCA will take appropriate measures to ensure that all employees are made aware of the law relating to money laundering and will arrange targeted, ongoing training to key individuals most likely to be affected by the legislation.

14.2 It is extremely important that all employees are familiar with their legal responsibilities: serious criminal sanctions may be imposed for breaches of the legislation. The key requirement on employees is to promptly report any suspected money laundering activity to the MLRO

15. Risk management and internal control

15.1 The legislative requirements concerning anti-money laundering procedures are lengthy and complex. The adequacy and effectiveness of, promotion of, and compliance by employees with, the documentation and procedures will also be monitored through the HSCCA's corporate governance and anti-fraud policy frameworks.

15.2 This policy has been written so as to enable the HSCCA to meet the legal requirements in a way which is proportionate to the risk of the HSCCA of contravening the legislation.

15.3 The MLRO will periodically review the risk to the HSCCA of contravening the anti-money laundering legislation. The adequacy and effectiveness of the anti-money laundering policy will be reviewed after such assessments.

15.4 Should you have any concerns generally or about specific transactions then you should contact the MLRO.

Appendix A: Offences Table

OFFENCES TABLE Section Ref	Type of Offence	Definition
S327 Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	**Money laundering Offence** Concealing Criminal Property	A person commits an offence if they conceal, disguise, convert or transfer criminal property or if they remove criminal property from England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. This is punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of 14 years and an unlimited fine. At the Magistrates Court it is 6 months and £5,000 fine
S328 Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	**Money laundering Offence** Acquisition, Use and Possession.	This offence is committed by anyone that has criminal proceeds in their possession provided they know or suspect that it represents the proceeds of a crime unless they paid 'adequate consideration' for it. Someone who pays less than the open market value is therefore guilty of the offence but someone who pays the full retail price, despite knowing or suspecting they were stolen goods is not guilty. The punishment is as per S327.
S329 Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	**Money laundering Offence** Acquisition, Use and Possession.	This offence is committed by anyone that has criminal proceeds in their possession provided they know or suspect that it represents the proceeds of a crime unless they paid 'adequate consideration' for it. Someone who pays less than the open market value is therefore guilty of the offence but someone who pays the full retail price, despite knowing or suspecting they are stolen goods is not guilty. The punishment is as per S327.
S330 Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	**Failure to Disclose Offence:** Regulated Sector	This offence is committed by an employee of a business in the regulated sector who has knowledge or suspicion of another person's involvement

		in money laundering and does not make a report through the appropriate channels. Negligence is not a defence as the employee will be tried upon what they should have known given their experience, knowledge and training. This is punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of 5 years and/or a fine.
S331 Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	**Failure to Disclose Offence:** Nominated Officers in the Regulated Sector	This offence is committed by a nominated officer MLRO of a business in the regulated sector who has knowledge or suspicion of another person's involvement in money laundering and does not make a report through the appropriate channels without an acceptable excuse under the legislation. Negligence is not a defence as the nominated officer will be tried upon what they should have known given their experience, knowledge and training. This is punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of 5 years and/or a fine.

S332 Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	**Failure to Disclose Offence**: Other Nominated Officers	This offence is committed by a nominated officer MLRO of a business outside of the regulated sector who has knowledge or suspicion of another person's involvement in money laundering and does not make a report through the appropriate channels without an acceptable excuse under the legislation. The officer will be tried on what they knew or suspected not on what they might have been expected to know or suspect. This is punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of 5 years and/or a fine.

S333 Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	**Tipping Off Offence**	This offence is committed if an employee or Member makes a disclosure which is likely to prejudice an investigation being carried out by a law enforcing authority, knowing that such an investigation is in motion. This is punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of 5 years and/or a fine.
Reg 86 **Money laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017**	**Contravening a relevant requirement**	A person commits an offence if they have not followed any relevant guidance issued by the European Supervisory Authorities, Financial Conduct Authority or any other relevant supervisory authority approved by the Treasury. This is punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of 2 years at the Crown Court, a fine, or both. At the Magistrates Court a term of three months, a fine, or both.
Reg 87 **Money laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of** **Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017**	**Prejudicing an investigation**	This offence is committed when a person who knows or suspects that an appropriate officer is acting (or proposing to act) in connection with an investigation into potential contravention of a relevant requirement which is being or is about to be conducted. The offence is committed if either they make a disclosure which is likely to prejudice the investigation or they falsely, conceal, destroy or otherwise dispose of, or cause to permit the falsification, concealment, destruction or disposal of, documents which are relevant to the investigation.

		The punishment is as for Reg. 86 above

Reg 88 **Money laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017**	**Providing false or misleading information**	There are two separate offences under regulation 88. Under regulation 88(1) a person commits an offence if: 1. In purported compliance with a requirement imposed on him by or under the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of

		Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations, provides information which is false or misleading in a material particular and knows that the information is false or misleading; or 2. Is reckless as to whether the information is false or misleading. In respect of both offences. The punishment is the same as Regs 86 and 87 above

Appendix B

Possible signs of money laundering:

Types of risk factors which may, either alone or along with other factors suggest the possibility of money laundering activity:

General

- A new customer with no previous 'history' with the HSCCA.
- A secretive customer: for example, one who refuses to provide requested information without a reasonable explanation.
- Concerns about the honesty, integrity, identity of a customer.
- Illogical third-party transactions: for example, unnecessary routing or receipt of funds from third parties or through third party accounts.
- Involvement of an unconnected third party without logical reason or explanation.
- Payment of a substantial sum in cash (but it's reasonable to be suspicious of any cash payments particularly those over £1,000).
- Overpayments by a customer.
- Absence of an obvious legitimate source of the funds.
- Movement of funds to/from overseas, particularly to and from a higher risk country.
- Where, without reasonable explanation, the size, nature and frequency of transactions or instructions is out of line with normal expectations.
- A transaction without obvious legitimate purpose or which appears uneconomic, inefficient or irrational.
- Cancellation or reversal of an earlier transaction.
- Requests for release of customer account details other than in the normal course of business.
- Poor business records or internal accounting controls.

- A previous transaction for the same customer which has been, or should have been, reported to the MLRO.

Property Matters

- Unusual property investment transactions with no apparent investment purpose;
- Instructions to receive and pay out money where there is no linked substantive property transaction involved (surrogate banking);
- Regarding property transactions, funds received for deposits or prior to completion from an unexpected source or where instructions are given for settlement funds to be paid to an unexpected destination.

The following table sets out the types of activities that might be suspicious and where the HSCCA may be susceptible to money laundering activities. It is not intended to be exhaustive, and just because something is not on the list, it doesn't mean that it shouldn't be reported.

ACTIVITY	**The types of activity that may be affected**
New customers with high value transactions	- Selling property to individuals or businesses - Renting out property to individuals or businesses - Entering into other lease agreements - Undertaking services for other organisations
Secretive clients	- People buying or renting property from the authority who may not want to say what it is for - People receiving grant funding who refuse to demonstrate what funding was used for

Customers who we think are acting dishonestly or illegally	- People paying for services who do not provide details about themselves - People making odd or unusual requests for payment arrangements Illogical transactions • People paying in cash then requesting refunds - Requests for the authority to pay seemingly unconnected third parties in respect of goods / services provided to the authority. - Requests for the authority to pay foreign currencies for no apparent reason - Payments of substantial sums by cash - Large debt arrears paid in cash - Refunding overpayments - Deposits / payments for property
Payments of substantial sums by cash	Large debt arrears paid in cash - Refunding overpayments - Deposits / payments for property
Movement of funds overseas	Requests to pay monies overseas, potentially for “tax purposes”
Cancellation of earlier transactions	- Third party “refunds” grant payment as no longer needed / used - No payment demanded even though goods / services have been provided - Sudden and unexpected termination of lease agreements

Appendix C

Red Flag Indicators of potential money laundering

Red flag indicators should always prompt you to raise questions in your mind and these should prompt you to make further enquiries. Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

The answers (or failure to answer) will either dispel the original suspicion that something may not be quite right or reinforce that suspicion or highlight new areas for investigation.

Customer / Client Behaviour

When risk assessing a client, there are some red flag behaviours that should raise questions in your mind and cause you to make further enquiry. These include:

- avoiding personal contact without good reason.
- changing agent or legal advisor a number of times without apparent reason
- using an advisor geographically distant from himself or the location of the transaction over using an advisor closer to the transaction.
- requesting or seeking to push the speed of the transaction.
- attempting to disguise the true owner or proprietary interests of the business or the parties to the transaction.
- the client is known to have convictions for acquisitive crime or criminal connections.
- the client informs you that funds are coming from one source and then at the last minute the source changes.

Source or Amount of Finance

The source of finance does not make sense, including:

- use of disproportionate amount of cash.
- funds sent to and from jurisdictions with a high level of banking secrecy.
- a significant amount of private funding from an individual running a cash-intensive business.
- the involvement of a third party without an apparent connection to the business or without a full explanation for their participation.

- funding which is inconsistent with the socio-economic profile of the individuals involved.
- a 100% cash deal.
- structured payments below money laundering thresholds

The Business

Red flags include:

- the ownership structure is overly complicated when there is no legitimate or economic reason.
- business transactions involve countries where there is a high risk of money laundering and / or the funding of terrorism.
- false or suspicious documents are used to back-up transactions.
- the level of activity is not consistent with the firm's understanding of the client's business or level of legitimate income.
- a failure to produce adequate paperwork detailing the business and its formation
- a history of aborted transactions.
- unverifiable information produced.

Appendix D – Proforma Disclosure Report

CONFIDENTIAL: Report to MLRO	
Name	
Title / Department / Directorate	
Phone number	
Email	
Details of Suspected Offence	
Names and addresses of the persons involved (if a company, the nature of their business)	
Nature, value, timing of activity	
Nature of suspicions	
Signed and dated (type name and date)	
For Completion by the MLRO	
Date received	
Are their reasonable grounds for suspecting money laundering?	
If yes, confirm date of report to NCA	
Unique NCA case reference number	
Date consent given to employee for transaction to proceed (if applicable)	
Signed and dated	
Please do not discuss the content of this report with anyone you believe to be involved in the suspected money laundering activity described. To do so may constitute a tipping off offence, which carries a maximum penalty of 5 years' imprisonment.	

Hampshire and the Solent
COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY

Complaints Policy

Document Control

Title	Complaints Policy
Document Type	
Author	
Owner	Monitoring Officer
Created	July 2026
Review Date	March 2027

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change

Governance Group

Version	Approving Body	Date Approved

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Table of Contents

Document Control 2
1. Complaints Policy 4
2. Principles 4
3. Complaints Covered Under this Policy 4
4. Complaints Not Covered by this Policy 4
5. How Should Customers Make a Complaint? 5
6. How We Manage Complaints 6
7 Fluency Duty 9
8 Access to Information 9
9 Reporting on Complaints 10

1. Complaints Policy

1.1 The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) is committed to providing high-quality services. People may wish to tell us when they are satisfied with the services they have received from us, make suggestions on how we could improve or tell us when things have gone wrong. We believe dealing effectively with all such feedback is essential to providing good services.

1.2 This policy sets out how complaints will be dealt with ensuring concerns raised are considered and any resulting adjustments made, where required.

2. Principles

2.1 All complaints are taken seriously, dealt with appropriately and where necessary acted upon.

2.2 We will:

- Put the customer at the heart of the process, showing understanding and responding appropriately to the circumstances
- Resolve complaints as early as possible
- Keep the customer informed about the complaints progress
- Apologise if we have made a mistake, or when something has gone wrong, we will put it right as soon as possible
- Make sure our response addresses all elements of the complaint and provide explanations for any decisions made or actions taken
- Use complaints information in a positive way to review and improve the way we provide services and prevent similar occurrences in the future

2.3 We encourage our staff to resolve customer's issues without the need to use the formal complaints process as in many cases we can resolve concerns quickly by putting the problem right straight away.

3. Complaints Covered Under this Policy

3.1 A complaint could be in relation to any of the following examples:

- There has been a significant delay in providing a function
- We have made a mistake in the way we provided a function
- We have failed to deliver a function; this could relate to the quality, standard or service level
- We have not listened properly
- Our processes or policies have not been followed
- Our legal or regulatory requirements have not been met
- We have not delivered against a commitment or promise
- Our staff have not been helpful or have not conducted themselves correctly

3.2 Every complaint will be considered on its individual merits and after initial conversations a decision will be made on whether the complaints policy should be implemented.

4. Complaints Not Covered by this Policy

4.1 **Requests for service;** the HSCCA has not replaced existing local authorities; there are a number of individual councils in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight who deliver the vast majority of services for your community. If you have a complaint that does not directly relate to an activity carried out by the HSCCA, you should submit your complaint to the appropriate Council.

4.2 **Requests for Information (Subject Access Request and Freedom of Information Requests);** these requests should be referred to our Complaints Manager at HSCCA@southampton.gov.uk. Dissatisfaction with the response to these requests should be directed to the Information Commissioner's Office.

4.3 **Immediate Safeguarding Concerns;** If you believe that an individual is in any immediate danger or risk of harm, this should be reported to the police for immediate action.

4.4 **Where legal processes are involved;** where a legal challenge is being made regarding whether a decision or action is lawful.

4.5 **Where there is a more appropriate individual or organisation to deal with your complaint;** - such as a tribunal, Ombudsman or another local organisation or council.

4.6 **Complaints made more than one year after the customer became aware of the issue;** (unless in exceptional circumstances) - this is because such complaints can be difficult to investigate fully or fairly.

4.7 **Complaints about members of the Combined Authority;** elected councillors have a separate complaints process and the Monitoring Officer can advise you about this.

4.8 **Staff personnel issues**; including disciplinary, grievance, pay, recruitment and selection processes - these should be progressed with guidance from specific HR policies and procedures.

4.9 **Complaints regarding the qualification of our staff;** All staff are employed based on their suitability and relevant qualifications for the role, therefore any complaint which questions whether a particular staff member is qualified to fulfil their role will not be accepted under this policy. Please note that this does not apply to complaints where you believe that staff have not acted appropriately.

4.10 **Complaints about data protection;** Complaints about how the Authority has processed personal data or about information sharing, disclosure, retention, or information security should initially be raised with the Complaints Manager at HSCCA@southampton.gov.uk

4.11 **Whistleblowing policy;** there is a separate policy relating to whistleblowing.

4.12 **Complaints that have already exhausted our process;** If the same complaint has received a final written decision or the complaint has already been referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) or the Information Commissioner (ICO).

5. How Should Customers Make a Complaint?

5.1 Before making a formal complaint, we encourage customers to contact our Complaints Manager at HSCCA@southampton.gov.uk to discuss their concerns in detail, providing an opportunity to gain clarity of the situation and, where necessary, put things right.

5.2 Should we not be able to address the concerns or rectify the situation, the customer may then choose to follow the appropriate complaints procedure, as detailed below.

5.3 An appointed Officer will act as a point of liaison between the customer and the authority, finding required information and providing details of what has happened. Where the authority is at fault we will apologise and tell the customer what we will do to rectify the situation.

5.4 The Complaints Manager can be contacted by:

- Emailing HSCCA@southampton.gov.uk
- Writing to HSCCA Offices, c/o Southampton City Council, Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LY

5.5 Customer should provide as much detail as possible including:

- What has happened or gone wrong from their perspective
- When it happened (or should have happened)
- Why and how we could have done things differently
- What they think we should do to put things right
- Their preferred method of contact and their contact details

6. How We Manage Complaints

6.1 Customers are encouraged in the first instance to raise any problems with the individual staff member concerned or with their line manager.

6.2 If the relevant staff member or their line manager are unable to resolve the issues the customer should contact our DPO or Complaints Manager at HSCCA@southampton.gov.uk who deal with all HSCCA complaints. Before any complaint is progressed to the formal stage, the customer will be contacted to determine how we may put this right for them.

6.3 For all stage 1 complaints an appropriate Officer will be appointed as a point of contact (POC) for the customer.

6.4 The **Officer** will:

- Where an investigation has been completed, contact the customer to advise of the outcome
- Be responsible for keeping the complainant up to date including if there are any delays in responding.

6.5 All stage 2 complaints will be overseen by our Complaints Manager who will be the customers appointed point of contact (POC).

6.6 The **Complaints Manager** will:

- Review the customer's request for escalation of their complaint
- Attempt resolution of the issue with the complainant before agreement to progressing to the next formal stage
- Where resolution has not been possible, conduct a case review of the original complaint and the response provided to determine if any areas have not been satisfactorily addressed or require a further investigation
- Determine if any new issues have been included within the complaint as these cannot be progressed to the next stage without having received due consideration at the stage 1. These may be returned to the first stage of the process
- Should the case review find that a further investigation is required, based on the information provided by the customer, this will be allocated to a relevant Senior Manager within the Authority. This allocation is confirmation that a stage 2 investigation should proceed
- Where an investigation has been completed contact the customer to advise of the outcome
- Be responsible for keeping the complainant up to date including if there are any

delays in responding
- Final decisions made during this process will be in conjunction with relevant professionals in the authority

6.7 Our Complaints Process

6.7.1 Stage 1 (Local Resolution) - A point of contact (POC) will be provided for the customer who will ensure a response is provided within 10 working days.

6.7.2 Stage 2 (Management Escalation) - If the customer is not satisfied with the stage 1 response, they can ask for the complaint to be referred to the Complaints Manager to consider whether further investigation is required. Once this request is accepted and the points for further investigation confirmed a response will be provided within 10 working days.

6.7.2.1 The complainant must:
- Provide a detailed explanation of why and how the initial response failed to fully address their concerns, and evidence what element(s) of the complaint have not been answered
- Raise their concerns within 28 days of the response from the initial stage

6.8 Refused Escalation Requests

6.8.1 There may be some instances in which a complaint will not receive a further investigation. Such reasons may be as follows:
- The customer has not provided their reasons for on-going dissatisfaction with the stage 1 response
- Where all points have been addressed and it is considered that a further investigation will not result in a different outcome
- Where the authority has admitted fault in the stage 1 response
- Where we have been unable to reach an agreement with the customer around the points which require further investigation
- Where we have advised that the original investigation determined that another course of action supersedes or is more appropriate for the concerns raised
- If the customer has entered any formal appeals processes in between their stage 1 response and request for escalation - appeals processes supersede the complaints process (*a customer may return to us once an appeal is complete for further advice)
- Where any of the above happens, the customer may contact us further if they believe their complaint should be given further considerations, providing detailed reasons for this.

6.9 Referral to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

6.9.1 Should the customer have exhausted the above relevant stages of the complaints procedure but consider their problems have still not been addressed or they have not received a response within a reasonable time, they can escalate their complaint to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) for independent review.

6.9.2 The LGSCO is the final stage for complaints about Council services and it investigates complaints in a fair and independent way.

6.9.3 The Ombudsman will contact the Authority to collect information on how we have handled the complaint before they decide in the form of a recommendation. The Authority is not legally bound to follow any recommendations set out by the Ombudsman, although will consider if it is appropriate to do so.

6.10 **Withdrawal of Complaints**

6.10.1 A complaint may be withdrawn verbally or in writing at any time by the customer (or their representative. The relevant Senior Manager will consider whether, or not the issue of concern requires further consideration under appropriate internal management review systems and will write to the customer confirming the withdrawal.

6.11 **Anonymous Complaints**

6.11.1 Anonymous complaints will be recorded and referred to the appropriate manager to decide whether the matters raised require further investigation.

6.12 **Unreasonable Behaviour or Vexatious Complaints**

6.12.1 The inclusion of this section within the policy is to ensure those customers who we deem to be 'persistent or vexatious complainants' are dealt with appropriately, whilst ensuring that other customers or Authority staff are not adversely affected.

6.12.2 A complaint could be considered unreasonable or vexatious where the complainant meets one or more of the following:

- Persists in pursuing a complaint where the Complaints Policy has been fully and properly implemented and exhausted
- Submits repeated and unacceptably high numbers or abusive communications in connection with the same complaint or with minor additions or variations
- Has, while addressing a registered complaint, made excessive demands on the time and resources of staff.
- Refuses to accept a decision made on a complaint, repeatedly arguing points with no new evidence
- Refuses to co-operate with the complaints process resulting in lengthy delays
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds and/or making unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the complaint
- Has harassed or been personally abusive or verbally aggressive on repeated occasions despite documented evidence of this being described to the complainant as unacceptable
- Publishes derogatory information or statements about the Authority or the services it provides, including those through partner organisations
- Is known to have recorded meetings or face to face/telephone conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of other parties involved

6.12.3 It is not possible to devise a single strategy to deal with 'persistent or vexatious complainants', as each case must be looked at on its own merits. If the Authority considers that a complainant meets the above criteria the following procedure will be implemented:

6.12.4 We will inform the customer, in writing or at a face-to-face meeting, why we feel their behaviours or actions are unacceptable

6.12.5 We will give them the opportunity to change their behaviours within a reasonable timescale before taking any further action

6.12.6 Should the behaviours persist evidence of these will be gathered by the Complaints Manager and presented to the relevant Director or Senior Manager. The Complaints Manager and relevant managers will review the gathered evidence and decide on any potential restrictions that will be applied to the customer

6.12.7 Where the above is undertaken the Authority can apply restrictions in the ways the customer can access Authority Council services which may include one or more of the following:

- Their use of the Authority's complaints system will be limited to a single point of contact
- Contact shall be restricted to written communications only
- The Authority will not respond to any further contact
- Their license to enter any Authority premises will be restricted or removed
- Legal action may be taken including injunctions or court orders

6.12.8 There is no right of appeal to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority regarding the implementation of this section of the policy. We would however direct the customer to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) should they not agree with the application of any such restrictions.

6.12.9 Information concerning the restrictions will be shared with relevant staff. This information will also be registered on the customer's record whilst restrictions are in place.

7 Fluency Duty

7.1 Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016 requires that employees working in public facing roles in the public sector speak a level of English (or Welsh in Wales) which is sufficient to enable them to effectively carry out their role. A complaint made to the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority under the Fluency Duty is one where a member of the public feels a public-facing employee has insufficient proficiency in spoken English for the performance of their role.

7.2 A complaint about a public sector employee's accent, dialect, manner or tone of communication, origin or nationality will not be considered a legitimate complaint under the Fluency Duty.

8 Access to Information

8.1 Data Protection Legislation regulates the processing of information relating to individuals (data subjects) and provides them with several

rights regarding the information held about them.

8.2 Enquirers can provide feedback about the way in which their information is processed by the Authority using the methods detailed in section 4 above.

8.3 Should the enquirer remain dissatisfied with the response provided by the Authority, they can raise this with the Information Commissioner's Office.

8.4 The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 regulates the disclosure of non-personal information. If dissatisfied with a FOI response, an enquirer should firstly approach the Complaints Manager at HSCCA@southampton.gov.uk to request an internal review. After this, if they remain dissatisfied, they can approach the Information Commissioner's Office to appeal against a decision or complain about an unsatisfactory response.

8.5 The Complaints Policy is not a mechanism for individuals to exercise their data protection rights or to submit freedom of information requests. Individuals wishing to exercise their data protection rights (such as the right of access or the right to erasure) or make a freedom of information request should contact the Business Support team.

9 Reporting on Complaints

9.1 The Authority has a Complaints Manager whose role is to manage (collating, monitoring and reporting) complaints across the Authority and ensure that we learn from them when we have done something wrong. The Complaints Manager oversees the Complaints Policy and associated procedures and ensures the consistency of its application across the Authority.

Meeting:			**Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board**
Date:			13 July 2026
Report Title:			**Establishment of Regulatory Committees, Membership and Political Proportionality**
Chief Officer:			Susan Zeiss, Interim Monitoring Officer
Key decision:			No
Exempt Report:	YES ☐	NO ☒	
Voting arrangements:			The Board will work to progress decisions via consensus, if a vote is required then it is by simple majority.
Recommendation(s): The authority is recommended to;			
A			Agree to the establishment of the two Regulatory Committees: Governance and Audit Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committee
B			Approve the political balance calculations set out in paragraph 3.2 and 3.3

1. Purpose

1.1 This report presents the Monitoring Officer's political balance calculations for application to the Authority's Regulatory Committees within its governance framework. It seeks the Board's approval of these calculations and addresses related appointment considerations for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 It is a legal requirement as set out in the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) Regulations 2026 and the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, for the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority to appoint both members and substitute members to the Combined County Authority's Regulatory Committees. As far as possible, these appointments should reflect the political balance of the Constituent Councils.

2.2 The political balance is calculated using an established method. The Board is asked to approve this calculation.

2.3 This is to ensure that the Combined County Authority is properly established, can operate effectively, and meets its legal and governance requirements from the outset, while retaining sufficient flexibility to manage transitional and preparatory arrangements ahead of the Mayor taking office.

3 Main Discussion

3.1 Regulatory Committees

3.1.1 The regulatory Committees of the Combined County Authority are:

- The Governance and Audit Committee
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3.1.2 The membership of the Governance and Audit Committee will consist of two representatives from each constituent council apart from Hampshire County Council who will appoint four. In addition, a non-voting independent member will be appointed. The appointments to these committees will be made at a future meeting of the HSCCA Board.

3.1.3 The membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consist of two representatives from each constituent council apart from Hampshire County Council who will appoint four. In addition, at least two co-opted members may be appointed, whilst ensuring that the majority of members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are members of the constituent councils.

3.1.4 The Authority may also appoint substitutes to act in the place of members of these committees when they are not able to attend meetings. A further report will be brought to the Board with proposed recommendations in respect of these appointments.

3.1.5 Members of the HSCCA Board, including the Mayor (once elected) and Deputy Mayor (once appointed), may not be members of the regulatory Committees.

3.1.6 It is recommended that the Board agrees to establish these Committees as set out above.

3.2 Political Balance Calculations

3.2.1 As far as reasonably possible, the Combined County Authority must make sure that the committee's overall membership on both of these regulatory Committees reflects the political balance that currently exists across all the Constituent Councils combined.

3.2.2 The political proportionality of each regulatory committee is based on the total number of councillors across the four Constituent Councils who belong to political parties registered with the Electoral Commission. Councillors who are Independents or members of groups not registered nationally are excluded from the total number of councillors.

3.2.3 This approach is commonly used by Mayoral Combined Authorities and supports the Monitoring Officer in achieving political proportionality as far as reasonably practicable,

in line with legislative requirements. It provides a clear and consistent basis for calculation and avoids ambiguity about what constitutes a political group.

3.2.4 The political composition of the Constituent Councils, as reported to the Authority, is set out below. Figures shown in blue are excluded from the overall political balance calculation for the reasons outlined above.

Council	Lib Dem	Reform UK	Cons	Labour	Green	Ind	Island First Network	All for Islanders
Hampshire CC	26	20	27	1	1	3	0	0
Isle of Wight	4	19	2	1	2	2	6	3
Portsmouth	22	12	3	4	0	1	0	0
Southampton	7	8	6	24	6	0	0	0
Total 195 Cllrs	59	59	38	30	9	0	0	0
Percentage	30.256%	30.256%	19.487%	15.385%	4.615%	0	0	0

3.3 When this political proportionality is applied to the Regulatory Committees:

	Lib Dem	Reform UK	Cons	Labour	Green
Total number of councillors	59	59	38	30	9
Percentage of total	30.256%	30.256%	19.487%	15.385%	4.615%
Number of seats 10	3.026	3.026	1.949	1.5385	0.4615
Whole seats allocated	3	3	1	1	0
Remaining allocation	0.26	0.26	0.95	0.54	0.46
Additional Seats	0	0	1	1	0
Total allocation	**3**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**0**

3.4 <u>The Governance and Audit Committee</u>

3.4.1 In line with the political balance calculations outlined above, and taking into account the political composition of each constituent Council, appointments should be made to the Governance and Audit Committee as follows:

Hampshire County Council	4 representatives: • 2 Conservative • 1 Liberal Democrat • 1 Reform

Isle of Wight	2 representatives: • 2 Reform
Portsmouth	2 representatives: • 2 Liberal Democrats
Southampton	2 representatives: • 2 Labour

3.4.2 In constituting this committee the Combined County Authority is seeking to ensure that: the committee has the right mix of skills and behaviours; councillors are able to provide effective and independent assurance; each council is properly represented by members who can contribute meaningfully.

3.4.3 Appointments to the Governance and Audit Committee matter. The Committee plays a key role in: overseeing financial management and value for money; reviewing risk management and internal controls; monitoring governance, transparency, and decision-making processes and considering audit reports and external assurance.

3.4.4 The Committee requires members who can provide independent challenge and ensure the Combined County Authority is well run. Constituent Councils are asked to appoint members who serve on their own audit committees and/or have relevant skills or experience in financial management and governance.

3.5 Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3.5.1 In line with the political balance calculations outlined above, and taking into account the political composition of each constituent Council, appointments should be made to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as follows:

Hampshire County Council	4 representatives: • 2 Conservative • 1 Liberal Democrat • 1 Reform
Isle of Wight	2 representatives: • 2 Reform
Portsmouth	2 representatives: • 2 Liberal Democrats
Southampton	2 representatives: • 2 Labour

3.5.2 In constituting this committee the Combined County Authority is seeking to ensure that: the committee can effectively hold the Strategic Authority to account; members have the skills and approach needed for constructive challenge and each council is represented by councillors who can contribute to regional decision-making and scrutiny

3.5.3 Appointments to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee matter. The Committee plays a key role in: holding decision-makers to account; developing and reviewing policies, strategies, and major decisions; undertaking pre decision scrutiny and call in and making recommendations to improve outcomes for residents

3.5.4 Constituent Councils are therefore encouraged to appoint members who demonstrate the appropriate skills, independence and commitment to strengthen the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and provide robust, constructive challenge in support of better decision-making.

4 Partnership & Engagement

4.1 The HSCCA Monitoring Officer has engaged with the Monitoring Officers in the Constituent Authorities in the early sharing of the political proportionality calculations to facilitate arrangements in their councils.

5 Alternative Options Considered

Option	Summary	Why not recommended
None		

6 Appendices

None

Board is required to consider the following identified implications;

7 Financial Implications

7.1 Critical steps to demonstrating its duty of Best Value are the Combined County Authority's approval of the Constitution, which includes Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules for the Strategic Authority, and of the Local Assurance Framework, which provides a robust process to prioritise and deliver projects. T

7.2 The proposed budget for 2026-27 which is being considered elsewhere on this meeting's agenda includes a contingency sum which will cover any costs arising from the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 The Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017, as amended by the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, set out membership requirements for appointing to Regulatory Committees.

8.2 The legislation requires that political balance be achieved so far as is reasonably practicable. This wording is key as it does not require mathematical perfection and it allows the Combined County Authority to choose a method that is workable and is consistent.

8.3 By limiting the calculation to nationally registered parties the Combined County Authority is using a recognised practice creates a clear, standardised dataset, avoids ambiguity about what counts as a "group" and ensures the calculation can actually be applied across the four constituent councils.

8.4 This approach uses an objective and legally recognised classification where political parties are formally defined in law through their registration with the Electoral Commission. This gives the approach a major advantage:

- It relies on a single, authoritative national register
- It avoids subjective judgments about: informal groups, locally named alliances or loosely organised independents

This makes the system transparent, verifiable, and defensible.

8.5 If this approach was not used and all local or informal groupings were applied to the political balance calculation then you could have a situation that included small groups of one to two members and differently defined groups within each council. This could create inconsistent classifications and create difficulty in aggregating results.

8.6 By using only nationally recognised parties the method becomes consistent across all areas where like for like comparisons are possible. This is why this approach is recognised when calculating politically balanced within a Combined Authority context.

9 Equality & Diversity Implications

9.1 There are no equality or diversity implications identified within this report.

10 Other Significant Implications

Risk	☐	Assurance Framework	☐	Procurement	☐
Improvement	☐	Environment	☐	HR & IT	☐

Meeting:			**Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority**
Date:			13 July 2026
Report Title:			**Appointment of Statutory Officers**
Chief Officer:			Polly Hicks, Head of People and OD
Exempt Report:	YES ☐	NO ☒	
Voting arrangements:			The Board will work to progress decisions via consensus, if a vote is required then it is by simple majority.
Recommendation(s): The authority is recommended to;			
A	Approve the appointment of Ruth Adams to the post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on a fixed term basis.		
B	Approve the appointment of Debbie Simpson to the post of Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) on an interim basis.		
C	Approve the appointment of Susan Zeiss to the post of Monitoring Officer, on an interim basis.		
D	Approve the appointment of Adam Swain to the post of Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) on a permanent contract subject to the successful completion of all required due diligence and pre-employment checks and the expiry of any required notice period. The interim appointment in Recommendation B above will automatically cease on the taking up by Adam Swain of the position of Chief Finance Officer (Section 73).		
E	To note that the recruitment process for a permanent Monitoring Officer is well underway and the recommended appointment will be brought to the next meeting of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board for approval.		

1. Purpose

1.1 A key requirement for the establishment of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) is the appointment of appropriate statutory officers, so that it is legally compliant with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and other legislation. These appointments must be confirmed at, or prior to, the Authority's inaugural meeting.

1.2 This report proposes the appointment of those roles necessary to support the HSCCA through the inaugural meeting, namely the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) and Monitoring Officer. Without these appointments, the Strategic Authority would be unable to discharge its statutory responsibilities.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The HSCCA must appoint a Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Chief Finance Officer (Section 73), and Monitoring Officer. These roles are critical to ensuring legal compliance, sound financial management, and effective governance.

2.2 Having assessed these options against the HSCCA's current context, specifically its early stage of development, evolving organisational design and the absence of an elected Mayor until 2028, the recommended approach pre formation was to make a fixed term appointment for the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) and interim appointments for the Monitoring and Chief Finance Officer (Section 73).

2.3 The first meeting of the Board is asked to ratify and agree the Appointments Panel process developed in conjunction with the Local Authority Leaders and already applied during the recruitment processes for:

- Adam Swain as permanent Chief Finance Officer (Section 73)
- The permanent Monitoring Officer

2.4 Recruitment to these positions has been undertaken in line with the procedure set out in Part 5G of the constitution and is recommended to the Board at this meeting to enable permanent appointments to be made at the earliest opportunity.

3 Main Discussion

3.1 The requirement to stand a new strategic authority up at pace requires the appointment of officers to key posts. In making the appointments a range of options have been considered, including:

- Permanent recruitment
- Fixed-term appointments
- Secondments (via Section 113 agreements)
- Interim appointments

3.2 Having assessed these options against the HSCCA's current context, partner capacity and the pace required to establish, a blended approach is proposed, including appointing the statutory position of Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), for a fixed term duration and appointing two interim officers to serve as Chief Finance Officer(Section 73) and Monitoring Officer.

3.3 This approach ensures:

- Immediate statutory compliance and operational readiness
- Continuity and momentum from members of the existing Devolution Delivery Team
- Flexibility to refine roles and structures as the Strategic Authority matures
- The ability for the Strategic Authority Board and future Mayor to shape permanent senior leadership

3.4 Appointments Panel

3.4.1 In the formation stage of the Authority, the Leaders of the Constituent Authorities were asked to consider the format for the Appointments Panel for the recruitment of the substantive Statutory Officers. The preferred approach was to establish a Panel with a minimum requirement for two Board Members, and / or their nominated Deputy.

3.4.2 In line with the constitution, three appointment panels were established to appoint the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) (fixed term appointment), the substantive Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) (permanent appointments) to be made at the earliest opportunity.

3.5 Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive)

3.5.1 The Appointment Panel for the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), met in December 2025, following the HR processes of Southampton City Council on behalf of the CCA. The Panel involved the Leaders of each of the Constituent Local Authorities. The recommendation of this panel was to appoint Ruth Adams, on a fixed term basis until the election of the Mayor and the process to recruit to the permanent position of Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) is established and implemented.

3.6 Chief Finance Officer (Section 73)

3.6.1 A search process was conducted to appoint interim support for an initial part-time temporary Finance Director, pending the appointment of the substantive post. This process appointed Debbie Simpson as the interim appointed Chief Finance Officer (Section 73).

3.6.2 The Appointment Panel for the substantive permanent Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) included Councillors Adams-King and Bogle. The Panel recommends the appointment of Adam Swain subject to all due-diligence and pre-recruitment checks being satisfactorily concluded.

3.7 Monitoring Officer

3.7.1 A search process was conducted to appoint interim support for an initial part-time temporary Monitoring Officer, pending the appointment of the substantive post. This process appointed Susan Zeiss as the interim appointed Monitoring Officer.

3.7.2 Appointment Panel for the ongoing recruitment process for the permanent Monitoring Officer included Councillors Bacon and Sanders (Deputy CCA Member for PCC) and has recommended an appointment subject to all due-diligence and pre-recruitment

checks being satisfactorily concluded. The designation of the permanent Monitoring Officer will be brought to the next meeting of the Board for approval.

3.8 Other Statutory Officers

3.8.1 The appointment of a Combined Authority Returning Officer (CARO) for the Mayoral elections will be the subject of a future report to the Board.
The remaining statutory roles, which are not Chief Officers, namely Scrutiny Officer (SO), Data Protection Officer (DPO) and Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), will be undertaken by the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) in line with the provisions of the constitution.

4 Partnership & Engagement

4.1 The HSCCA utilised the HR services of Southampton City Council to facilitate and lead the process supporting the appointment of the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive). This process involved the support of two of the UTLA Chief Executive Officers who conducted the technical interview.

4.2 In the appointment of the Interim MO and s73 Officers, the MO of Portsmouth City Council and s151 of Southampton City Council were engaged in the process of longlisting and interviewing.

4.3 In the process to appoint the substantive MO and s73 Officers, officers supported the initial sift. An established s73 and MO from out of the region supported a technical interview process leading to a short list of recommended candidates for the formal politically led Appointments Panel.

5 Alternative Options Considered

Option	Summary	Why not recommended
Permanent and fixed-term recruitment	Permanent and fixed-term appointments offer some advantages, including: ▪ Greater stability and continuity ▪ Clear long-term leadership accountability ▪ Potential cost efficiencies compared to interim rates	The recruitment to permanent Section 73 and Monitoring Officer roles could not be completed in time for the first meeting of the Authority, hence the requirement for the interim solution

Secondments (Section 113 Agreements)	The Local Government Act 1972 provides that local authorities may place their employees at the disposal of other local authorities through secondment or other arrangements	Existing statutory officers in constituent authorities already hold significant responsibilities and expressed they felt unable to provide the capacity required and that the dual role would create capacity and resilience risks, conflicts of interest where priorities of constituent councils and the Strategic Authority diverge and a reduced ability to provide independent statutory advice.
Interim Appointments (recommended approach)	This approach provides: ▪ immediate compliance with statutory requirements ▪ momentum to start quickly ▪ reduced delivery risk during a critical establishment period ▪ the ability to design and transition to fixed term /permanent at the appropriate time.	This is the recommended approach for the statutory Officer roles on Monitoring Officer and Section 73 (Finance) Officers pending the approval by the Board of permanent postholders.

6 Appendices

6.1 None

Board is required to consider the following identified implications;

7 Financial Implications

7.1 The costs of the interim arrangements are reflected within the HSCCA's proposed budget model. Interim arrangements may carry higher short-term day-rate costs; however, these are justified by the need to ensure statutory compliance and governance continuity during the establishment phase. The interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) and the Monitoring Officer appointments have also been made on a part-time basis, recognising the additional associated costs as well as the knowledge, skills and

significant experience that those proposed have already brought to the Devolution Programme and will continue to bring.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 The HSCCA is required to designate one of its officers as Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), under Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) is a statutory post with the duties set out in Section 4 (3) of the 1989 Act which include reporting (where they think it is appropriate) on the coordination of the discharge of the Authority's functions, the number and grades of staff required, the organisation of staff and their appointment and proper management. The Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) cannot be the same person as the Monitoring Officer.

8.2 The Monitoring Officer is appointed under Section 5 Local Government and Housing Act 1989; and that Officer has personal responsibility:

- To report on actual, and anticipated, illegality within the Authority
- To report cases where the Ombudsman has found maladministration on the part of the Authority
- To maintain the Register of Members' Interests; and to administer, assess and investigate complaints of Members' misconduct

8.3 The Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) is required to be appointed under Section 73 Local Government Act 1985 and has responsibility for the proper administration of the Combined Authority's affairs.

9 Equality & Diversity Implications

9.1 No specific implications were identified in the preparation of this decision. In administering the process and appointing a partner to assist in the search for candidates, the devolution set up team scrutinised the equality and diversity plan to deliver a diverse field of candidates.

10 Other Significant Implications

Risk Ensuring the CCA commences in a safe and legal way	☒	Assurance Framework	☐	Procurement	☐
Improvement	☐	Environment	☐	**HR & IT** All recruitment activity will comply with: The HSCCA Constitution, Employment law, Public Sector Equality Duty, and HSCCA's HR policies and procedures	☒

Meeting:			**Hampshire and Solent Combined County Authority Board**
Date:			13 July 2026
Report Title:			**Finance Report and Year 1 Budget**
Chief Officer:			Debbie Simpson, Interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 73)
Key decision:			Yes
Exempt Report:	YES ☐	NO ☒	
Voting arrangements:			Until the commencement of the first Mayor's term of office, any decision relating to the approval or amendment of the Combined County Authority's budget shall require the unanimous support of all five Constituent Members.
Recommendation(s): The authority is recommended to;			
A	To approve the balanced 2026/27 revenue and capital budget as set out in Appendix A.		
B	To approve the acceptance of known funding and to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Section 73 Officer, to accept future funding allocations in accordance with the Authority's approved schemes of delegation.		
C	To approve the proposed approach to the establishment and use of earmarked reserves for 2026/27, as set out in paragraph 3.10.6, noting that a comprehensive Reserves Strategy will be presented to a future meeting of the Authority.		
D	To approve the arrangements for internal and external Audit as detailed in 3.12 of this report and that an update of the appointment of the external auditor via Public Sector Audit Appointments, will be bought to the next HSCCA meeting. As detailed in section 3.12.2 of this report.		

1. Purpose

1.1 This report establishes the initial, interim budget and financial governance arrangements for HSCCA. It also looks at how expenditure will be funded.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report sets out the financial position of the Hampshire and Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) as of June 2026. It covers the 2025/26 year-end position, funding sources and their planned use, the interim budget for 2026/27, the reserves strategy, and other financial governance arrangements.

3 Main discussion

3.1 HSCCA was vested on 4 June 2026 with devolved powers and funding to boost economic growth, encourage innovation among local businesses, and create more

opportunities for communities in the Hampshire and Solent region. Until this point Southampton City Council has been acting as accountable body for the authority pre vesting for grant funding used to support the establishment of the Combined Authority and administering the funding in an agent capacity on behalf of HSCCA.

3.2 **2025/26 Pre Vesting Income and Expenditure**

3.2.1 In the 2025/26 financial year, Southampton Council received £3m of Mayoral Capacity Funding (MCF) on behalf of the authority; a ringfenced grant to support the creation of the combined authority. The funding received was higher than the initially anticipated £1.5m due to an uplift of £1.5m received late in the year.

3.2.2 The MCF funding has been used to cover the cost of project staff and statutory officers; recruitment expenses; the creation of a HSCCA website; work towards the development of a Local Growth Plan for the region; and other general running costs.

	Year 2025/26 £000
Expenditure	
PMO Staff	420
Other Staff	60
Non-Staff Costs	70
Total costs	**550**

3.2.3 In March 2026, additional funding of £0.765m was received to develop the Spatial Development Strategy. The fund is to cover a 3-year period, of which £0.314m has been included for delivery in 2026/27, the remainder has been ring fenced in an ear-marked reserve to fund years two and three of the programme.

3.2.4 The Growth Hub grant of £0.48m for 2026/2027 was also accepted on behalf of the HSCCA by Southampton Council.

3.2.5 Surplus funds of £2.45m held on behalf of HSCCA by Southampton City Council, as accountable body, will be transferred to HSCCA once the bank account and finance system is live.

3.3 **Accounting for Pre Vesting Expenditure**

3.3.1 Grant income and related expenditure will not be recognised in the accountable body's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement but will be recorded on a balance sheet basis only.

3.3.2 In its 2026/27 year one accounts, the Combined Authority will recognise:

- Pre vesting income and expenditure
- any pre vesting liabilities and commitments, and
- ongoing income and expenditure from vesting

3.4 2026/27 Budget

3.4.1 The 2026/27 budget represents a part-year position following the establishment of the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) on 4 June 2026, following parliamentary approval of the relevant statutory instrument. A summary of the budget is shown in Appendix A.

3.4.2 The budget reflects the Authority's transition from start-up to early delivery. During its first year, the focus will be on establishing delivery models, developing a pipeline of investment programmes, and preparing for the transfer and integration of strategic responsibilities, including transport, housing, skills, economic development and regeneration, and the Growth Hub. Subject to future decisions, this may also include Police and Crime Commissioner and Fire functions. Closer alignment with Solent Freeport is anticipated.

3.4.3 As a newly established organisation, the Authority has no prior-year financial baseline against which to compare expenditure. The budget has therefore been developed using the best information currently available, drawing on research, indicative local government benchmarks and anticipated activity levels. It should be regarded as an interim Year 1 budget and a reasonable estimate of the resources required to establish and operate the Authority during 2026/27. As the Board agrees its policy and operational priorities and there is more certainty around the level of resourcing required, the budget process will evolve.

3.4.4 The budget provides for all known and anticipated costs associated with the establishment and operation of the Authority and includes a contingency provision of £0.15m to reflect the uncertainties inherent in a new organisation. This provision is intended to cover unforeseen costs arising from changes in delivery models, timing differences in recruitment and implementation, and emerging operational requirements. The level of contingency will be kept under review through regular in-year financial monitoring.

3.4.5 The budget is balanced with reserves starting to be built.

3.5 Source of Funds

3.5.1 Mayoral Capacity Funding (MCF)

3.5.1..1 The Mayoral Capacity Fund is a multi-year settlement granted by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to be used to create the authority and support its sustainability. An initial allocation was granted for 2025/26 with a further three-year settlement granted up to 2028/29. The new allocation and carry forward allocation will be used to support revenue costs.

Mayoral Capacity Funding	**(3,950,000)**
MCF 25/26 Carry Forward	(950,000)
Mayoral Capacity Funding Standard Allocation	(1,500,000)
MCF one year uplift	(1,500,000)

3.5.2 Growth Hubs

3.5.2..1 The Growth Hub funding is granted by the Department for Business & Trade (DBT) as a 3-year settlement. The settlement granted to the HSCCA, is for £0.48M per year. Department for Business and Trade are seeking efficiencies from a single CCA Hub running across the region.

3.5.3 Spatial Development Strategy Fund (SDS)

3.5.3..1 A new Spatial Development Strategy Fund has been granted by MHCLG to support the preparation and development of a high-level spatial plan looking ahead at least 20 years and setting the framework for Local Plans. Total allocation of £0.76m has been made to the HSCCA, based on two payments one made in 2025/2026 and one in this financial year. £0.235 of this has been budgeted to cover expenditure in 2026/27, with the remainer held in reserve to cover years 2 and 3 of the scheme. Spatial Development Strategies are to ensure sub-regional areas can effectively plan to meet their housing needs, co-ordinate the provision of strategic infrastructure, grow their economies and improve the environment and climate resilience and the first use of this fund will be to recruit a planning team to deliver HSCCA Spatial Development Strategy. More information regarding this funding will be available once secondary legislation to make the strategic planning system operational is passed. This is expected to be laid before Parliament breaks for summer recess.

3.5.4 Investment Fund

3.5.4..1 The Authority will receive £17.8m of Investment Fund (IF) funding in 2026/27, comprising £8.9m revenue funding and £8.9m capital funding.

3.5.4..2 The revenue allocation will support programme delivery and grant distribution (£6.1m), staffing and programme management costs (£0.976m), together with contributions to the election reserve (£1.8m).

Investment Fund - Grant Received	(8,920,000)
Investment Fund - Grant Distributed	6,143,300
Investment Fund - Staffing	976,700
Transfer to reserves	1,800,000
Balance	-

3.5.4..3 The capital allocation will provide £8.1m for investment projects and programmes. In addition, £0.8m has been allocated to support scheme development, scheme appraisal, procurement and commissioning of investment activity and direct staff costs that are permitted to be capitalised. These costs are directly attributable to the delivery of the Authority's investment programme and are based on insights from other Combined Authorities. If the totality of this allocation is not required funds will be available for capital schemes.

Investment fund grant received	(8,920,000)
Investment Fund (feasibility, development, appraisal)	812,000
Investment Fund (to be distributed)	8,108,000

3.5.4..4 Taken together, this provides £16.0m to support investment, programme delivery, associated programme management activity and the operating costs of the HSCCA in 2026/27, alongside £1.8m to support reserve creation and strengthen the Authority's financial resilience.

3.5.4..5 Investment funding is not required to be spent within the financial year. Any unspent funding will either be carried forward or transferred to an earmarked reserve to support future investment activity.

3.5.4..6 The Authority's investment priorities are currently being developed and will be subject to Member approval through the appropriate governance processes. As a result, expenditure in 2026/27 is expected to focus on the development and appraisal of investment proposals, including feasibility studies, business cases and project design. Delivery of capital investment is therefore expected to be phased over subsequent years, with unspent funding retained in earmarked reserves to support the approved investment programme.

3.5.5 Transport Revenue

3.5.5..1 Due to the HSCCA not being established at the start of the 2026/2027 financial year, the DfT contracted directly with the UTLA, a total sum of £17.8m was granted to the UTLAs by. In subsequent years this funding will be received by HSCCA, and these will be shown in the MTFP. Following the election a Mayoral Transport Fund will be created, with funds allocated according to strategic priorities. Plans will be shared with relevant committees for comment and approval.

3.5.6 Consolidated Adult Skills Fund

3.5.6..1 The Consolidated Adult Skills Fund is made up of three distinct funding elements: Adult Skills Fund, Skills Bootcamps and Free Courses for Jobs. ASF is a statutory responsibility, transferring to the CCA from the Secretary of State in 2027/2028, it is distributed to Further Education Colleges and UTLA via a grant mechanism and to independent training providers via a procured process. For the year 2026/2027 HSCCA received £0.15m and will receive £0.05m in the subsequent year to undertake readiness work. The full allocation of ASF, Skills Bootcamp funding will come to the CCA from April 2027, and this will be reflected in the MTFP.

3.5.7 Other funding

3.5.7..1 A contract for Careers Hub provision is available from the Careers and Enterprise Company in 2027/2028. This contract will be available to the Authority from September 2027 and will require match funding from the CCA. No provision for this has been made in the 2026/27 budget.

3.5.7..2 Flexibilities available within the devolution framework include mayoral powers in relation to transport funding, the introduction of levies (including a potential overnight visitor levy), and the application of a mayoral precept. These powers sit with the elected Mayor and have therefore not been incorporated into the 2026/27 budget. Consideration of their use, including any associated policy and financial implications, will form part of future financial planning following the election of a mayor in 2028. No provision for these will be made in the 2026/27 budget, or the MTFP until that time.

3.6 **Revenue Expenditure 2026/27**

3.6.1 Revenue costs for 2026/27 are shown in the table below;

Revenue Forecast (£'000)	26/27
Total Costs	**14,615,072**
Staffing costs	**2,938,251**
Operating Structure Staffing	2,938,251
Non staffing costs	**1,262,105**
Non Staffing Costs	923,926
SLAs	338,179
Grant Distribution & Delivery	**6,666,788**
Growth Hub	437,406
Investment fund	6,143,300
Adult education	86,082
Finance and contingencies	**350,000**
Provisions & Contingencies	150,000
Transition Preparation costs - Fire/Police	200,000
Cont. To/From Reserves	**3,397,928**
Spatial Development Fund EMR	451,070
Elections from Investment Fund	1,800,000
General reserve	1,146,858

3.6.2 Staffing Costs include salaries, employer National Insurance and pension contributions, recruitment costs, training and development, and agency costs. The 2026/27 budget provides for a mix of directly employed officers and secondees to enable rapid mobilisation and early delivery of regional benefits. The staffing structure reflects the core responsibilities of the HSCCA and identifies the key leadership, operational and support roles required to deliver the proposed operating model effectively. However, this should not be interpreted as a commitment to recruit to all posts from inception. Recruitment into the following functions, will be phased and incremental, with appointments made in line with operational requirements, service demand, available resources and organisational maturity:

3.6.2..1 Policy and External Affairs – Leading delivery of an ambitious Local Growth Plan for 2026/27, including establishing a data, insight and intelligence function to support key strategies such as the Spatial Development Strategy, Skills Strategy and Local Transport Plan, alongside Communications and External Affairs.

3.6.2..2 Economy – Strategic oversight and commissioning across Planning, Regeneration, Housing, Business Support, Skills and Employment, the Freeport and wider sectoral activity.

3.6.2..3 Transport – To be mobilised later, aligned with the transfer of strategic transport responsibilities.

3.6.2..4 Delivery – Programme management of major transition programmes and services (including the Growth Hub, Careers and Enterprise Hub, Strategic and Public Transport, Freeport, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Fire

Authority transfer), alongside commissioned programmes, corporate performance, and digital and data requirements.

3.6.2..5 Finance – Section 73 statutory responsibilities.

3.6.2..6 Governance and Legal – Democratic Services, Legal, Risk and Assurance, Human Resources, Organisational Development and Executive Support

3.6.3 During 2026/27 financial year HSCCA will receive support services under Service Level Agreements (SLAs) as follows:

- Portsmouth CC – internal audit and information governance
- Southampton CC – procurement and IT
- Hampshire CC – financial systems, treasury management, data, and intelligence
- OPCC – Information Governance and Scrutiny support
- Southeast Employers – Initial secondment of CEX and call off HR support, Job Evaluation

These are shown as corporate enabling costs and charges will be monitored on an on-going basis to ensure the delivery model represents best value for money.

3.6.4 In addition to direct staffing costs, provision has been made for non-staffing costs directly associated with the delivery of investment programmes and grant-funded schemes and other operational costs. These non-staffing costs includes project development, commissioning, technical assurance, compliance with fund-specific delivery requirements, and potentially specialist programme management.

3.6.5 Where funding conditions permit, non-staff and staff and management costs will be allocated to individual schemes on a reasonable and proportionate basis to reflect the resources required to deliver those programmes.

3.6.6 The budget includes an in-year contingency of £0.150m. This provision forms part of the annual revenue budget and is intended to manage minor unforeseen costs and variations from budget assumptions during the Authority's first year of operation. Its use is intended to reduce the need to draw upon reserves for day-to-day budget management.

3.7 Capital Budget

3.7.1 In addition to the available revenue programme budget of £6.14m, the capital budget comprises £8.9m of Investment Fund (IF) capital funding. Of this £8.9m, £0.812m has provisionally been allocated to support the development, appraisal, commissioning and

staffing of investment activity, that are able to be capitalised. The remainder will be utilised to enable progression of specific capital schemes. There are no firm plans for this at this time but as plans are developed, they will be bought back to the Board.

Total Capital Expenditure	Capital Expenditure
Strategy Policy & Growth Total	
Investment fund grant received	(8,920,000)
Investment Fund (feasibility, development, appraisal)	812,000
Investment Fund (to be distributed)	8,108,000

3.7.2 **Summary of Revenue and Capital**

3.7.3 In summary the revenue and capital position, after operating costs and the general, ringfenced and election reserve, the available resources for investment total £14.3m, as shown below.

Total Revenue and Capital available for investment	**14,251,300**
Revenue Investment Fund to be distributed	6,143,300
Capital Investment Fund to be distributed	8,108,000

3.8 **Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)**

3.8.1 As the organisation evolves and more is known about regional priorities and national changes a Medium-Term Financial Plan will be developed and presented to Members for consideration and approval at a future meeting. The Plan will provide a comprehensive framework for financial planning, resource allocation, workforce planning and financial stewardship and governance as the Authority continues its transition towards the establishment of a Mayoral model of governance.

3.9 **Assumptions and Principles 2026/27**

3.9.1 General Budget assumptions are listed below

- Income is based on known funds
- Expenditure is based on anticipated sums
- Implementation including recruitment, will be phased, with expenditure reflecting mobilisation across the year
- Staffing and pay costs are indicative, pending final organisational design and Pay Policy approval
- Pension costs are assumed based on expected participation in the Hampshire Pension Fund, subject to confirmation
- Election costs are based on indicative forecasts and will be refined

- Salary uplifts are assumed to be 3.3% in line with Local Government Pay awards
- Inflation is anticipated to remain stable with no additional cost pressures
- SLA costs will be within the anticipated budget
- HSCCA will not move to its own premises during the year
- There will be no shortfall in Growth Hub funding

3.9.2 General budget principles are listed below.

- Revenue surpluses resulting from slippage will be considered for investment in schemes
- Options to use revenue funds to support borrowing will be explored
- All decisions will consider both short-term affordability and long-term financial resilience
- HSCCA will encourage joint working to improve outcomes

3.10 Reserves Policy

3.10.1 This initial Reserves Strategy, set out below, sets out the Authority's proposed approach to maintaining reserves during its establishment and vesting period. It establishes the purpose of reserves, the proposed reserve structure and the principles that will be applied in determining reserve adequacy.

3.10.2 The HSCCA reserves strategy will adopt a risk-based approach consistent with CIPFA's Financial Management Code, Prudential and Reserves Guidance, and Bulletin 13, together with the Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) statutory duty is to advise Members on the robustness of budget estimates and the adequacy of reserves when setting the budget.

3.10.3 Reserves will be maintained through a clear distinction between the General Reserve, held to manage unforeseen events and financial volatility, and earmarked reserves, established for specific known or anticipated liabilities and commitments.

3.10.4 The Authority will not normally use reserves to support recurring expenditure on an ongoing basis, except where this forms part of a time-limited and credible Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

3.10.5 The adequacy of the General Reserve will be reviewed at least annually, with the Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) recommending an appropriate minimum balance based on an assessment of financial risks. This assessment will take account of factors including the scale of the budget, funding uncertainty, demand and cost pressures, grant

conditions, inflationary risk, delivery risk, and the Authority's status as a newly established organisation.

3.10.6 It is proposed that contributions from the 2026/27 budget are set aside in earmarked reserves for the following purposes:

- Spatial Development Reserve – an earmarked reserve comprising developer and other contributions received to support spatial development activity, with expenditure currently profiled over a three-year delivery period.
- Mayoral Election Reserve – an earmarked reserve established to meet the anticipated costs of future mayoral elections, the first election estimated to cost between £6m and £7m.
- General Fund Balance – a general reserve maintained at an appropriate level to provide financial resilience, manage the impact of unforeseen expenditure and income volatility, and support the authority's overall financial sustainability.

Cont. To/From Reserves	**3,397,928**
Spatial Development Fund EMR	451,070
Elections from Investment Fund	1,800,000
General reserve	1,146,858

3.10.7 A minimum balance equivalent to around 5% of the Authority's net revenue budget is considered prudent during the early years of operation, subject to an annual review of risks and the Authority's financial circumstances.

3.10.8 For 2026/27, a higher level of 10% has been provided. As the Authority is newly established, there is no historical financial data or expenditure trend information on which to base an assessment of the appropriate level of reserves. The higher balance therefore provides additional resilience while financial baselines are established, and operational and financial risks become better understood.

3.11 Capital and Treasury Considerations (Interim)

3.11.1 The Authority expects to receive significant funding that includes both revenue and capital elements, most notably through the Investment Fund and transport-related funding streams.

3.11.2 At this early stage, a detailed Capital Strategy has not yet been developed. However:

- No external borrowing is currently anticipated in Year 1

- Capital expenditure decisions will be subject to future governance and prioritisation arrangements.
- A formal Capital Strategy will be developed in line with CIPFA Prudential Code requirements.

3.11.3 Treasury Management activities in Year 1 are expected to be limited and will be managed through the accountable body arrangements. Cash balances will be managed prudently with a focus on security and liquidity.

3.11.4 A full Treasury Management Strategy, compliant with CIPFA guidance, will be presented to the next HSCCA audit committee.

3.12 **Financial Governance**

3.12.1 The proposals within this report are consistent with the Authority's Local Assurance Framework and Financial Procedure Rules, ensuring appropriate governance, control and oversight of financial decision-making. The proposals within this report are consistent with the Authority's Local Assurance Framework and Financial Procedure Rules, ensuring appropriate governance, control and oversight of financial decision-making.

3.12.2 Appointment of external auditors

3.12.2..1 Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd is designated as an appointing person for principal local government and police bodies for audits under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015. The Combined Authority has opted into this national scheme for appointing an auditor. An update on the appointment will be bought to the next Audit Committee meeting.

3.12.3 Internal Audit

3.12.3..1 The Authority has agreed provision of appropriate internal audit arrangements, delivered through SLA with Portsmouth Council. An Audit Committee (or equivalent) will be established to provide independent assurance on governance, risk management and internal control.

3.12.4 Treasury Management

3.12.4..1 HSCCA are entering into an SLA with Hampshire County Council for Treasury Management services. A full Treasury Management Strategy will be presented to a future meeting.

3.12.5 Pay Policy Statement

3.12.5..1 The HSCCA Pay Policy Statement for Year One is in development and will be presented to Members for approval at the next meeting. This will set out the Authority's approach to remuneration, including senior pay, workforce pay structures and governance arrangements. We are recommending we follow nationally agreed sectoral pay arrangements.

3.13 **Pension Arrangements**

3.13.1 From vesting day, the HSCCA will become a scheduled body within the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) as a combined authority. Advice will be sought on the process for participation in the Fund's scheme, and this will be reflected within the forthcoming Pay Policy Statement where relevant to pension provision and overall remuneration.

3.14 **Financial Monitoring and Control**

3.14.1 Robust financial management arrangements will be established to ensure that expenditure remains within approved budgets and that financial risks are identified and managed appropriately.

3.14.2 Financial performance will be monitored on a regular basis, with:

- Routine budget monitoring reports prepared for management.
- Formal financial reporting to Members on a quarterly basis (or more frequently if required)
- Forecast outturn positions updated throughout the year.

3.14.3 As a newly established Authority, particular focus will be placed on:

- Monitoring of staffing costs and recruitment to ensure the HSCCA is resourced sufficiently to deploy its policy, programme and investment functions for the benefit of the region and, in time, to prepare for the Mayoralty.
- Tracking the use of grant funding in line with conditions
- Managing the phasing of expenditure against available resources

These arrangements will be further strengthened as the Authority develops its full financial regulations and governance framework.

3.15 **Financial Risk**

3.15.1 The following financial risks have been identified in relation to delivery of the Year 1 budget and ongoing financial sustainability:

- Underestimation of SLA costs resulting in higher-than-budgeted expenditure
- Outgrowing current premises, leading to unbudgeted relocation or expansion costs
- Funding received being lower than budgeted.
- Inflation exceeding the 3.5% assumption, increasing costs.
- Delay in receipt of funding or income, impacting cash flow and delivery timelines.
- Unplanned demand for services, leading to additional cost pressures.
- Dependency on third-party delivery partners, creating financial pressures if costs escalate or delivery changes.
- Inability to recruit staff leads to use of interims, increasing staffing costs.
- Underfunding of Growth Hubs by government creates a funding gap.

3.15.2 These risks will be managed through the development of a corporate approach to risk management, with financial and delivery risks monitored and reviewed regularly as part of this framework.

4 Alternative Options Considered

Option	Summary	Why not recommended
Not to approve the budget	The Authority could decide not to approve the budget	This option was rejected as failure to approve the Year 1 budget would prevent the Authority from meeting its statutory obligations and effectively delivering its agreed priorities.

5 Appendices

Appendix A - 2026/27 Summary Revenue Budget

Board is required to consider the following identified implications.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The proposals set out in this report establish the interim Year 1 budget, enabling the Authority to operate within a defined financial framework and ensuring resources are aligned to agreed priorities. As the organisation continues to develop, ongoing financial monitoring and risk management arrangements will support delivery within the

approved budget and allow for refinement as part of the work to develop the MTFS as operating models and requirements are confirmed.

6.2 In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer (Section 73) is required to report on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

6.3 Having reviewed the budget proposals set out in this report, it is my opinion that:

- The budget has been prepared on a prudent and reasonable basis, reflecting the best available information at this stage of the Authority's development.
- The key assumptions underpinning the budget are appropriate, although subject to a degree of inherent uncertainty given the evolving nature of delivery models, service requirements and organisational design.
- The estimates are sufficiently robust for the purpose of setting a Year 1 budget and establishing financial control.
- The level of reserves is adequate when considered alongside the Authority's current risk profile, particularly as a newly established organisation.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The Authority is required to set and operate within an approved budget in accordance with its statutory duties and governance framework, the proposals in this report support compliance with these obligations.

8 Equality & Diversity Implications

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report; however, delivery of the approved budget will continue to support the Authority's commitment to inclusive and equitable outcomes.

9 Other Significant Implications

Risk	☒	Assurance Framework	☒	Procurement	☐
Improvement	☐	Environment	☐	HR & IT	☐

2026/27 Budget

Revenue Forecast (£'000)	26/27
Total Costs	**14,615,072**
Staffing costs	**2,938,251**
Operating Structure Staffing	2,938,251
Non staffing costs	**1,262,105**
Non Staffing Costs	923,926
SLAs	338,179
Grant Distribution	**6,666,788**
Growth Hub	437,406
Investment fund	6,143,300
Adult education	86,082
Finance and contingencies	**350,000**
Provisions & Contingencies	150,000
Transition Preparation costs - Fire/Police	200,000
Cont. To/From Reserves	**3,397,928**
Spatial Development Fund EMR	451,070
Elections from Investment Fund	1,800,000
General reserve	1,146,858
Total Corporate Funding	**(14,615,072)**
Investment income	**(350,000)**
Mayoral Capacity Funding net position	**(3,950,000)**
MCF 25/26 Carry Forward	(950,000)
Mayoral Capacity Funding Standard Allocation	(1,500,000)
MCF on year uplift	(1,500,000)
Employment & Skills net position	-
Adult Skills Enabling Costs - Grant Received	(150,000)
ASF - Staff costs	63,918
ASF - Non staff costs	77,082
ASF - Commissioned activity	9,000
SDS funding net position	**(451,070)**
SDS funding from MHCLG intended to cover 3 years	(765,072)
SDS Staff costs	235,416
SDS contribution to corporate costs	25,000
SDS SLA Costs	53,586
Investment Fund net position	-
Investment Fund - Grant Received	(8,920,000)
Investment Fund - Grans Distributed	6,143,300
Investment Fund - Staffing	976,700
Transfer to reserves	1,800,000
Growth Hub net position	-
Growth Hub Funding - Grant Received	(480,000)
Growth Hub Provision	437,406

Growth Hub Staffing	42,594
Net (Surplus)/Deficit	**(0)**
	26/27
Capital Fore cast (£'000)	**Capital Forecast (£'000)**
Total Capital Expenditure	**Capital Expenditure**
Strategy Policy & Growth Total	
Investment fund grant received	(8,920,000)
Investment Fund (feasibility, development, appraisal)	812,000
Investment Fund (to be distributed)	8,108,000
Net Capital Position	-

Meeting:			**Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority**
Date:			13 July 2026
Report Title:			**Responding to the Young People and Work Report**
Chief Officer:			Ruth Adams, Chief Executive
Exempt Report:	YES ☐	NO ☒	
Voting arrangements:			The Board will work to progress decisions via consensus, if a vote is required then it is by simple majority.
Recommendation(s): The authority is recommended to;			
A			Consider the analysis in this report and determine whether any additional research or local analysis is required.
B			Consider and agree any priorities for consideration by the Employment and Skills Advisory Board, when established.
C			Approve that an invitation be made to Alan Milburn and / or the research team to host a round table stakeholder discussion that informs and contributes to the development of the HSCCA Local Growth Plan and supplementary Skills and Employment Strategy.

1. Purpose

1.1 This report and presentation poses questions for the Hampshire and Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) to consider. It seeks guidance from the Board as to how it wishes to build this priority into the terms of reference for the Employment and Skills Advisory board and in its work to develop the Local Growth Plan and Skills and Employment Strategy.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 Youth employment is crucial for the regional and UK economy. It drives economic growth, productivity, social cohesion and personal and social wellbeing. Since the Covid pandemic, youth unemployment has, however been rising. Youth unemployment is driven by a complex array of barriers, but for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and / or with low qualifications the risk of being Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) doubles.

2.2 The recent national report on NEETS, authored by Alan Milburn, in addition to personal and social blights, highlights the lost contribution to the exchequer, and calls for a whole system reset to reduce regional disparities in outcomes for young people.

2.3 The data for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, points to a below national average rate of NEETS, this masks considerable disparities, particularly in the cities and other district communities.

2.4 Whilst the HSCCA has no powers or responsibilities for pre 19 education, other than accountability for the national Careers Hub programme, it will have statutory responsibility for post 19 adult skills. This includes the requirement to support adults (19 plus) with basic skills, achieving their first level 2 qualification and prioritising skills linked to employment outcomes. It also will assume responsibility for Skills Bootcamps and Free Courses for Jobs. In the longer term the HSCCA, can seek a single settlement from HM Treasury, which removes programmatic constraints.

2.5 The questions posed in this presentation seek to stimulate the commencement of a policy and programme debate on outcomes and priorities related to youth employment. It seeks guidance from the Board on future work and priorities, that informs the work of officers and the, soon to be developed, Employment and Skills Advisory Board.

3 Main Discussion

3.1 The Diagnosis

3.1.1 In any economic downturn or economic shock, young people bear the brunt of the consequences. This has most recently manifested itself following the COVID pandemic. The Government recently commissioned Alan Milburn, to conduct an independent review into the rising number of young people designated as NEET. The Milburn review is in two parts with the diagnostic review released in June 2026 and the final report due in the Autumn of 2026.

3.1.2 The Report draws on key themes in the diagnosis of the current national position:

- The cost and scale of the problem, in comparison to other countries, and the blight to the long-term trajectory for regions and the UK if there remains a failure to act.
- The multiple interconnected reasons for youth disengagement and the systemic failures to align health, education and welfare systems with the labour market to improve outcomes.
- The lack of a joined up and connected system, that keeps young people in the system, especially after leaving full-time education at age 18, resulting in a lack of funding and accountability to deal with youth unemployment.

3.1.3 The report also highlights the frustrations of young people. Namely, that their talents are unidentified. They feel blocked from proper adulthood due to a lack of a job and income, which adversely affects their ability to find a home and achieve practical and financial independence. There is a dearth of work experience whilst simultaneously employers

are demanding work experience and finally other barriers, particularly transport pose significant barriers. The significance of these barriers is amplified for young people who have been in the care system or whom have a disability, as they feel unsupported and ill-prepared for employment.

3.1.4 The diagnosis of reasons for the increase in youth unemployment also points to demand and supply side contributors. On the demand side the fall in jobs in retail, hospitality or designated entry level jobs has suppressed the opportunities traditionally open to young people. On the supply side the use of apprenticeships by employers to upskill their existing older workforce are squeezing both opportunity and displacing resources.

3.1.5 A recent significant contributor to NEETs is the increase in diagnosed mental health constraints and the failure to meet this with a comparable support response. The challenge raised is for a pivot from diagnose and cure to supporting employment which can bring longer term benefits to secure positive mental health.

3.1.6 Finally, and outside the scope of the HSCCA to influence, is the benefit system and an assessment that this is skewed to short term gap support for older workers as opposed to the younger work force with no or limited resources and / or work experience.

3.1.7 The overarching conclusion made in the diagnosis report is of a system, where the different elements of government, do not align around a common cause and objective regarding young people's employment. Milburn's conclusion is for a reorientation of the education and skills system which emphasises and prioritises destination as an aim and employment an outcome as opposed to the preoccupation with a sole focus on qualification attainment. The call is for a strong systems architecture in which young people's outcomes are defined and standardised and supported through funded and empowered institutions.

3.2 The Hampshire and Solent Position

3.2.1 DfE published data (2025) illustrates that for all but one area in the region the 16–17-year-old figures for confirmed NEETs were higher than the South East and UK average of 3.4%. When considering NEET young people and those for whom activity is not known (and therefore are often NEET), the region performs better at 5.8% compared to the South East average of 7%, although the regional average conceals local disparities with only two areas in the region below the South East average.

	Cohort number	NEET or activity not known	Confirmed NEET
England	1,335,160	5.6%	3.4%

South East	215,720	7%	3.4%
Hampshire	32,242	5.5%	3.5%
Isle of Wight	2,924	3.8%	3.1%
Portsmouth	4,716	7.7%	6%
Southampton	5,571	6.8%	4.9%
Hampshire and the Solent	45,453	5.8%	3.9%

Notes:

- Cohort = total number of young people between 16-17 years old.
- NEET or activity unknown = the percentage of young people who are either not in employment, education or training, or else whose status is unknown.
- Confirmed NEET = percentage confirmed as not in employment, education, or training.
- Data is a snapshot taken from the winter of 24/25 and labelled 2025 by DfE.

3.2.2 Youth unemployment (2024 data) shows that for the UK the average of 16–24-year-olds who are economically active who were unemployed was 16%. For Hampshire and the Isle of Wight the comparable figure was 11.6%. This data discounts those in full-time education, looking after the home or permanently sick or disabled. Typically, the regions' cities, some coastal areas and communities including in Leigh Park, Gosport and Rushmoor have higher rates.

3.3 <u>The Debate</u>

3.3.1 Whilst the HSCCA does not have the levers required to remedy all the issues contributing to this worsening youth unemployment position there is a real opportunity for the regions to address systemic and systems weaknesses.

3.3.2 Key questions for debate are:

a. What should be the new offer for young people?
b. How do we identify young people at risk of being becoming NEET early and track and support them, including beyond the age of 18?
c. How does the offer vary for young people who are close to work, some distance from work, or furthest from the labour market?
d. What evidence is identified nationally and internationally that will support and ground our recommendations?
e. What delivery architecture is needed nationally and locally?
f. How do we ensure that the health and education systems are geared to maximise labour market participation by young people?
g. How does public policy make it easier for businesses to create career routes for young people?

h. What will employers need to change in their practices to enable young people into the workplace and retain them?
i. How does welfare system need to change to maximise youth participation?
j. What delivers the most impact, maximising labour market participation?
k. How are all these changes funded?

3.3.3 Whilst this introductory debate cannot begin to address these, nor are they for the HSCCA alone, they frame the debate the region can and should have with local partners and stakeholders and provide the evidence for the debate for all MCAs and CCAs to make the case for further devolution of accountability and resources to tackle youth participation and economic activity.

3.3.4 Combined Authorities are uniquely placed to turn a fragmented set of national programmes into a coherent local participation system. The issue is not simply that too many young people are out of work. It is that education, skills, health, welfare, transport, employers and the voluntary sector do not currently operate as one system around young people, particularly at the point of transition from education into work.

3.3.5 This creates a significant opportunity. With the right powers, data, funding flexibility and accountability, Combined Authorities can act as the convenor and integrator of a local system that keeps young people visible, connects them to real opportunities, and supports them into sustained education, training or employment. Particularly focusing on approaches to:

3.3.5..1 **Keep young people visible**: Too many young people disappear after they leave school or college, especially those who are not claiming benefits. A serious local participation system needs to know who its young people are, where they are, and whether they are learning, earning or falling out of sight. Combined authorities could play a much stronger role in creating a shared local data view across education, skills, employment support, local authorities, health and employers.

3.3.5..2 **Second, health and work:** Mental health and wider health-related inactivity are now central to the youth participation challenge. Local health systems need to be part of the solution, not adjacent to it. The key question should not only be whether a young person has been treated, but whether they are able to participate in education, training or work. There is an opportunity for combined authorities and ICBs to develop shared outcome targets and integrated pathways for young people with health, SEND and neurodevelopmental needs.

3.3.5..3 **Third, transport:** For many young people, transport is the practical barrier that determines whether an opportunity is real or theoretical. If they cannot get to college, an apprenticeship, an interview or a shift, the system has failed before employment support begins. Combined authorities with transport powers have a direct lever here, including youth travel concessions, targeted apprenticeship travel support and routes aligned to education and employment opportunities.

3.3.5..4 **Fourth, employer demand:** We need to prepare young people for work, but we also need to prepare the labour market to bring young people in. Combined authorities can play a powerful brokerage role with anchor institutions and growth sectors, including the NHS, councils, universities, infrastructure projects, construction, clean energy, digital, transport and social care. The opportunity is to secure local employer compacts around apprenticeships, supported internships, work tasters, guaranteed interviews and youth-friendly recruitment.

3.3.5..5 **Fifth, vocational and apprenticeship pathways:** FE and apprenticeships should be central to the local offer, particularly for young people who do not follow the academic route. The test of local skills policy should be whether it creates real first rungs into work, not only higher-level training for those already in employment. Foundation apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeship pathways, supported internships and sector-based progression routes all feel important here.

3.3.5..6 **Finally, the voluntary and community sector:** The organisations closest to hidden or disengaged young people are often those least securely funded. They should be treated as core participation infrastructure, not peripheral delivery partners. Longer-term, outcome-based commissioning could help bring them properly into local pathways.

3.4 Summary

3.4.1 For the HSCCA the overall message is that devolution should not simply be constructed as the local delivery of national schemes. It should mean building the local participation architecture that is lacking: identifying young people earlier, keeping them visible after 18, joining up health, skills, transport and employment support, and creating real routes into local jobs. Strategic questions for consideration as this debate evolves:

3.4.1..1 **What does HSCCA want to be accountable for in youth participation?** In the development of our Local Growth Plan, do we want to define our outcome framework to be judged on employment alone, or on a broader learning or earning outcome for 16–24-year-olds?

3.4.1..2 **If we seek responsibility for youth participation, what levers do we need to influence positive outcomes?** For example, what more do we need in skills, transport, employer brokerage, local data, health alignment and flexible funding.

3.4.1..3 **What would we want to see in a national youth participation guarantee, and what should be locally designed?** What should be the balance between national entitlement and local flexibility.

3.4.1..4 **How do we avoid devolution becoming the delegation of failure?** How do we make sure local areas are not held responsible for outcomes they cannot control?

4 Partnership & Engagement

4.1 The HSCCA is committed to establishing an Employment and Skills Advisory Board and working in partnership with employers and the supply side sector for education and training. These arrangements are yet to be established.

5 Alternative Options Considered

Option	Summary	Why not recommended
None this is a discussion paper		

6 Appendices

6.1 None

Board is required to consider the following identified implications;

7 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations in this paper. Longer term this may be an area we lobby for further financial resources to influence, in addition to the known devolved programmes and resources.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications resulting from the recommendations in this paper.

9 Equality & Diversity Implications

9.1 At the point of drafting this report the HSCCA has not considered the data for youth unemployment and NEETS and whether this illustrates any significant equality and diversity implications.

10 Other Significant Implications

Risk	☐	Assurance Framework	☐	Procurement	☐
Improvement	☐	Environment	☐	HR & IT	☐

Meeting:			**Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority Board**
Date:			13 July 2026
Report Title:			**Calendar of Meetings**
Chief Officer:			Susan Zeiss, Interim Monitoring Officer
Key decision:			No
Exempt Report:	YES ☐	NO ☒	
Voting arrangements:			The Board will work to progress decisions via consensus, if a vote is required then it is by simple majority.
Recommendation(s): The authority is recommended to;			
A	Approve the calendar of meetings for the rest of the 2026/27 Municipal Year as set out in paragraph 3.3.		

1 Purpose

1.1 This report presents the Board with a draft Committee Calendar for 2026/27 to accommodate existing scheduling clashes with activity in constituent councils and create a pattern of meetings designed to accommodate HSCCA business needs.

2 Executive Summary

2.1 The calendar of meetings for 2026/27 is proposed to support forward planning, provide constituent councils with full information to inform the Committee nomination and recruitment process as well as enable effective logistical arrangements.

3 Main Discussion

3.1 Location of Meetings

3.1.1 Where reasonably possible, the Combined County Authority will hold its meetings on an equitable basis distribution, across the region, with each constituent council hosting meetings at its offices up to April 2027. This approach is commonly used by Mayoral Combined Authorities and supports the new organisation during the period before a permanent head office is established.

3.1.2 This proposal has been developed following discussions with constituent members, recognising the breadth of the geography covered by the new Authority, the travel commitments of nominees.

3.1.3 The sequence of meeting locations for this initial term has been determined based on suitable room availability and the availability of appropriate audio-visual equipment to facilitate live streaming of meetings, as increasingly expected by residents, in order to ensure that HSCCA decision-making is transparent and accessible.

3.2 Frequency and Timing of Meetings

3.2.1 Based on consultation to date, Mondays have emerged as the weekday with the fewest conflicts with constituent council business. To avoid clashes with public holidays, it is proposed that meetings are held on the second Monday of each month.

3.2.2 This principle has been applied as far as reasonably possible until the end of the current municipal year. Some discretion has been exercised to take account of the following:

- Scheduling conflicts arising from pre-existing commitments within constituent councils
- Avoiding meetings during school holidays and on public holidays
- Maintaining consistent intervals between meetings

3.2.3 HSCCA Board: It is proposed that bi-monthly public decision-making meetings are interspersed with informal meetings, providing opportunities for collaboration and discussion during this initial phase of establishing the Authority. Informal meetings will operate in hybrid format where appropriate and practicable to accommodate those who wish to attend in person and help manage travel commitments for others. Meetings are proposed to begin at 2:30pm.

3.2.4 Governance and Audit Committee: For logistical efficiency, it is proposed that meetings are scheduled on the same day as formal decision-making Board meetings, reducing the hosting burden on constituent councils. Meetings are proposed to begin at 10am.

3.2.5 Overview and Scrutiny Committee: As above, it is proposed that meetings are scheduled on the same day as informal Board meetings for the same logistical reasons. The proposed sequencing the month after the Board will enable the Committee to respond to Board activity in a timely manner. Meetings are proposed to begin at 10am.

3.3 Proposed calendar of meetings

	Location	**Meeting**	
July 13.07.26	Southampton City Council		HSCCA Board @ 2.30pm
September 28.09.26	Portsmouth City Council		HSCCA Board @ 2.30pm

October 12.10.26	Portsmouth City Council	Overview and Scrutiny Committee @ 10am	Informal HSCCA Board @ 2.30pm
November 16.11.26	Isle of Wight	Governance and Audit Committee @ 10am	HSCCA Board @ 2.30pm
December 14.12.26	Isle of Wight	Overview and Scrutiny Committee @ 10am	Informal HSCCA Board @ 2.30pm
January 11.01.27	Southampton City Council	Governance and Audit Committee @ 10am	HSCCA Board @ 2.30pm
February 08.02.27	Portsmouth City Council	Overview and Scrutiny Committee @ 10am	Informal HSCCA Board @ 2.30pm
March 08.03.27	Hampshire County Council	Governance and Audit Committee @ 10am	HSCCA Board @ 2.30pm
April 12.04.27	Hampshire County Council	Overview and Scrutiny Committee @ 10am	Informal HSCCA Board @ 2.30pm

4 Partnership & Engagement

4.1 The HSCCA Governance Support Officer has engaged with the Democratic Services teams in the Constituent Authorities in the early sharing of the existing schedules within constituent councils to facilitate arrangements and reduce diary conflicts for nominees.

5 Alternative Options Considered

Option	Summary	Why not recommended
None		

6 Appendices

None.

Board is required to consider the following identified implications;

7 Financial Implications

7.1 The proposed budget for 2026-27 which is being considered elsewhere on this meeting's agenda includes a contingency sum which will cover any costs arising from

the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel which will include any proposals for expenses remuneration.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 The HSCCA Board must approve the date and time of the formal meetings of the Board. The calendar of meetings supports the best value duties of the authority because it encourages forward planning and limiting cancellations. Also, it will give sufficient notice to members of the public, when meetings are to be held.

9 Equality & Diversity Implications

9.1 There are no equality or diversity implications identified within this report.

10 Other Significant Implications

Risk	☐	Assurance Framework	☐	Procurement	☐
Improvement	☐	Environment: The rotating meeting locations will help to distribute travel demand, congestion, and use of facilities more evenly across the region, reducing the impact on any single area.	☒	HR & IT	☐