THE ROLE OF CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL AS ACCOUNTABLE BODY FOR THE PLAN FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS BOARD

12 SEPTEMBER 2025

REPORT TO: PLAN FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS BOARD

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Purpose of this report

1) The purpose of this report is to provide a brief overview of the accountable body role undertaken by Castle Point Borough Council.

Recommendations

2) It is recommended that the Board:
   a. notes the contents of this report; and
   b. agrees to a future session which will go into more detail on the various aspects of the accountable body role.

Introduction

3) Castle Point Borough Council is the "relevant local authority" which will act as the "accountable body for the funds with responsibility for ensuring that that public funds are distributed fairly and effectively, and that funds have been managed in line with the Nolan Principles and Managing Public Money principles. They will also be responsible for compliance with legal responsibilities in relation to subsidy control, state aid and procurement."[1]

What does this mean in practice?

4) As accountable body, the Council will work with the Board to help it deliver its aims and objectives. It will provide finance, legal, HR and other required resource (funded from within the programme) to ensure the smooth running of

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[1] Plan for Neighbourhoods: governance and boundary guidance - GOV.UK

the Board's operations and to ensure compliance with and Government and legislative requirements.

5) The role of the Council as accountable body is separate and distinct from the Council's role as a Board member. The accountable body function is answerable to the Board and enacts decisions of the Board. Funding held by the Council on behalf of the Board will be separately identifiable within the Council's systems and the Council does not have the ability to use the funding for its own purposes.

6) The Council has a suite of rules, regulations, policies and processes which will be adapted (where required and appropriate to do so) and applied to the activities of the Board. These include Financial Regulations, Procurement Rules and HR policies amongst others.

Next steps

7) To ensure the Board has a full and proper understanding of the accountable body role and the practical implications this will, it is proposed that a detailed session is held at a later date. This session would include detail around:
   - The Council's Financial Regulations, including
     - The role of the budget holder and their responsibilities
     - Budgeting and forecasting
     - Changes to programmes of work
     - Making and authorising payments
     - Managing assets
     - Prudent financial management including required provisions
   - Procurement & Contract Management, including
     - Processes for supplier selection
     - Processes for buying goods and services
     - Contract management processes and support
   - Legal and Governance, ensuring decisions taken are lawful in process and substance and that contracts entered into are appropriate and legal.
   - Human Resources, including the role of the accountable body as an employer
   - Secretariat function and how this will provide administrative support to the board
   - The assurance framework, including
     - The Council's role as the 'first line of defence'
     - MHCLG's role as the 'second line of defence'

    - Considerations the Board may wish to make with regard to any sub-groups or committees the Board may wish to establish either now or at a later time.
- Any other relevant aspects of the accountable body function, as required.