

Statement of Governance Principles for Age UK North Tyneside

Age UK North Tyneside (AUKNT) aims to serve customers and communities through the provision of excellent services wherever we work. Our vision is about 'Making More of Life' and we are committed to innovative and pioneering activity to deliver this – going beyond what we believe the statutory and commercial sectors can achieve. This approach governs our work in local communities, our delivery of quality services as well as our campaigning activity. It applies to the ways in which our staff and Trustees conduct themselves and fulfill their roles.

We are committed to good governance as the basis for demonstrating our charitable purposes, ethical conduct and our commitment to a values based approach to all our actions.

This document is a summary of our approach and we ask all partners, stakeholders, customers and communities to judge us by how well we deliver the principles highlighted here. We welcome feedback on how we perform against the standards we set for ourselves and will undertake an annual appraisal of Board effectiveness to seek continuously to improve governance as well as the overall performance of AUKNT.

We have adopted 'The Good Governance Standard for Public Services' which, we believe, is a statement of best practice meeting the needs of all those with whom we work as well as satisfying the requirements of our Regulators, the Charity Commission and Companies House.

The six principles and our adherence to them are summarised below.

First, focusing on purpose and outcomes

We are firmly focused on the promotion of our customers' needs and interests through our community services, information and advice, home care and other work carried out by AUKNT. This principle also applies to our trading activities carried through subsidiaries. We have clear strategies and plans and our decision making is consistent with our governing documentation and our legal obligations.

Second, performing effectively

Our Trustee Board and staff have clearly defined roles and act in the best interests of AUKNT's mission. Board and staff working relationships are constructive and effective reflecting a commitment to joint working and collective responsibility. Trustees are committed to giving appropriate time to fulfill their governance responsibilities. We have clear delegation arrangements and the Chief Executive is accountable to the Trustee Board for operational matters and performance management within the agreed corporate strategy. Our ethical approach is defined in our Code of Conduct, reflected in our Register of Interests and the duty of the Board to reach decisions based on evidence and, where necessary, external professional advice as well as the work of the expert staff team.

Third, promoting values for the whole organization:

We have a clear statement of values which commits us to being positive, inclusive, respectful, realistic, empowering and excellent. This guides the activities of the organization at every level. We are committed to the principles of equality and diversity and conduct our affairs with honesty and integrity ensuring our good reputation and the trust which can be placed in us.

Fourth, taking informed, transparent decisions and managing risk

The Trustee Board and its Committees and associated bodies act and make decisions in a way which is consistent with our Memorandum and Articles of Association, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation. The Board receives information and advice which enables it to fulfill our strategic oversight role and to hold staff to account for performance in achieving our purpose and outcomes. We monitor, measure and evaluate performance and publish information about our activities. We exercise and implement clear risk management principles to enable us to operate effectively.

Fifth, developing the capacity of the Board to be effective

The Board, Chief Executive and management team have the skills, knowledge and experience to exercise capable leadership and direction of the organization. We are committed to open recruitment processes, periodic assessment of skills and capability and the provision of induction, training and support to sustain organizational effectiveness. We are committed to regular reviews of the skills and composition of the Board to ensure we can fulfill governance responsibilities and to have succession planning in place for future Board development.

Sixth, engaging stakeholders and being accountable

We work closely with partners, stakeholders and funders to ensure we do what we promise and deliver value for money. We engage with local people and customers to make sure we are open about service performance and our future plans. We have a Customer Charter which spells out our service promises which are measured annually and results published. We encourage involvement in our work through the OPEN network and welcome feedback about our effectiveness as an agency.

Approved by The Board of Trustees on 11 February 2014