

# **Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council**

# **Local Code of Corporate Governance 2017**

## LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Governance is about organisations ensuring that they are doing the right things in the correct manner for the right people in a timely, open, honest, inclusive and accountable manner. It follows that good governance leads to good management, performance, public engagement, stewardship of public money and, through all this, good outcomes for citizens and service users.

Good governance also enables the Council to pursue its vision effectively as well as reinforcing that vision with the mechanisms for control and management of risk.

In 2014/15, Rotherham Council was subject to a corporate governance inspection. The Council was heavily criticised in the report resulting from the inspection\* for a series of governance failings. The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Education appointed five commissioners in February 2015 to take all executive and licensing responsibilities at the Council and lead the improvements necessary to deliver services that meet the needs of Rotherham. The intervention remains in force until 31 March 2019 unless the Secretaries of State, or, as the case may be, either one of them, consider it appropriate to amend or revoke it at an earlier date.

The Commissioners produced an Improvement Plan in May 2015 which was supported by the Council and accepted by the Secretaries of State. In February 2016, the Commissioners produced a twelve months progress review\* which showed a considerable amount of positive progress has been made, while confirming the significant challenges still to be addressed. Subsequently, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government issued revised directions following a request from Commissioners to return responsibility for a number of functions to Councillors. These included services which in the Commissioners' views were well-led by officers, had Members in a position to exercise executive authority over these functions, and had clear service definitions and plans for improvement in place.

Actions set out in the original improvement plan have been reassessed and a new Phase Two plan, effective from May 2016, has been approved. Key priorities for 2016/17 are to continue to improve the services requiring improvement and ensure the Council focuses on implementing its corporate and service priorities, and meeting its responsibilities for achieving best value through the use of resources.

This Code of Corporate Governance explains all of the Council's policies and practices in one document, making them open and explicit. Appropriate procedures and processes are being integrated into the Council's Governance Framework to ensure there will be routine application and ongoing review of the arrangements described in the Code.

*Councillor Chris Read*  
Leader, Rotherham MBC

*Sharon Kemp*  
Chief Executive

**\* *The Corporate Governance Inspection report (the Casey report), the Twelve Months Progress Review, The Corporate Improvement Plan 'A Fresh Start' and other associated documentation can be found at [www.rotherham.gov.uk](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk)***

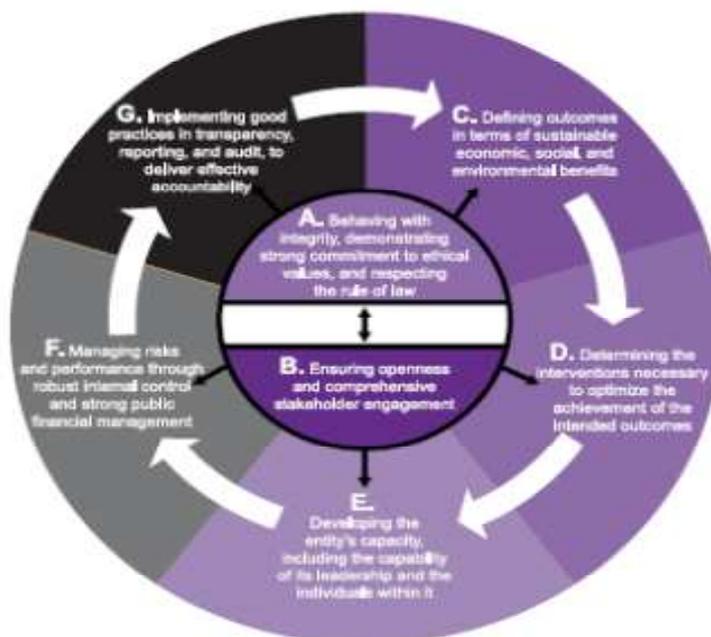
## Introduction

All of the decisions made by Rotherham Council about the services it delivers, and how to deliver them, are supported by a whole set of systems and processes which make up the Council's 'governance arrangements'. These include holding meetings where decisions are made, the Council's legal framework, setting out priorities and roles clearly, holding decision makers to account through scrutiny, risk management processes, financial monitoring and ensuring high standards of conduct. Local authorities are encouraged to demonstrate how they ensure effective governance arrangements by setting these out in a local code of governance.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's 'Local Code of Corporate Governance' is based on the guidance "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government", published in 2016 by CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and SOLACE (the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives).

The main principle underpinning the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework continues to be that local government is developing and shaping its own approach to governance, taking account of the environment in which it now operates. The Framework is intended to assist authorities individually in reviewing and accounting for their own unique approach. The overall aim is to ensure that resources are directed in accordance with agreed policies and according to priorities, that there is sound and inclusive decision making and that there is clear accountability for the use of those resources in order to achieve desired outcomes for service users and communities. A diagram of the Framework from the guidance is copied below:

### Achieving the Intended Outcomes While Acting in the Public Interest at all Times



The International Framework notes that:

*Principles A and B permeate implementation of principles C to G. The diagram also illustrates that good governance is dynamic, and that an entity as a whole should be committed to improving governance on a continuing basis through a process of evaluation and review.*

The Framework positions the attainment of sustainable economic, societal, and environmental outcomes as a key focus of governance processes and structures. Outcomes give the role of local government its meaning and importance, and it is fitting that they have this central role in the sector's governance. Furthermore, the focus on sustainability and the links between governance and public financial management are crucial – local authorities must recognise the need to focus on the long term.

The Framework defines the principles that should underpin the governance of each local government organisation. It provides a structure to help individual authorities with their approach to governance. Whatever forms of arrangements are in place, authorities should test their governance structures and partnerships against the principles contained in the Framework by:

- Reviewing existing governance arrangements
- Developing and maintaining an up-to-date local code of governance, including arrangements for ensuring ongoing effectiveness
- Reporting publicly on compliance with their own code on an annual basis and on how they have monitored the effectiveness of their governance arrangements in the year and on planned changes.

To achieve good governance, each local authority should be able to demonstrate that its governance structures comply with the core and sub-principles contained in this Framework. It should therefore develop and maintain a local code of governance and governance arrangements reflecting the principles set out.

It is also crucial that the Framework is applied in a way that demonstrates the spirit and ethos of good governance which cannot be achieved by rules and procedures alone. Shared values that are integrated into the culture of an organisation, and are reflected in behaviour and policy, are hallmarks of good governance.

The Council has adopted this Code of Corporate Governance (Code) with the intention of giving citizens and customers a clear understanding of how the Council intends to manage its decision making, service planning, service delivery and accountability processes, how it aims to ensure that the Council sets out its vision and priorities and how it aims to provide effective and efficient outcomes to its citizens and customers.

This Code is work in progress and reflects the Council's position in its improvement journey. It reflects the principles and evidence that we are striving towards as well as reflecting the Council's current position.

The Code will be subject to constant review to ensure its adequacy and its effectiveness will be assessed as part of an annual review process that will lead to the production of the Council's Annual Governance Statements from 2016/17 onwards.

Every Council officer and Member has a responsibility to ensure that their personal conduct and the organisation's governance arrangements are always of the highest standard possible.

Senior managers have a responsibility for reviewing governance standards in their areas of responsibility and for identifying and implementing any necessary improvement actions. Improvement actions should be reflected in the appropriate business plans.

The Chief Executive and Leader will ensure that an annual review of corporate governance arrangements is completed and give assurances on their adequacy in the published Annual Governance Statement, accompanying the Statement of Accounts.

The Strategic Leadership Team will ensure that the Code is reviewed regularly (at least yearly) to reflect ongoing developments and planned improvements to the framework, and to authorise any amendments.

## How Rotherham Council intends to meet the Principles of Good Corporate Governance

This section sets out how Rotherham Council aims to works to the principles of good corporate governance.

### Principle A - Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.

#### Summary:

Local government organisations are accountable not only for how much they spend, but also for how they use the resources under their stewardship. This includes accountability for outputs, both positive and negative, and for the outcomes they have achieved. In addition, they have an overarching responsibility to serve the public interest in adhering to the requirements of legislation and government policies. It is essential that, as a whole, they can demonstrate the appropriateness of all their actions and have mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and to respect the rule of law.

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this will be evidenced
<b>Behaving with integrity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring members and officers behave with integrity</li> <li>• Ensuring members and officers lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated</li> <li>• Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions.</li> <li>• Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member's Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Employees' Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy &amp; Strategy</li> <li>• Dignity at Work Policy</li> <li>• Equal Opportunities Policy</li> <li>• Whistle-blowing Policy</li> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) to investigate allegations made against people working with children</li> </ul>

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this will be evidenced
<b>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance</li> <li>• Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation.</li> <li>• Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values.</li> <li>• Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Human Resources Policies</li> <li>• Induction Procedures</li> <li>• Registers of Interests</li> <li>• Registers of Gifts and Hospitality</li> </ul>
<b>Respecting the rule of law</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations.</li> <li>• Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities.</li> <li>• Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and stakeholders.</li> <li>• Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively.</li> <li>• Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal (Monitoring) Officer Role</li> <li>• Internal Audit</li> <li>• KPMG (External Auditors)</li> <li>• Corporate Complaints Procedure</li> <li>• Standards Committee (supporting Members' observation of their Code of Conduct)</li> <li>• Employees' Personal Development Reviews</li> <li>• Publicising the process of how to complain about Members' conduct</li> <li>• Publicising the process of how to make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman</li> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny functions</li> </ul>

## Principle B - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

### Summary:

Local government is run for the public good; organisations therefore should ensure openness in their activities. Clear, trusted channels of communication and consultation should be used to engage effectively with all groups of stakeholders, such as individual citizens and service users, as well as institutional stakeholders.

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this will be evidenced
<b>Openness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness.</li> <li>• Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes.</li> <li>• Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear.</li> <li>• Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/courses of action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Community Strategy</li> <li>• Forward Plan</li> <li>• Council Website</li> <li>• Formal consultation arrangements</li> <li>• Community and voluntary sector representation on Partnership Boards</li> <li>• Freedom of Information publication scheme</li> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny functions</li> </ul>
<b>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal consultation arrangements</li> <li>• Community and voluntary sector representation on Partnership Boards</li> <li>• Council Website</li> <li>• Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board</li> </ul>

	<p>sustainably.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively</li> <li>• Defining the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship</li> <li>• Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotherham Safeguarding Adults</li> <li>• Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit</li> <li>• Neighbourhood working group</li> </ul>
<p><b>Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.</li> <li>• Ensuring that communication methods are effective and members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement.</li> <li>• Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs.</li> <li>• Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account.</li> <li>• Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity</li> <li>• Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan published on RMBC website</li> <li>• Key 'minded to' decisions are made available for consultation for 5 days</li> <li>• External Auditor provides an annual organisational assessment of the Council's performance through the Value for Money conclusion</li> <li>• Council Website</li> <li>• Council minutes and agendas available on website</li> <li>• Formal consultation arrangements</li> <li>• Community and voluntary sector representation on Partnership Boards</li> <li>• Satisfaction Surveys</li> <li>• Freedom of Information publication scheme</li> </ul>

**Principle C - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.**

**Summary:**

The long-term nature and impact of many of local government’s responsibilities mean that it should define and plan outcomes and that these should be sustainable. Decisions should further the authority’s purpose, contribute to intended benefits and outcomes, and remain within the limits of authority and resources. Input from all groups of stakeholders, including citizens, service users, and institutional stakeholders, is vital to the success of this process and in balancing competing demands when determining priorities for the finite resources available.

<b>Sub principles</b>	<b>Actions Demonstrating Good Governance</b>	<b>How this will be evidenced</b>
<b>Defining Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation’s purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the organisation’s overall strategy, planning and other decisions.</li> <li>• Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer.</li> <li>• Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available.</li> <li>• Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes.</li> <li>• Managing service users’ expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Forward Plan listing key decisions to be taken</li> <li>• Corporate report template requires information explaining the legal and financial implications of decisions</li> <li>• Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit</li> <li>• Rotherham Housing Strategy</li> <li>• Risk Management Policy &amp; Guide</li> <li>• Six weekly revision and consideration of Strategic Risk Register by Strategic Leadership Team and Quarterly consideration by Audit Committee</li> <li>• Monthly consideration of Directorate Risk Registers by Directorate Leadership Teams</li> <li>• Corporate report template contains ‘risk implications’ section</li> <li>• Audit Committee reviews risks and the Risk Management process</li> </ul>

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this will be evidenced
<p><b>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision.</li> <li>• Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints.</li> <li>• Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs.</li> <li>• Ensuring equality of access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Forward Plan listing key decisions to be taken</li> <li>• Receipt of reports from numerous inspectorates and regulators throughout the year</li> <li>• Formal consultation arrangements</li> <li>• Rotherham Economic Growth Plan</li> <li>• Safer Rotherham Strategy</li> <li>• Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy</li> <li>• Municipal Waste Management Strategy</li> <li>• Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> </ul>

**Principle D - Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.**

**Summary:**

Local government achieves its intended outcomes by providing a mixture of legal, regulatory, and practical interventions. Determining the right mix of these courses of action is a critically important strategic choice that local government has to make to ensure intended outcomes are achieved. They need robust decision-making mechanisms to ensure that their defined outcomes can be achieved in a way that provides the best trade-off between the various types of resource inputs while still enabling effective and efficient operations. Decisions made need to be reviewed continually to ensure that achievement of outcomes is optimised.

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this will be evidenced
<b>Determining interventions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options.</li> <li>• Ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided.</li> <li>• Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business decisions are accompanied by a business case and options appraisal</li> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny functions</li> <li>• Corporate report template requires information explaining the legal and financial implications of decisions</li> <li>• Financial, legal and technical advice provided by the s151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer and other officers as required</li> <li>• Council Website</li> <li>• Formal consultation arrangements</li> </ul>
<b>Planning interventions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets.</li> <li>• Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered.</li> <li>• Considering and monitoring risks facing each</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Directorate Service Plans</li> <li>• Quarterly Monitoring Reports</li> <li>• Contract Monitoring Reports</li> <li>• Performance Reports aligned to Corporate Plan priorities</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> </ul>

	<p>partner when working collaboratively including shared risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances.</li> <li>• Establishing appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured.</li> <li>• Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly.</li> <li>• Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan.</li> <li>• Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital Programme</li> <li>• Revenue budget process</li> <li>• Value for Money judgement by External Auditor</li> </ul>
<p><b>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints.</li> <li>• Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term.</li> <li>• Ensuring the medium term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage.</li> <li>• Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>• Revenue budget process</li> <li>• Capital Programme</li> <li>• Procurement Policy</li> <li>• Procurement Standing Orders</li> <li>• Action Plans developed in response to external audit and inspections</li> <li>• Value for Money judgement by external auditor</li> </ul>

**Principle E - Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.**

**Summary:**

Local government needs appropriate structures and leadership, as well as people with the right skills, appropriate qualifications and mind-set, to operate efficiently and effectively and achieve their intended outcomes within the specified periods. A local government organisation must ensure that it has both the capacity to fulfil its own mandate and to make certain that there are policies in place to guarantee that its management has the operational capacity for the organisation as a whole. Because both individuals and the environment in which an authority operates will change over time, there will be a continuous need to develop its capacity as well as the skills and experience of the leadership of individual staff members. Leadership in local government entities is strengthened by the participation of people with many different types of backgrounds, reflecting the structure and diversity of communities.

<b>Sub principles</b>	<b>Actions Demonstrating Good Governance</b>	<b>How this will be evidenced</b>
<b>Developing the entity's capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing operations and performance on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness and enable organisational learning.</li> <li>• Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the authority's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently.</li> <li>• Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase Two of Improvement Plan implemented in May 2016</li> <li>• Revised Corporate Plan published August 2016</li> <li>• Organisational restructure ongoing together with appointment of new Senior Management Team</li> <li>• Benchmarking undertaken throughout the authority (e.g. CIPFA Benchmarking Clubs)</li> <li>• Officer participation in regional groups appropriate to their particular service</li> <li>• Involvement in Sheffield City Region initiative</li> </ul>
<b>Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarifying roles and responsibilities of members and management at all levels.</li> <li>• Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council Constitution</li> <li>• Members' Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Member training and seminars</li> <li>• Members' and officers' induction programmes</li> <li>• Personal Development Reviews</li> </ul>

	<p>in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body.</li> <li>• Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads the authority in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority.</li> <li>• Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks.</li> <li>• Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation.</li> <li>• Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs.</li> <li>• Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job descriptions and person specifications produced for all posts</li> <li>• Recruitment and appointment policies and procedures</li> <li>• Members' Development Panel</li> <li>• Comprehensive training programme for officers</li> <li>• Workforce Development Plan</li> <li>• Corporate Workforce Strategy (including employee health &amp; wellbeing)</li> <li>• Staff surveys</li> <li>• A-Z list of HR Policies and Guidance on intranet</li> </ul>
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**Principle F - Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.**

**Summary:**

Local government needs to ensure that the organisations and governance structures that it oversees have implemented, and can sustain, an effective performance management system that facilitates effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Risk management and internal control are important and integral parts of a performance management system and crucial to the achievement of outcomes. Risk should be considered and addressed as part of all decision making activities. A strong system of financial management is essential for the implementation of policies and the achievement of intended outcomes, as it will enforce financial discipline, strategic allocation of resources, efficient service delivery, and accountability. It is also essential that a culture and structure for scrutiny is in place as a key part of decision making, policy making and review. A positive working culture that accepts, promotes and encourages constructive challenge is critical to successful scrutiny and successful delivery.

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this will be evidenced
<b>Managing risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making.</li> <li>• Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively.</li> <li>• Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management Policy &amp; Guide in place and reviewed annually</li> <li>• Strategic Risk Register in place and reviewed six weekly by Strategic Leadership team</li> <li>• Directorate and Service level risk registers in place and reviewed monthly</li> <li>• Corporate report template contains 'risk implications' section</li> <li>• Audit Committee reviews risks and the Risk Management process quarterly.</li> </ul>
<b>Managing performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review.</li> <li>• Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Reports aligned to Corporate Plan priorities</li> <li>• Quarterly Monitoring Reports</li> <li>• Contract Monitoring Reports</li> <li>• Corporate report template requires information explaining the legal and financial implications of decisions</li> <li>• Corporate report template contains 'risk implications'</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the organisation's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible</li> <li>• Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement.</li> <li>• Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements).</li> </ul>	<p>section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny functions</li> <li>• Monthly spend/budget reports sent to all budget holders</li> <li>• Officers' make online monthly budget submissions as part of budget monitoring arrangements</li> </ul>
<p><b>Robust internal control</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the objectives.</li> <li>• Evaluating and monitoring the authority's risk management and internal control on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place.</li> <li>• Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor.</li> <li>• Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive provides further assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management Policy &amp; Guide in place and reviewed annually</li> <li>• Strategic Risk Register in place and reviewed six weekly by Strategic Leadership team</li> <li>• Directorate and Service level risk registers in place and reviewed monthly</li> <li>• Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy &amp; Strategy</li> <li>• Internal Audit annual opinion on governance, risk management and internal control.</li> <li>• Audit Committee reviews risks and the Risk Management process quarterly</li> <li>• Corporate Information Governance Group</li> <li>• Completion and maintenance of a Corporate Fraud Risk Register</li> </ul>

<p><b>Managing data</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data.</li> <li>• Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring.</li> <li>• Ensuring effective arrangements for sharing data with other bodies are in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Communications Policy</li> <li>• Dedicated Information Governance Unit</li> <li>• Freedom of Information publication scheme</li> <li>• Digital Council Strategy</li> <li>• Ongoing monitoring of Data Protection Act / Freedom of Information compliance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strong public financial management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance.</li> <li>• Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>• Revenue budget process</li> <li>• Procurement Policy</li> <li>• Procurement Standing Orders</li> <li>• Value for Money judgement from the External Auditor</li> <li>• External Auditors' Annual Audit letter</li> </ul>

**Principle G - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.**

**Summary:**

Accountability is about ensuring that those making decisions and delivering services are answerable for them. Effective accountability is concerned not only with reporting on actions completed, but also ensuring that stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the organisation plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner. Both external and internal audit contribute to effective accountability.

<b>Sub principles</b>	<b>Actions Demonstrating Good Governance</b>	<b>How this will be evidenced</b>
<b>Implementing good practice in transparency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate.</li> <li>• Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council website</li> <li>• Corporate Communications Strategy</li> <li>• Budgets and spending published on website</li> <li>• Senior Officer remuneration published on website</li> </ul>
<b>Implementing good practices in reporting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources.</li> <li>• Ensuring members and senior management own the results.</li> <li>• Assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance in action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of Annual Report and Statement of Accounts on website</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement produced and published on website</li> <li>• Local Code of Corporate Governance refreshed annually in accordance with CIPFA/SOLACE principles</li> <li>• Documents are scrutinised and approved by Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet and Audit Committee prior to publication</li> <li>• Performance information and reports are published</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate.</li> <li>• Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other similar entities.</li> </ul>	<p>on the website</p>
<p><b>Assurance and effective accountability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon.</li> <li>• Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon.</li> <li>• Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations.</li> <li>• Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the Annual Governance Statement.</li> <li>• Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The external auditors produce an Annual Audit Letter which is presented at Audit Committee and published on the website. The council produces a response to all issues and recommendations contained within.</li> <li>• The Chief Auditor presents an annual report to Audit Committee to inform members of Internal Audit activity that has taken place during the year</li> <li>• Audit Committee meets on a quarterly basis and receives reports from both Internal and External Audit</li> <li>• The authority is subject to regular inspections from regulatory bodies, including Ofsted, Care Quality Commission etc. The outcomes of these inspections, together with the council's responses are made available via the website</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement produced and published on website</li> </ul>