

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Code of Corporate Governance

2023/24

November 2023

CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Introduction

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.

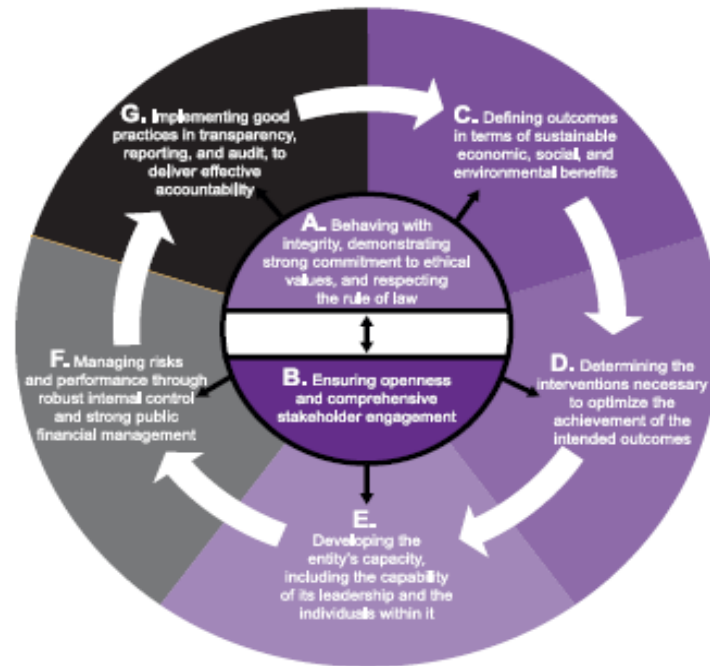
Good governance enables Rotherham Council to pursue its vision effectively, as well as reinforcing that vision with the mechanisms for control and management of risk.

All of the decisions made by Rotherham Council about the services it delivers, and how to deliver them, are supported by a 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 '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 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 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.

The Code is subject to annual review to ensure its adequacy and its effectiveness is assessed as part of a process that leads to the production of the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

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 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 ensures that the Code is reviewed regularly (at least yearly) to reflect ongoing developments and planned improvements to the framework and authorises any amendments.

For the 2023/24 financial year, the Code has once again been amended, where necessary.

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

This section sets out how Rotherham Council works according 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 is evidenced
Behaving with integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation • Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles). • Leading by example and using the above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions. • Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member's Code of Conduct • Employees' Code of Conduct • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy & Strategy • Dignity at Work Policy • Equal Opportunity in Employment Policy • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy • Whistle-blowing and Serious Misconduct Policy • Corporate Safeguarding Policy • The Council Plan • The Year Ahead Delivery Plan • LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) to investigate allegations made against people working with children • Standards and Ethics Committee • Social Value included in procurement • One Rotherham Values

	<p>or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively.</p>	
<p>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance • Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation. • Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values. • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Plan • The Year Ahead Delivery Plan • Human Resources Policies • Induction Procedures • Registers of Interests • Registers of Gifts and Hospitality • Member's Code of Conduct • Employees' Code of Conduct • Member / Officer Relations Protocol • Standards and Ethics Committee
<p>Respecting the rule of law</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations. • Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements. • Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal (Monitoring) Officer Role • Internal Audit • External Auditors • Corporate Complaints Procedure • Standards and Ethics Committee (supporting Members' observation of their Code of Conduct) • Employees' Personal Development Reviews • Publicising the process of how to complain about Members' conduct • Publicising the process of how to make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman • Overview and Scrutiny functions • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively.• Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whistleblowing and Serious Misconduct Policy• Anti-Money Laundering Policy
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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 is evidenced
<p>Openness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation’s commitment to openness. • Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided • 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. • Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/courses of action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council Plan • The Year Ahead Delivery Plan • Six monthly Council Plan/Year Ahead Delivery Plan progress reports • The Rotherham Plan • Forward Plan listing key decisions to be made • Council Website • Consultation and Engagement toolkit • Formal consultation arrangements • Community and voluntary sector representation on Partnership Boards • Freedom of Information publication scheme • Overview and Scrutiny functions • Data Transparency Code • Public meetings open to all (other than for restricted items) and many are webcast and publicly accessible through the internet • Six monthly updates on external inspections, reviews and audits to AC

<p>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 sustainably. • Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively • Ensuring that partnerships are based on: trust; a shared commitment to change; and a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners, and that the added value of partnership working is explicit. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal consultation arrangements • Community and voluntary sector representation on Partnership Boards • Council Website • Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board • Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board • Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit • Neighbourhood working group • Rotherham Together Partnership
<p>Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve communities, individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes. • Ensuring that communication methods are effective and members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement. • Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs. • Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Plan, Year Ahead Delivery Plan and six monthly progress reports published on RMBC website • Key decisions are published at least 28 days prior to consideration at Cabinet • External Auditor provides an annual assessment of the Council's performance through the Value for Money conclusion • Council Website • Council minutes and agendas available on website • Consultation and Engagement toolkit • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy • Formal consultation arrangements • Community and voluntary sector representation on Partnership Boards • Satisfaction Surveys • Freedom of Information publication scheme • Corporate Complaints Procedure.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity• Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Suggest a topic for scrutiny” process enabling individuals to influence the scrutiny agenda.
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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.

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this is evidenced
Defining Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. • Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available. • Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes. • Managing service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council Plan • The Year Ahead Delivery Plan • Six monthly Council Plan/Year Ahead Delivery Plan progress reports • Rotherham Plan • Forward Plan listing key decisions to be taken • Corporate report template requires information explaining the legal and financial implications of decisions • Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit • Rotherham Housing Strategy 2022-2025 • Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Strategy (A healthier Rotherham by 2025) • Safer Rotherham Partnership Plan 2022-2025 • Rotherham Economic Growth Plan 2015-2025 • Early Help Strategy for children, young people and families • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Risk Management Policy • Risk Management Guide

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular revision and consideration of Strategic Risk Register by Strategic Leadership Team and consideration by Audit Committee including Directorate Risk “deep dives” • Monthly consideration of Directorate Risk Registers by Directorate Leadership Teams • Corporate report template contains ‘risk implications’ section • Audit Committee reviews risks and the Risk Management process
<p>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision. • 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. • 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. • Ensuring fair access to services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council Plan • The Year Ahead Delivery Plan • Service Plans • Forward Plan listing key decisions to be taken • Receipt of reports from inspectorates and regulators throughout the year • Formal consultation arrangements • Consultation and Engagement toolkit • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy • Rotherham Economic Growth Plan 2015-2025 • Safer Rotherham Partnership Plan 2022-2025 • Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy 2013-28 • Municipal Waste Management Strategy • Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Strategy (A healthier Rotherham by 2025) • Social Value included in procurement • All Cabinet Reports require a Carbon Impact Assessment.

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 (courses of action). 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 is evidenced
Determining interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and associated risks. Therefore, ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided. 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business decisions are accompanied by a business case and options appraisal Overview and Scrutiny functions Corporate report template requires information explaining the legal and financial implications of decisions Financial, legal and technical advice provided by the s151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer and other officers as required Council Website Formal consultation arrangements Consultation and Engagement toolkit
Planning interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets. Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council Plan The Year Ahead Delivery Plan Directorate Service Plans Six monthly Council Plan/Year Ahead Delivery Plan progress reports Performance Management Framework Contract Monitoring Reports

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks. • Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances. • 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. • Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly. • Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan. • Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Capital Programme • Revenue budget process • Value for Money judgement by External Auditor • Jointly developed risk register with Rotherham Together Partnership (RTP) which covers the key elements of the Rotherham Plan.
<p>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints. • Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term. • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Revenue budget process • Capital Programme • Procurement Policy • Procurement Standing Orders • Action Plans developed in response to external audit and inspections • 6 monthly public reporting on completion of inspection and external audit recommendations • Value for Money judgement by external auditor • Social Value in procurement

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning.	
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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.

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this is evidenced
<p>Developing the entity’s capacity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness. • Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how resources are allocated so that defined outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently. • Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved. • Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council Plan • The Year Ahead Delivery Plan • Six monthly Council Plan/Year Ahead Delivery Plan progress reports • Service Plans • Organisational restructure in key service areas • Officer participation in regional groups appropriate to their particular service • Engagement with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) • Benchmarking increasingly used to develop budgets • Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge in 2023, along with associated action plan and follow up visit • LGA review of Big Hearts, Big Changes programme • LGA Corporate Peer Challenge • Workforce Plan

<p>Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained. • Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body. • Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads 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. • Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective 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 by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council Constitution • Scheme of Delegation • Members' Code of Conduct • Member training and seminars • Members' and officers' induction programmes • Personal Development Reviews • Job descriptions and person specifications produced for all posts • Recruitment and appointment policies and procedures • Members' Development Panel • Comprehensive training programme for officers • Workforce Development Plan • Workforce Plan (including employee health & wellbeing) • Staff surveys • A-Z list of HR Policies and Guidance on intranet • Employee Guide to wellbeing

	<p>organisational requirements is available and encouraged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis.- Ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation.• Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections.• Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs.• 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.	
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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 are 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 accountable 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. Importantly, this culture does not happen automatically, it requires repeated public commitment from those in authority.

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this is evidenced
Managing risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making. • Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively. • Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Management Policy & Guide in place and reviewed annually • Strategic Risk Register in place and reviewed regularly by Strategic Leadership team and linked to service performance • Directorate and Service level risk registers in place • Corporate report template contains 'risk implications' section • Audit Committee reviews one directorate risk register at each meeting and considers the Strategic Risk Register every six months. • Audit Committee receives an annual Risk Management Report • Risk training for all levels
Managing performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports aligned to the Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which provides 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 • Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement. • Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements). 	<p>with two of the four quarters considered in public session at OSMB and Cabinet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management Framework • Contract Monitoring Reports • Corporate report template requires information explaining the legal and financial implications of decisions • Corporate report template contains ‘risk implications’ section • Overview and Scrutiny functions • Monthly spend/budget reports sent to all budget holders • Officers’ make online monthly budget submissions as part of budget monitoring arrangements • Service Plans for all services
Robust internal control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the objectives. • Evaluating and monitoring risk management and internal control on a regular basis. • Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place. • Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor. • Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Management Policy & Guide in place and reviewed annually • Strategic Risk Register in place and reviewed regularly by Strategic Leadership team and linked to service performance • Directorate and Service level risk registers in place • Risk Management Meetings consisting of Risk Champions • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy & Strategy • Internal Audit annual opinion on governance, risk management and internal control.

	<p>executive and accountable to the governing body provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment, and that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit Committee reviews risks at each meeting, including each Directorate's Risk Register at least annually, and the Strategy Risk Register twice a year • Corporate Information Governance Group • Consideration of specified Fraud risks by Corporate Risk Champions
Managing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data. • Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring. • Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated Information Governance Unit • Freedom of Information publication scheme • Digital Council Strategy • Ongoing monitoring of Data Protection Act / Freedom of Information compliance • Data Transparency Code • Data Sharing Agreements • GDPR training for staff • Internal Audit opinion of the Council Plan.
Strong public financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance. • Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council Plan • The Year Ahead Delivery Plan • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Revenue budget process • Procurement Policy • Procurement Standing Orders • Value for Money judgement from the External Auditor • External Auditors' Annual Audit letter • Financial Regulations • Capital Strategy • Treasury Management Strategy

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.

Sub principles	Actions Demonstrating Good Governance	How this is evidenced
Implementing good practice in transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in a fair, balanced and understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate. • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council website • Meeting papers and minutes published on website • Recordings of public meetings published on website • Budgets and spending published on website • Senior Officer remuneration published on website
Implementing good practices in reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of resources to stakeholders in a timely and understandable way. • Ensuring members and senior management own the results reported. • Ensuring robust arrangement for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in this Framework have been applied and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of Statement of Accounts on website • Annual Governance Statement produced and published on website • Code of Corporate Governance refreshed annually in accordance with CIPFA/SOLACE principles • Documents are scrutinised and approved by Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet and Audit Committee prior to publication

	<p>publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (the annual governance statement).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that this Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate. • 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 organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance information and reports are published on the website. Six monthly Council Plan/Year Ahead Delivery Plan progress reports. • VFM judgement by external auditors
<p>Assurance and effective accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon. • Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place, providing assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon. • Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations. • Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the Annual Governance Statement. • Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • The Head of Internal Audit presents an annual report to Audit Committee to inform members of Internal Audit activity that has taken place during the year • Audit Committee meets five times a year and receives reports from both Internal and External Audit • 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. Progress reports on all external inspections, reviews and audits are presented to Audit Committee six-monthly • Annual Governance Statement produced and published on website

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The RTP Rotherham Plan and the supporting agreement. The partnership reports publicly periodically on its progress on the Plan and there is an annual delivery plan and updates on its website.• LGA Corporate Peer Challenge.
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