

Code of Corporate Governance

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Defining Corporate Governance

This Code of Governance is concerned with the governance of Hackney Council (the Council); both its corporate governance – the internal regulation and procedures that must be followed in the exercise of its power and duties – and the public-facing elements of local governance such as elections, the relationship between the elected members and electorate, and consultative and participatory process employed to build a closer relationship between the citizens of Hackney and other stakeholders and the decisions made about Hackney the place.

The Council operates through a governance framework which is set by legislative requirements, the organisational culture and values, and management systems and processes.

What characterises good governance?

Governance comprises the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.

To deliver good governance, both the Council and those working for the organisation must try to achieve the Council's objectives while acting in the public interest at all times. Acting

in the public interest implies primary consideration of the benefits for society, which should result in positive outcomes for service users and other stakeholders.

Ethical behaviour is the cornerstone of good governance. Local government relies on the credibility of and public confidence in Members and officers. As such, it is important that all Members and officers operate in an open and accountable manner, and demonstrate high standards of conduct at all times.

In their guidance notes, *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016)*, CIPFA/SOLACE identifies the principles of good governance, as follows:

Acting in the public interest requires a commitment to and effective arrangements for:

- A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
- B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

In addition to the overarching requirements for acting in the public interest in principles A and B, achieving good governance also requires a commitment to and effective arrangements for:

- C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits
- D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Purpose of the Code of Governance

The Council recognises the need for sound governance and has put in place policies, systems and procedures designed to achieve this. It has published this local Code as a means of demonstrating its commitment to good governance and as a way of communicating to Members, officers and stakeholders the high standards of governance it has set itself. The principles of good governance set out in this Code should be evident in the work of all officers and Members and the Council will report on its compliance with this Code and the Governance Framework in its Annual Governance Statement.



This Code of Governance is based on the principles above and is compatible with the Committee on Standards in Public Life's Seven Principles of Public Life which are as follows:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership



Code of Corporate Governance: Interpretation

Core Principles	Sub-principles (Behaviours and actions that demonstrate governance in practice are illustrated in the bullet points and included for information).	Evidence of Compliance and Supporting Documentation
<p>Acting in the public interest requires a commitment to and effective arrangements for:</p> <p>A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.</p> <p>The Council is accountable not only for how much it spends, but also for how it used the resources under its stewardship. This includes accountability for outputs, both positive and negative, and for the outcomes they have achieved. In addition, we 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, we can demonstrate the appropriateness of all our actions and have mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to</p>	<p>Behaving with integrity:</p> <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 Council's reputation. • Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values [building on the Seven Principles for Public Life] for the Council and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. • Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions. 	<p>Behaving with integrity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct for Members and staff. • A well-structured and transparent decision making process and delegation arrangements. • The Standards Committee is responsible for overseeing the conduct of Members and identifying training needs of members in relation to the Code of Conduct. The Committee receives a report at each meeting on the progress of complaints and investigations. • All Councillors receive

<p>ethical values and to respect the rule of law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrating, 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 	<p>training on the Code of Conduct.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established staff procedures including an employee policy for acceptance of gifts and hospitality, an employee policy for registering interests and a whistle blowing policy. • Registers of Members' interests and records of gifts and hospitality. • Members' declaration of interests are a standing item on all agendas.
	<p>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the Council's ethical standards and performance. • Underpinning behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the Council's culture and operation. • Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values. 	<p>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution sets out how the Council operates and how it makes decisions. It also states that the Council will exercise all its duties in accordance with the law. • Independent person on the Standards Committee. • Standards Committee reports annually to Full Council. • Terms of Reference that exists for all

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that external providers of services are required to act with integrity and in compliance with the same ethical standards expected of the Council. 	<p>committees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced S151 and Monitoring Officer with appropriate qualifications and standing to promote ethical values. Regular Statutory Officers meeting Contract Procedure Rules which emphasise the expectation for partners and contractors to comply with the “seven principles of public life”. An Employee Performance Management Framework is in place.
	<p>Respecting the rule of the 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 	<p>Respecting the rule of law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constitution identifies the Director of Legal and Governance Services as the Council’s Monitoring Officer who is responsible for ensuring the Council operates within the law and decisions are administered correctly. An Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy, Anti-Money Laundering Policy, Anti-Bribery Policy and Whistleblowing Policy are in place. There is a Whistleblowing hotline for employees to report irregularity and

	<p>citizens, communities and other stakeholders.</p> <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. 	<p>fraud.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All decision making reports contain legal comments and decisions only taken after advice from appropriate officers. • Financial Procedure Rules, Contract Standing Orders and procurement guidance. • Overview and Scrutiny function of five standing Commissions. • The Constitution sets out the responsibilities of Statutory Officers in the event of Maladministration by either the Mayor, Cabinet or Full Council.
<p>B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>Openness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the Council'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 	<p>Openness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Publication Scheme that describes the information available • Responding to FOI (Freedom of Information) and SAR (Subject Access Requests) in accordance with legal provision. • A standard decision making report format to ensure that the decision

	<p>case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>maker is presented with all of the information necessary to inform the decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings are held in public unless confidential items are being considered. • Agendas, reports and minutes for all committees of the Council (including Scrutiny, Cabinet and Full Council) are published on the Council's website. • Decisions to be taken by Cabinet and Portfolio Holders are published in advance with the Forward Plan of Key Decisions. • Cabinet decisions are tracked to ensure actions are implemented on a timely basis. • Maintenance of an effective website. • Effective 'Critical Friend' challenge through the Council's scrutiny processes.
	<p>Engaging institutional stakeholders/ stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users:</p>	<p>Engaging institutional stakeholders/ stakeholders effectively including individual citizens and service users comprehensively with Engaging stakeholders effectively including individual citizens and service users</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 a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners; and that the added value of partnership working is explicit. Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the Council 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. Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaningful consultation is undertaken during key service changes. Statutory consultation processes are followed and consistently applied. Having in place a clear complaints procedure. Regular printed communications, including the Hackney Today, Our Homes and Hackney Life publications, which are delivered to more than 100,000 homes monthly. Team Hackney is Hackney's Local Strategic Partnership. Integrated Commissioning Group Regular digital communications, including to tens of thousands of subscribers to Council social media accounts, email newsletters and instant messaging services Ensuring that website and mobile app communications meet accessibility requirements Hackney Youth Parliament
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	<p>their roles with regard to community engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 values have been taken into account, • 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"> • One-off events to increase engagement, including an annual Mayor’s Question Time and monthly social media Q&A sessions. • An annual External Communications and Consultation Strategy which sets out an open programme for the year ahead, detailing how communications will improve and ensure that the latest communications trends are embedded within the Council’s approach. • Community Engagement Toolkit laying out how consultation with employees, partners, residents, businesses and other stakeholders should take place. • A partner/organisation/stakeholder list • Partnership Governance Protocol. • A Community Engagement framework that sets out how the Council will consult with the public. • An Engagement Officers meeting is being developed and includes the CCG, Police Fire and voluntary organisations.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised engagement structure for RPs. • Ward Forums to encourage community led action.
<p>In addition to the overarching requirements for acting in the public interest in principles A and B, achieving good governance also requires effective arrangements for:</p>		
<p>C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits</p>	<p>Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the Council'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. 	<p>Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Refreshed Corporate Plan that sets out the Council's vision and priorities based on consultations with local community and other key stakeholders was published in July 2020 reflecting the impact of the pandemic on Hackney and its residents. • Mayor's priorities • Core strategic plans which form a key part of the Council's overall visions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ An Inclusive Economy strategy ◦ A health and well-being strategy ◦ A community safety strategy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes. ● Managing service user's expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available. ● 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 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"> ○ Housing Strategy 2017-22 ○ Community Strategy 2018-28 ● Decision making takes account of key strategies, effects on residents and pays regard to public sector equality duty ● Community Safety Partnership ● Council provides fair access to the services it provides ● Parks and open spaces recognised with Green Flag awards ● Local Plan ● Medium Term Financial Plan ● Community engagement framework ● Environmental policy statement ● Impact assessment ● Social value policy ● Ethical Procurement
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<p>D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.</p>	<p>Determining interventions:</p> <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 including the risks associated with those options. • 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. 	<p>Determining interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making processes that receive objective and rigorous analysis including involvement of Monitoring Officer and S151 officer. • Processes that take account of service users when making decisions • Retaining control over preparation of strategic and operational plans • Demonstrable corporate approach to project management which is flexible and takes into account need for systems change • Refreshed Corporate Plan with measurable objectives in place which reflects the impact of the pandemic on Hackney and its residents • KPIs that are measurable and take account of the Council's Objectives • Regularly reviewed risk
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		<p>registers, the contents of which all relate to impacts on objectives, whether in a potentially negative capacity or a positive opportunity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust budget preparation process that reflects the Council's objectives and MTFS
	<p>Planning interventions:</p> <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. • 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 as part of the 	<p>Planning interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation engagement framework • Risks associated with partnership working are identified and captured in Council's risk register. • Strategic Leadership Group brings together senior officers from across the council to look in depth at delivery of priorities set out in the corporate plan.

	<p>planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	
	<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 	<p>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance updates to HMT • Medium Term Financial Plan • Annual budget report

	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 states that this is "the additional benefit to the community...over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes". 	
<p>E. Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.</p>	<p>Developing the Council's Capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing operations, performance 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 the authority's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently. • Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative 	<p>Developing the Council's Capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction programmes and E-Learning providing opportunities to update staff knowledge on a regular basis. Training needs identified through measurement of performance and objective setting meetings. • Robust recruitment process to assess the ability of candidates. • A Member development programme including appropriate training

	<p>working where added value can be achieved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformational Leadership Programme in Housing Skills • Member Champion role for Mental Health • Weekly staff newsletter promoting well-being initiatives. • Apprenticeship programme and Management trainee scheme and supported internship programme. • People and Development Strategy
	<p>Developing the capability of the 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 collective decision making. • Ensuring the Leader and the Chief Executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a 	<p>Developing the capability of the leadership and other individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme of Delegation which is reviewed annually • Statutory officers have skills, knowledge, resources and support necessary to perform their roles effectively. • Clear Senior Level involvement and 'buy-in' in processes like risk management, where all Corporate risks have to be signed off by the Hackney Management Team. • Health and safety policies in place.

	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the Council 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 organisational requirements is available and encouraged. 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee Assistance Programme, Mental Health Champions, Wellbeing Wednesdays, Regular Wellbeing surveys. All staff attend a corporate Welcome session on their first day. This is followed up by a corporate full day induction where our new colleagues will meet the Mayor and CE, plus have a tour of various Hackney Council sites. Directorates organise their local inductions into the service and line managers will plan out at least the first three weeks of a new starters time, using the new starter checklist as a template. All staff are able to access learning via two programmes of development available from the Organisational Development (OD) team. These are called Hackney Essentials and Hackney Manager. All staff can also access over 200 online eLearning modules on the Hackney Learning Hub. In October 2020 the OD team is launching an enhanced programme of development for people managers, called Managing for Hackney: Skills for Modern Managers.
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<p>F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.</p>	<p>system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external.</p> <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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hackney Check Ins take place every 4 - 6 weeks for all staff. Check Ins cover four topics; health and wellbeing, Goals, Feedback and Development. Check Ins are based on a coaching model and are designed to enhance the performance management relationship between team member and manager. There are additional add ons available to use alongside Check Ins, e.g. Probation Check Ins, Poor performance Check Ins, Team Check Ins and annual Snapshot reviews of performance.
	<p>Managing risk:</p> <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. 	<p>Managing risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Risk Champions within each directorate promoting good risk management.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 registers are refreshed and considered by Hackney Management Team (and Directorate Management teams) on a regular basis and reported to the Audit Committee. • Directorate Risk registers individually considered by the Audit Committee on an annual basis. • The Council's Corporate register is updated and reviewed on a quarterly basis, before being submitted to the Audit Committee. • Embedded within all Projects and Programmes is an emphasis on risk management as a key factor in assisting the achievement of outcomes. All project reports contain regularly updated registers, and if relevant, feed into Divisional / Directorate or Corporate registers. • A Risk Management Policy and Strategy is reviewed biennially and then signed off by Audit Committee. The strategy is introduced and signed by the Chief Executive, illustrating Senior Management buy-in and how important an effective approach to risk is to the Council.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategy and Policy explicitly outline and clearly allocate individual responsibilities for managing risks. • At each Audit Committee meeting, in order to provide an additional layer of assurance, a joint Risk / Performance and Financial Management paper is presented to ensure members receive a consistently updated overview of these often overlapping areas. • Pentana dashboard reporting tool for providing clear overviews for members / Senior Officers.
	<p>Managing performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review. • 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 encourages constructive challenge 	<p>Managing performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Performance Indicators • Contract Standing Orders and Financial Procedure Rules • Performance data is available online for senior officers and cabinet members. This is reviewed regularly at HMT and senior officer/cabinet member meetings and appropriate corrective actions agreed where needed. • The Audit Committee receives quarterly performance and risk

	<p>and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>updates where committee members challenge Cabinet Members and senior officers and seek assurances on areas of concern.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All decisions of the Council are made taking account of the relevant financial, social and environmental impacts with analysis and advice on the impacts. All policies and decisions have appropriate challenges and debate before formal decisions are made.
	<p>Robust internal control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the objectives. • Evaluating and monitoring the authority's 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 	<p>Robust internal control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective internal audit function which provides assurance on governance, risk management and control. • Annual assurance report from Audit and Anti Fraud which provides an opinion on the Council's control framework. • Counter fraud and anti-corruption service which investigates allegations of fraud and promotes awareness of counter fraud initiatives. • Annual fraud report.

	<p>management and control is provided by the internal auditor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment. ○ That its recommendations are listened to and acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy. • Audit Committee which is independent of Cabinet which oversees the management of governance issues, internal controls, risk management and financial reporting. The Audit Committee reports annually to Full Council. • Training for Audit Committee members • Child and Adult Safeguarding
	<p>Managing data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, and use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data. • Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies. • Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring. 	<p>Managing data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies in place setting out the Council's Information Governance Framework (LIST) • Mandatory information governance training for staff and Councillors. • Information sharing agreements • Data subjects are informed why personal information is being collected and how it will be processed through Privacy Notices on website

	<p>Strong public financial management:</p> <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. 	<p>Strong public financial management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Procedure Rules • Compliance with CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer • Assessment against CIPFA FM code (appendix to budget report) • Medium Term Financial Plan • Council's financial position reported monthly to Cabinet and update to Scrutiny
<p>G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.</p>	<p>Implementing good practice in transparency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. 	<p>Implementing good practice in transparency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas, reports and minutes are published on the Council's website in line with Access to Information requirements set out in the Council's Constitution • Adoption of National Transparency Code.

	<p>Implementing good practices in reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources. • Ensuring members and senior management own the results. • Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in this Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (annual governance statement). • 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. 	
		<p>Implementing good practices in reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual financial statements are produced to timetable and published on Council's website • Annual Governance Statement

	<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 which provides 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 that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met. 	<p>Assurance and effective accountability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of service complete annual assurance statements and directors provide overall assurance of compliance with the Council's governance framework. • The AGS sets out the Council's governance framework and the results of the annual review of effectiveness. • An effective internal audit and counter fraud service is resourced and maintained. The service provides assurance on governance arrangements via regular monitoring reports and an annual report to Audit Committee. • External Audit provides an annual opinion on the Council's financial statements and arrangements for securing value for money.
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