

How Spelthorne Borough Council intends to meet the Principles of Good Corporate Governance

This Appendix sets out how Spelthorne Council aims to work to the principles of good Corporate Governance.

What is Corporate Governance?

Corporate Governance is about the systems, processes and values by which Councils operate and by which they engage with, and are held accountable to, their communities and stakeholders.

Spelthorne Borough Council is committed to the principles of effective corporate governance and has therefore adopted a Code of Corporate Governance which follows the latest guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), entitled "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016)".

The guidance defines the seven core principles, each supported by subprinciples that should underpin the governance framework of a local authority.

- A - Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rules of law.
- B - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- 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 Council'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.
- G - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit, to deliver effective accountability.

What are the benefits of having a Code of Corporate Governance?

Good governance leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and ultimately good outcomes for citizens and service users. It enables the Council to pursue its vision effectively as well as underpinning that vision with mechanisms for control and the management of risk.

The Council has a robust governance framework in place. The documents and arrangements which comprise the framework demonstrate that the Council continually seeks to ensure it is and remains, well governed, through integration of its processes and structures with the core principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework into all aspects of the Council's conduct and operation.

The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring the Code is reviewed regularly, and the outcome of the review, along with any required amendments is reported to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

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.

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
<p>Behaving with integrity</p>	<p>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</p> <p>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)</p> <p>Leading by example and using the above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions</p> <p>Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through</p>	<p>Maintain shared values between the Council and its officers. These are defined in the Constitution and reflect public expectations about the conduct and behaviour of individuals.</p> <p>Use shared values as a guide for decision making and as a basis for developing positive and trusting relationships within the Council. We demonstrate this by adherence to the Constitution.</p> <p>Have adopted formal codes of conduct defining standards of personal behaviour for Members and Officers</p> <p>Maintain a Committee to support the Members' Code of Conduct to raise awareness and take the lead in ensuring high standards of conduct are embedded within the Council's culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial procedure Rules ○ Contract Standing Orders ○ Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy ○ Anti-Bribery Policy ○ Rules relating to members external interests (Register of Interests) • Human Resources Policies • Staff Induction Procedures

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>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>	<p>Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance</p> <p>Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation</p> <p>Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values</p> <p>Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with ethical standards expected by the organisation</p>	<p>Have put in place arrangements to ensure that Members and officers of the Council are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders. We have put in place appropriate processes to ensure that these arrangements are workable including declaration of interests and anticorruption policies.</p> <p>Ensure that systems and processes for financial administration and control together with protection of the Council's resources and assets comply with ethical standards; and are subject to monitoring of their effectiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members' Induction Procedures • Member's Code of Conduct • Staff Code of Conduct • Scheme of Delegation to officers • Information Security Policy
<p>Respecting the rule of law</p>	<p>Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Ensure that professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making if appropriate.</p> <p>Officers will actively recognise the limits of lawful activity placed on them but also strive to utilise their powers to the full benefit of their communities.</p> <p>Officers will observe all specific legislative requirements placed upon the Council as well as</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money Laundering Policy • Whistle-blowing Policy • Rules relating to members external interests (Standing Orders) • Annual Governance Statement

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders</p> <p>Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively</p> <p>Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively</p>	<p>the requirements of general law, and in particular integrate the key principles of administrative law – rationality, legality and natural justice into the procedures and decision making.</p> <p>Have put in place effective systems to protect the rights of staff. We ensure that policies for whistleblowing which are accessible to staff and those contracting with the Council, and arrangements for the support of whistle blowers, are in place.</p> <p>Publish an Annual Governance Statement, signed by the Leader and the Chief Executive, and reviewed through the Audit Committee to review the effectiveness of the Council's governance framework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External inspections of accounts • Internal Audit Annual Plan • Assurance Framework supporting the Annual Governance Statement • Equal Opportunities Policy • Registers of Gifts and Hospitality • Legal (Monitoring Officer) Role • Corporate Complaints Procedure • Standards Committee (supporting Members' observation of their Code of Conduct) • Overview and Scrutiny functions

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.

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
<p>Openness</p>	<p>Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most</p>	<p>Ensure that the Council's priorities within the Corporate Plan and targets are developed in consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders, and that they are clearly articulated and disseminated.</p> <p>Maintain a culture of accountability so that Members and Officers understand to whom they are accountable and for what.</p> <p>Strive to engage with stakeholders on an individual and collective basis to demonstrate that we deliver services and outcomes that meet the needs and expectations of the public. These arrangements will recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish robust processes for dealing with these competing demands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan • Consultation strategy • Constitution • Scheme of Delegation to officers • Budget reports • Corporate Risk Register and risks identified in committee reports

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	appropriate and effective interventions/courses of action		
Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	<p>NB institutional stakeholders are the other organisations that local government needs to work with to improve services and outcomes (such as commercial partners and suppliers as well as other public or third sector organisations) or organisations to which they are accountable.</p> <p>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</p> <p>Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Publish reports giving information on the Council's strategies, plans and financial statements as well as information about outcomes, achievements.</p> <p>Ensure that the Council as a whole is open and accessible to the community, service users and staff and we are committed to openness and transparency in all dealings.</p> <p>Publish all committee reports under Part 1 – open for inspection the public - unless there is a legitimate need to preserve confidentiality on the basis of the statutory tests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Accounts • Service Committee Forward Plans • Council Website • Formal consultation arrangements and staff surveys • Community and voluntary sector representation on Partnership Boards • Freedom of Information publication scheme • Overview and Scrutiny functions • Community Safety • External Auditor provides an annual organisational assessment of the Council's performance through the Value for Money conclusion
Engaging stakeholders	Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will	As above	As above

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
<p>effectively, including individual citizens and service users</p>	<p>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</p> <p>Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement</p> <p>Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs</p> <p>Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how views have been taken into account</p> <p>Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity</p> <p>Taking account of the impact of decisions on future generations of tax payers and service users</p>		

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.

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
<p>Defining outcomes</p>	<p>Having a clear vision, which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provide the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions</p> <p>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</p> <p>Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available</p> <p>Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes</p> <p>Managing service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making</p>	<p>Make a clear statement of the Council's purpose and use it as a basis for corporate and service planning.</p> <p>Publish annual reports to communicate the Council's activities and achievements, its financial position and performance.</p> <p>Ensure that those making decisions are provided with financial and non-financial information that is fit for the purpose relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications.</p> <p>Identify and monitor service performance indicators which demonstrate how the quality of service for users is to be measured.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan • Budget Reports • Audit Reports • Statement of Accounts • External Auditors letter & reports • External Audit Inspections • Performance management framework • Project Management arrangements

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	the best use of the resources available Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits		
Defining sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	<p>Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies and plans when taking decisions about service provision</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>Ensuring fair access to services</p>	<p>Maintain a prudential financial framework, balance commitments with available resources; and monitor income and expenditure levels to ensure this balance is achieved.</p> <p>Ensure compliance with the CIPFA codes regarding a Prudential Framework for Capital Finance and Treasury Management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management arrangements • Treasury Management strategy • Regular budget reporting • Internal and external audit

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.

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
Determining interventions	<p>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</p> <p>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>	<p>Make a clear statement of the Council's purpose and use it as a basis for corporate and service planning.</p> <p>Clear process for decision making.</p> <p>Have risk management arrangements in place including mitigating actions to support the achievement of the Council's intended outcomes.</p> <p>Ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to monitor service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan • Risk Management Framework • Service Plans • Service Risk Registers • Performance Management Reports to Committees and to the Leadership Team • Business Continuity Plans
Planning interventions	Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles	Put in place effective arrangements to deal with a failure in service delivery and explore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency & Resilience Plans

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets</p> <p>Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered</p> <p>Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively, including shared risks</p> <p>Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering goods and services can be adapted to changing circumstances</p> <p>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</p> <p>Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly</p> <p>Preparing budgets in accordance with objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan</p> <p>Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and</p>	<p>options for improving service delivery and outcomes for our residents.</p> <p>Have prepared contingency arrangements including disaster recovery plans and business continuity plans to ensure resilience in delivering services, for example during adverse weather conditions.</p> <p>Provide senior managers and Members with timely financial and performance information.</p> <p>Ensure that budget calculations are robust.</p> <p>Align financial and performance data to provide an overall understanding of performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from consultation exercises • Monitoring of all KPI's and key projects. • Budget monitoring arrangements. • Project monitoring and action taken to support the implementation of key projects. • Process for committee approvals and delegated approval

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy		
Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	<p>Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints</p> <p>Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term</p> <p>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</p> <p>Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning</p>	As above	As above

Principle E - Developing the Council'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.

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
<p>Developing the Council's capacity</p>	<p>Reviewing operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness</p> <p>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</p> <p>Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved</p> <p>Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources</p>	<p>Through the Constitution set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Committees and individual Members.</p> <p>Set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council's senior officers.</p> <p>Have developed protocols to ensure effective communication between Council Members and officers in their respective roles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution • Annual Pay Policy Statement • Members' Allowance Scheme • Scheme of Delegation

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
<p>Developing the capability of the Council's leadership and other individuals</p>	<p>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</p> <p>Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body</p> <p>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</p> <p>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:</p>	<p>Conduct for Elected Members are adhered to.</p> <p>Assess the skills required by Members including the understanding of financial systems.</p> <p>Assess the skills required by officers through the appraisal process and address any training gaps, to enable roles to be carried out effectively.</p> <p>Develop skills on a continuing basis to improve performance, including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and to recognise when outside expert advice is needed.</p> <p>Ensure that the statutory officers have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and that these roles are properly understood throughout the Council.</p> <p>Provide the Chief Finance Officer with the resources, expertise and systems necessary to perform the role effectively within the Council.</p> <p>Provide operational divisions with the resources, expertise and systems necessary to perform the role effectively within the Council.</p> <p>Monitor all key corporate projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Development Plans • Appraisals • Member Induction & Development Programme • ICT Digital Strategy • Organisational Development Plan? • Project management arrangements • Corporate Projects Register

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>— 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</p> <p>— 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</p> <p>— ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external</p> <p>Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation</p> <p>Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections</p> <p>Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which</p>		

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>take account of training or development needs</p> <p>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</p>		

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.

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
Managing risk	<p>Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making</p> <p>Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively</p> <p>Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated</p>	<p>Maintain an effective Audit Committee which is independent of the executive and scrutiny functions.</p> <p>Ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the Council, with Members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their job.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Management Strategy • Regular Corporate Risk Management Reports • Service Risk Registers • Budget Reports
Managing performance	<p>Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review</p>	<p>Ensure our arrangements for financial and internal control and management of risk are formally addressed within the annual governance statement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Governance Report • Performance Management Framework and

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>Encouraging effective and constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives to support balanced and effective decision making</p>		<p>reporting cycle to all Committees</p>
<p>Robust internal control</p>	<p>Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement</p> <p>Ensuring there is consistency between specification</p> <p>Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives</p>	<p>Ensure effective internal control arrangements exist for sound financial management systems and processes.</p> <p>Ensure that there is a performance management framework and performance is reported to relevant committee for improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Auditing standards • Annual Audit Plan • Internal Audit Reports • Internal Audit Manager's annual opinion of assurance • Corporate Projects Register

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>Evaluating and monitoring risk management and internal control on a regular basis</p> <p>Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place</p> <p>Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor</p> <p>Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group/function, which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body:</p> <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"> • Medium Term Financial Strategy. • Budget targets and monitoring reports to Committee
Managing data	<p>Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data</p>	<p>Effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage and sharing of data including processes to safeguard personal data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT Security & Acceptable Use Policy • Data Protection Policies • Retention and Disposal Policies

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies</p> <p>Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring</p>		
Strong public financial management	<p>Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance</p> <p>Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls</p>	<p>Enable the Chief Finance Officer can bring influence to bear on all material decisions and provide advice on the levels of reserves and balances to be retained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Budget Speech

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.

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
Implementing good practice in transparency	<p>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</p> <p>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>	<p>Comply with the local government transparency code and publish all required information in a timely manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's Committee Webpages
Implementing good practices in reporting	<p>Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and stewardship of resources to stakeholders in a timely and understandable way</p>	<p>Have established a medium term financial planning process in order to deliver a financial strategy ensuring sustainable finances, a robust annual budget process ensuring financial balance and an adequate monitoring process; all of which are subject to regular review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Towards a Sustainable Future Strategy

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>Ensuring members and senior management own the results reported</p> <p>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 (the annual governance statement)</p>		
<p>Assurance and effective accountability</p>	<p>Ensuring that this Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate</p> <p>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> <p>Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon</p> <p>Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place, providing</p>	<p>Put in place effective transparent and accessible arrangements for dealing with complaints.</p> <p>Maintain an effective scrutiny function which encourages constructive challenge and enhances the Council's performance overall.</p> <p>Maintain an effective Audit Committee.</p> <p>Ensure an effective internal audit function is resourced and maintained.</p> <p>Take corrective action from internal and external audit reports.</p> <p>Maintain open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Complaints Procedure • Audit Committee • Constitution • Mod.Gov • Whistle-blowing Policy • Monthly budget and quarterly monitoring Reports • Annual Pay Policy Statement • Compliance with Transparency Agenda • Partnership Risk Register

Supporting Principles	Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	To meet the requirements of these Principles the Council will:	How this will be evidenced
	<p>assurance with regard to governance arrangements and that recommendations are acted upon</p> <p>Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations</p> <p>Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement</p> <p>Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met</p>	<p>considerations on which decisions are based.</p> <p>Publish all committee reports under Part 1 open to inspection by the public – unless there is a legitimate need to preserve confidentiality on the basis of the statutory tests.</p> <p>Ensure when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider accountability has been recognised and met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal audit plan and the monitoring of the implementation of audit recommendations <p>Head of internal audit's annual opinion of assurance</p>