Local Code of Corporate Governance

Dorset Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards. It needs to ensure that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively. The Council's Code of Corporate Governance is based upon the CIPFA / SOLACE publication entitled "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016 Edition." This revised framework emphasises the importance of considering the longer term and the links between governance and public financial management. The overall aim to demonstrate that:

- Resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities.

- There is sound and inclusive decision making.

- There is clear accountability for the use of those resources to achieve desired outcomes for service users and communities.

Corporate Governance

Corporate governance is about how we ensure that we are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest, and accountable manner. Good governance means that we have the right systems, processes, cultures, and values in place, to ensure that we account to, engage with and, where appropriate, lead our communities. It also means that our elected members and staff will conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of conduct. We are committed to effective corporate governance.
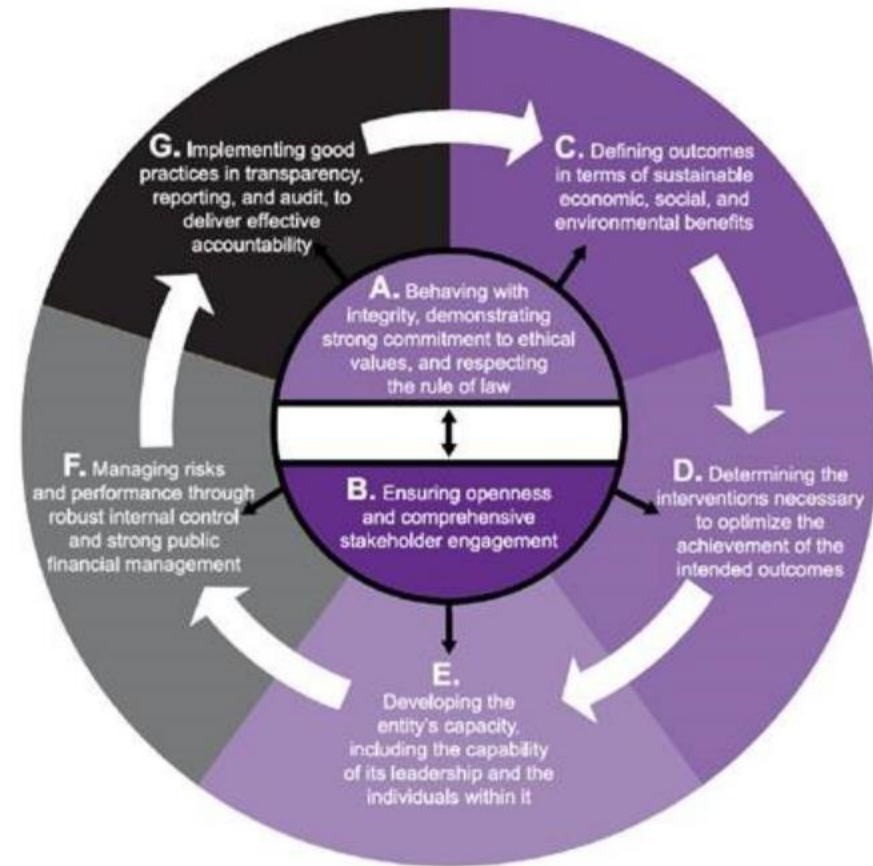
Dorset Council is committed to the seven core principles of good practice contained in the CIPFA framework.

The CIPFA/ SOLACE Governance Framework states that: 'Principles A and B permeate implementation of Principles C to G. The diagram opposite illustrates that good governance is dynamic and that an entity should be committed to improving governance on a continuing basis through a process of evaluation and review.'

To confirm this, we evaluate our governance arrangements by developing and maintaining an up-to-date local code of governance, including arrangements for ensuring ongoing effectiveness.

Our Local Code has been written to reflect the Council's own structure, functions, and the governance arrangements in existence.

The Council will monitor its governance arrangements for their effectiveness in practice and will review them on a continuing basis to ensure that they are up to date.

Governance Structure and Responsibilities	
Dorset Council	• Dorset Council consists of 82 Councillors. A member role includes representing the needs, priorities and aspirations of the Dorset Council and the people of the Dorset Council area. • Approves the budget and policy framework. • Approves the Constitution (including Standing Orders and Financial Regulations). • Establishes committees to discharge non-executive functions.
Cabinet	• The main decision-making body of the Council responsible for executive functions. • Leader of the Council appointed by the council with responsibility for executive functions and who appoints a Deputy Leader and Cabinet members who have responsibility for portfolios.
Audit and Governance Committee	• Provides independent assurance to the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management framework and internal control environment. • Approves the Local Code of Corporate Governance, Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement.
Overview and Scrutiny Committees	• Overview and scrutiny are a statutory activity, and the Council will appoint members to 2 Overview Committees and 2 Scrutiny Committees - People and Health Overview Committee; People and Health Scrutiny Committee; Place and Resources Overview Committee; and Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee.
Head of Paid Service	• Overall corporate management and operational responsibility for the council (including management for all employees) • The provision of professional advice to all parties in the decision-making process and, responsibility for a system of record keeping for all the council's decisions, representing the council on partnerships and external bodies. • The Head of Paid Service will determine how the council's functions are discharged, the number and grade of Officers required to discharge the functions and how Officers are organised.
Chief Finance Officer	• Accountable for developing and maintaining the council's governance, risks, and control framework. • Ensuring lawfulness and financial prudence of decision making and the administration of financial affairs. • Providing advice on the scope of powers and authority to take decisions, maladministration, financial impropriety, probity and budget and policy framework issues, and will support and advise Councillors and Officers in their respective roles. • Contributes to the effective corporate management and governance of the council.

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Monitoring Officer	• Monitoring, reviewing, and maintaining the Constitution. • Ensuring lawfulness and fairness of decision making. • Supporting Joint Standards Committee, conducting investigations, and undertaking other actions in respect of matters referred to him/her by the Joint Standards Committee. • Proper Officer for access to information. • Advising whether decisions are within the budget and policy framework. • Providing advice on the scope of powers and authority to take decisions, maladministration, financial impropriety, probity and budget and policy framework issues. • Contributes to the effective corporate management and governance of the council. • Contributes to all the effective corporate management and governance of the council.
Senior Leadership Team	• Implements the policy and budgetary framework set by the Council and provides advice to Cabinet and the Council on the development of future policy and budgetary issues. • Oversees the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and implementation of Council Policy.
Heads of Service and Service managers	• Responsible for developing, maintaining, and implementing the Council's governance, risk, and control framework. • Contribute to the effective corporate management and governance of the Council.

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

To behave with integrity
(Lead – Jonathan Mair, Director for Legal and Democratic)

	Evidenced by:	Identified Improvement for 2024/25
• Ensure that councillors and staff behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visible and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the council; • Ensure that councillors take the lead in establishing values for the council and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These will build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (The Nolan Principles); • Lead by example and use values as a framework for decision-making and other actions; and • Demonstrate, communicate and embed the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are operating effectively.	**Dorset Council constitution** **Scheme of Delegation** **Contract procedural Rules** **Officer** and **member codes of conduct** **Behaviours framework** **Anti-fraud and corruption strategy** **Complaints policies (corporate, childrens social care, adults) and Annual Report** **Managing Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Protocol** **Policy schedule**	

To demonstrate strong commitment to ethical values (Lead – Jonathan Mair, Director for Legal and Democratic)		
• Seek to establish, monitor and maintain the council's ethical standards and performance; The documents that make up this framework provide the structures and guidance that our members and employees require to ensure effective governance across the council. • Underpin personal behaviour with Council values and ensure they permeate all aspects of the council's culture and operation; • Develop and maintain robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values; and • Ensure 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 council.	**Evidenced by:** **Officer** and **member codes of conduct** **Behaviour framework** **Whistleblowing policy** **Commercial strategy** **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Board and Strategy** **Job evaluation scheme** **(Internal link)** **Protocol for officer and member relations** **Audit and Governance Committee** **Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption policy** **Caldicott Guardian**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25**

To respect the rule of law (Lead – Jonathan Mair, Director for Legal and Democratic / Grace Evans, Head of Legal Services)		
• Ensure councillors and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations; • Create the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and councillors are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory provisions; • Strive to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders; • Deal with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively; and • Ensure corruption and misuse of power is dealt with effectively.	**Evidenced by:** **Monitoring Officer** **Legal Services** **Committee report clearance process and Democratic Services Hub** (Internal Link) **Financial regulations** **Audit and Governance Committee** **Codes of conduct** **Register of Interests** **Register of Gifts and Hospitality** **Compliments and Complaints Procedure (corporate, childrens social care, adults)** **Constitution** **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Board and Strategy**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25**

	Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption policy	

PRINCIPLE B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.		
To ensure openness (Lead - Jen Lowis, Head of Strategic Comms and Engagement / Jacqui Andrews, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services)		
• Ensure an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the council's commitment to openness; • Make decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption will be for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential will be provided; • Provide clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanation to stakeholders and will be explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, the council will ensure that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear; and • Use formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions / courses of action.	**Evidenced by:** **Committee Meetings open to the public and streamed (unless exempt). Members of the public can attend virtually or in person to ask questions** **Committee papers published** **Consultation and engagement activities** **Dorset Council constitution** **Council Plan** and communications to residents across a range of channels **Behaviour** and **Performance Management Framework** **Freedom of Information compliance and disclosure log** **Right of Access Compliance (Subject Access Requests)** **Open data**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25**

To engage comprehensively with stakeholders (Lead - Jen Lowis, Head of Strategic Comms and Engagement)		
• Effectively engage 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; • Develop formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively; • Ensure 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; • Establish a clear policy on the type of issues that the council will meaningfully consult with or involve communities, individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service provision is contributing towards the achievement of the intended outcomes; • Ensure that communication methods are effective, and that councillors and staff are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement; • Encourage, collect and evaluate the views and experiences of customers, communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs; • Implement effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account; • Balance feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity; and	**Evidenced by:** **Consultation and engagement policy** **Public consultations on key decisions** **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Board and Strategy** **Residents' survey** **Dorset Council news magazine** **Dorset Council constitution** **Complaints policy (corporate, childrens social care, adults) and Annual Report**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25**

• Take account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users.		

PRINCIPLE C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits

To define outcomes
(Lead – David Bonner, Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance)

• Have 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 council's overall strategy, planning and other decisions; • Specify 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; • Deliver defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available; • Identify and manage risks to the achievement of outcomes; and • Manage customers/service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available.	**Evidenced by:** **Golden thread running through Council Plan, Service Plans and "My Road Map" appraisals.** **Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy** **Performance and risk reporting** **Team meetings** **Statement of Accounts** **Budget Reports** **Data & BI Strategy**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25** Update the strategic performance and risk framework including an updated risk strategy. Update the Council Plan and associated metrics/delivery

To enable sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits
(Lead – Steve Ford, Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Sustainability)

• Consider and balance the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision; • Take a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the council's	**Evidenced by:** **Committee report impacts sheet.**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25**

intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints; • Determine 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; and • Ensure fair access to services.	**Risk management** **Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy** **Commercial Strategy** **Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy** **Climate decision-wheel embedded into committee papers**	

PRINCIPLE D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.

To determine and plan interventions
(Lead – David Bonner, Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance / Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial)

	Evidenced by:	Identified Improvement for 2024/25
• Ensure decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how the intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore, ensuring best value is achieved regardless of how services are provided; • Consider feedback from customers, 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. • Establish and implement robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets; • Engage with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered; • Consider and monitor risks facing each partner when working collaboratively, including shared risks; • Ensure arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances; • Establish 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;	**Dorset Council constitution** **Service risk registers** **Committee report clearance process and Democratic Services Hub** (Internal Link) **Portfolio holders** **Climate change decision making** **Service risk registers** **Consultation and engagement policy** **Quarterly Reports** **Financial Strategy - reviewed annually.** **Business Continuity Plans** (internal link)	Embedding a new strategic performance framework and reporting tool, to include enhanced 'customer voice/feedback' monitoring/KPIs and risk dashboarding.

- Ensure capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly; - Prepare budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium-term financial plan; and - Inform medium and long-term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy	**Assurance Service Lessons Learnt processes (Emergency Planning / complaints)** **Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption policy** **Anti Money Laundering Policy** **Organisational Compliance and Risk Learning Group** **Equality Impact Assessments** **Transformation plan and supporting programme** **Budget cafes for councillors** **Capital Strategy** **Property Strategy and Asset Management Plan**	
To optimise achievement of intended outcomes (Lead – Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial / Steve Ford, Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Sustainability)		
- Ensure the medium-term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints; - Ensure the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer-term; - Ensure the medium-term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment	**Evidenced by:** **Medium Term Financial Strategy** **Annual Audit and Inspection letter** **Scrutiny Committees**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25** Implement the corporate performance framework that links financial planning and assumptions to service

that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage		performance and emerging risks.

PRINCIPLE E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.		
To develop capacity (Lead – Steve Ford, Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Sustainability)		
• Improve resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the council's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently; • Recognise the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved; • Develop and maintain an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources.	**Evidenced by:** **People strategy and 'My Roadmap' appraisals** **Staff Development Scheme** **Learning and Development Plans** **Chief Executive role defined in Authority Procedural Rules** **Staffing Committee** **Partnership working**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25** Improve compliance rates for mandatory training. Complete governance review. Work with Our Future Council programme on enhanced partnership working.
To develop the capability of the leadership and other individuals (Lead – Sheralyn Towner, Head of Organisational Development / Chris Matthews, Head of HR / Jacqui Andrews, Service Manager for Democratic and Electoral Services)		
• Develop 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;	**Evidenced by:** **Roles set out in the Council's constitution** **People Strategy**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25** Induction of new councillors, post May elections

• Publish a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body;
 	
• Ensure the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads the council in implementing its strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by councillors and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority;
 	
• Develop the capabilities of councillors and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by:
    o ensuring councillors and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing learning and development that matches individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged;
    o ensuring councillors and staff 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; and
    o ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external.
 	
• Ensure that there are structures in place to encourage public participation;
 	
• Take steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensure leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections;
 	
• Hold staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of learning or development needs; and
	Scheme of Delegation
	
	My Roadmap' appraisals and 1to1s
	
	Induction
	
	Mentoring and coaching
	
	Peer reviews and external inspections
	
	Staff consultative panels
	
	Leadership and Employee Forums (internal link)
	
	HR policy framework (internal link)
	
	Member Development and Support Officer
	
	Staff Surveys
	
	Management Academy (internal link)	

• Ensure arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing.		

PRINCIPLE F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public monetary management		
To manage risks (Lead – David Bonner, Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance / Marc Eyre, Service Manager for Assurance)		
• Recognise that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making; • Implement robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensure that they are working effectively; and • Ensure that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated	**Evidenced by:** **Risk management policy statement** **Corporate and service risk registers, with clear risk owners** **Risk considerations within committee reports** **Business continuity framework** (internal link) **Emergency Response Plan / Command and Control structure** (internal link) **Performance Management Framework** **Local Code of Corporate Governance** **Annual Governance Statement** **Risk Management and Reporting Officer**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25** Respond to internal audit actions on embedding risk management, including reassessment of Council's risk appetite. Embed an enhanced corporate performance framework linking financial planning and assumptions to service performance and emerging risks.

To manage performance Lead – David Bonner, Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance		
• Monitor service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review; • Make decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the council's financial, social and environmental position and outlook; • Ensure an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made - thereby enhancing the council's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible; • Provide councillors and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement; and • Ensure there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements).	**Evidenced by:** **Performance Management Framework** and dashboards **Separate Overview and Scrutiny Committees** **Council Plan** **Transformation plan and supporting programme** **Delivery Plan** **Supporting strategies** **Data and BI strategy**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25** Develop and roll out the action plan to support the Council's data and business intelligence strategy Embed an enhanced corporate performance framework linking financial planning and assumptions to service performance and emerging risks. Evolve the Scrutiny Committee interactive performance and risk dashboarding/reporting
To ensure robust internal control (Lead – Marc Eyre, Service Manager for Assurance)		
• Align the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives; • Evaluate and monitor the council's risk management and internal control arrangements on a regular basis; • Ensure effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place;	**Evidenced by:** **SWAP Internal Audit Services** **Chief Internal Auditors report**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25**

• Ensure additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor;
 	
• Ensure an Audit & Governance Committee which is independent of the executive and accountable to the council:
    o provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment; and
    o that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon.
	Anti-fraud and corruption policy
	
	Anti Money Laundering Policy
	
	Whistleblowing Policy
	
	Quarterly reporting to elected members
	
	Audit and Governance Committee	

To manage data
(Lead – Marc Eyre, Service Manager for Assurance / David Bonner, Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance)

• Ensure effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data; • Ensure effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies; and • Review and audit regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	**Evidenced by:** **Information Compliance Team and Data Protection Officer** **Senior Information Risk Owner** **Caldicott Guardian** **Strategic Information Governance Board and supporting groups**. **Data sharing agreements**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25** Develop and roll out the action plan to support the Council's data and business intelligence strategy

	Annual Information Governance report **Mandatory data protection and cyber security training** **Information Governance Policy Framework** **Cyber security and ICT continuity Lead** **Data Protection Impact Assessments** **Record retention policy and identified Information Asset Owners**	
To ensure strong public monetary management (Lead – Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial)		
• Ensure financial management supports both long-term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance; and • Ensure well–developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls.	**Evidenced by:** **Section 151 Officer** **Performance Management Framework** **Medium Term Financial Plan** **Budget update reports to committee** **Pay Policy Statement**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25**

	Annual Governance Statement	
	Annual Outturn and Financial Statements	
	Quarterly Report including performance	

PRINCPLE G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.		
To demonstrate good practice with transparency (Lead – Marc Eyre, Service Manager for Assurance / Jacqui Andrews, Service Manager for Democratic and Electoral Services)		
• Write and communicate reports for the public and other stakeholders in a fair, balanced and understandable style appropriate to the intended audience ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate; and • Strike a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous and ensuring the information is easy for users to understand.	**Evidenced by:** **Annual Governance Statement** **Member allowances scheme** **Annual Internal Audit Opinion report** **Freedom of Information and Disclosure system** **Independent remuneration panel** **Committee report clearance process and Democratic Services Hub** (Internal Link) **Committee reports published and meetings open to the public, including streaming (unless exempt)**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25**
To implement good practices in reporting (Lead – David Bonner, Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance)		
• Report at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources to stakeholders in a timely and understandable way;	**Evidenced by:**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25**

• Ensure councillors and senior management own the results; • Ensure robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in this framework have been applied and publish the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (Annual Governance Statement); • Ensure that the framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate; and • Ensure 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.	**Council plan** and supporting performance reporting. **Accountable officers for performance indicators** **Accountable officers for risks**	
To provide assurance and effective accountability (Lead – Marc Eyre, Service Manager for Assurance / David Bonner, Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance)		
• Ensure that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon; • Ensure an effective internal audit service with direct access to councillors is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and that recommendations are acted upon; • Welcome peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implement recommendations; • Gain assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and evidence this in the Annual Governance Statement; and • Ensure that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met	**Evidenced by:** **Audit and Governance Committee** **Internal audit delivered by SWAP Internal Audit Services.** **Monitoring and reporting of audit recommendations** **Quarterly audit reporting to Audit and Governance Committee**	**Identified Improvement for 2024/25** Audit action tracking built into new strategic reporting tools/dashboards as part of the wider corporate performance framework

| | External audit | |
| | Periodic peer reviews | |