

Cambridge City Council - Code of Corporate Governance 2016-17

Review Date: July 2017

A Council's Code of Corporate Governance is:

“The system by which local authorities direct and control their functions and relate to their communities”

Guidance from CIPFA and SOLACE suggests each local authority should develop and maintain a Code of Corporate Governance based on seven *new* core principles, supported by sub-principles, that should underpin the governance structure for the whole Council. The seven new core principles of good governance are as follows:

1. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law.
2. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
3. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
4. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
5. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
6. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
7. Implementing good practice in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

The Council first adopted a Code of Corporate Governance in 2002. It has been reviewed annually since then. This is the 2017 review which has been evaluated against the seven new principles above. The Council's Civic Affairs Committee will be asked to consider the revised Code and to recommend it to full Council for adoption.

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This Code takes each of the principles of good governance in turn and sets out the systems, processes and principles the Council has put in place to ensure good corporate governance.

The Code will be reviewed annually through the Annual Governance Statement process, which will identify the actions to be taken to enhance the code or address any limitations with in it.

Tom Lewis
Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer

July 2017

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Principle A – Behaving with Integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
Sub-Principles	How does the City Council achieve this?	Supporting Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaving with Integrity Demonstrating Strong Commitment to Ethical Values Respecting the rule of Law 	<p>The Council expects the authority's leadership – both Members and Officers - to create a climate of openness, support and respect and to uphold the Council's values.</p> <p>The standards of conduct and personal behaviour expected of Members and staff is set out in the Employee Code of Conduct, the Member Code of Conduct and in the Member/ Officer protocol. An up-to-date register of Member and Officer Senior Officer Interests is maintained.</p> <p>The Council has put in place procedures for considering complaints so that members of the public can express dissatisfaction with Council services and their concerns can be monitored and addressed.</p> <p>The Council has appointed two “independent persons” to support this, in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act, 2011.</p> <p>It publishes an Annual Complaints report analysing trends in complaints against the Council and what has been done to address them.</p> <p>The Council's Civic Affairs Committee fulfils the core functions of an Audit Committee. The Committee is responsible for constitutional issues and ensures that the constitution is monitored and updated when required.</p> <p>The terms of reference of the Civic Affairs committee include responsibility for advising on the Council's ethical framework and the promotion of openness, accountability and probity to ensure the highest standards of conduct.</p>	<p>Constitution</p> <p>Employee Code of Conduct Member Code of Conduct Member/Officer Protocol Register of Interests</p> <p>Complaints Procedure</p> <p>Annual Complaints Report</p> <p>Terms of Reference for Civic Affairs Committee</p>

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	<p>The Council maintains a Whistleblowing policy to enable confidential reporting of suspected breaches of the Employee Code of Conduct or unethical behaviour. It also maintains a Prevention of Fraud and Corruption Policy. Both policies are reviewed regularly by the Civic Affairs Committee.</p> <p>The Council's standing orders and financial regulations put in place processes designed to ensure that Members and employees of the authority are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders.</p> <p>The Council operates within the legal framework for local councils complying with its statutory duties and making the most of its powers to meet the needs of the City and its residents.</p> <p>The Head of Legal Practice is the Council's Monitoring Officer, responsible to the authority for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes and regulations are complied with.</p> <p>The Council ensures that 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>The Council has a clear Procurement Strategy designed to meet the Council's wider objectives and Contract Procedures Rules designed to deliver robust and fair procurement processes.</p>	<p>Whistleblowing Policy</p> <p>Prevention of Fraud & Corruption Policy</p> <p>Annual Report on the Prevention of Fraud and Corruption</p> <p>Constitution</p> <p>Financial Regulations</p> <p>Job Description for the Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Professional Qualifications and training</p> <p>Procurement Strategy</p>
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Principle B - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement		
Sub-Principles	How does the City Council achieve this?	Supporting Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness • Engaging comprehensively with Institutional stakeholders • Engaging stakeholders effectively, including citizens and service users 	<p>The Council holds its meetings, and those of its committees and working groups in public unless there are good reasons for confidentiality. The public are allowed to ask questions at all Council and committee meetings.</p>	<p>Committee Agendas Constitution Committee Forward Plan</p>
	<p>The Council records the deliberation of scrutiny committees and the reasons for Executive and Regulatory decisions and makes agenda papers and minutes available on the Council's website. The Council also records and publishes on the website written questions asked at Council meetings and their answers, and oral questions and answers where these are available.</p>	<p>Agendas and Minutes of Committees Council Website</p>
	<p>Officers use standard report templates for committee and executive reports to help ensure that readers are provided with information that is accurate, complete and unbiased. Reports make clear the options available so that the implications of all decisions and strategic risks can be assessed before those decisions are made.</p>	<p>Standard Committee Report Templates</p>
	<p>The Council has a network of Area Committees to ensure neighbourhood issues are considered in the Council's decision-making processes.</p> <p>The Council has a Joint Development Control Committee with the County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council for decisions affecting growth sites bordering the City and South Cambridgeshire.</p>	<p>Area Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>Terms of Reference of Joint Development Control Committee</p>

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	<p>The Council seeks to encourage engagement in its work through a variety of means including through area committees, public representatives on the Equalities Panel, Tenant Representatives on the Housing Scrutiny Committee and involvement of appointed “Independent Persons” in the work of the Civic Affairs Committee.</p> <p>It also puts resources into outreach work through its community development services and support to tenant and leaseholder representatives.</p> <p>The Council seeks to ensure all partnerships with which it is engaged have a set of values or criteria against which decision-making and actions can be judged. It works with those partnerships to promote open and accountable decision making and to ensure they have clear governance structures in place.</p> <p>It also ensures that there is clarity about the legal status of each partnership and that all representatives in the partnership have clarity about their powers to bind their own organisation to partnership decisions.</p> <p>The Council operates in accordance with principles of partnership working agreed with our key partner organisations.</p> <p>The Council ensures that the authority as a whole is open and accessible to the community, service users and its staff.</p> <p>It promotes the role of Councillors and makes the public know who the Councillors are, what roles they have on the Council and how to contact them.</p> <p>It treats everyone fairly and strives to treat all as rational people able to make up their own minds.</p> <p>It also strives to provide services on the basis of need rather than</p>	<p>Membership and Terms of Reference of these bodies</p> <p>Public Questions and petitions</p> <p>Partnership Terms of Reference Principles of Partnership Working</p> <p>Survey results Public Question time and petition procedures</p> <p>Council Website</p> <p>Cambridge Matters Annual Statement</p>
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	<p>ability to pay.</p> <p>The Council makes clear through its website and other Council publications the services that it is responsible for, how people can contact the Council and the service standards they can expect.</p> <p>The Council undertakes surveys of residents to ensure that it has up to date information about their priorities and levels of satisfaction with the Council and its services.</p> <p>The Council's consultation programme ensures that the Council proactively seeks the views of a wide range of people and engages with all sections of the community effectively.</p> <p>This is achieved through a mix of corporate consultation initiatives with more targeted consultation on service specific issues led by relevant departments.</p> <p>The Council seeks to ensure all views are actively considered when making decisions, recognising that it is not always possible to reconcile conflicting viewpoints.</p> <p>The Council ensures it makes feedback available to consultees on the outcomes of consultation, what has changed as a result and explaining why it has made the decisions it has.</p> <p>The Council undertakes Equality Impact Assessments of all major Council decisions and takes action to implement changes required, to ensure that council services and policies consider the diverse needs of its service users and citizens.</p>	<p>Charging Policies</p> <p>Council Website Council Tax Leaflet Annual Report Open Door Magazine</p> <p>Budget Consultation Citizens Survey</p> <p>Consultation reports Statement of Community Involvement Code of Best Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement</p> <p>Consultation pages on website Council Publications</p> <p>Code of Best Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement</p> <p>Examples of Equality Impact Assessments</p>
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	<p>It has a Single Equalities Scheme covering race, disability, gender age, sexual orientation and religion or belief and an Action Plan will be reviewed annually.</p> <p>It also uses research data, or other relevant data, to inform decisions about relative deprivation in the City.</p> <p>The Council's Equalities Panel (which has staff, member and public representatives) helps the Council evaluate its success in promoting diversity and meeting a broad range of needs.</p> <p>The Council enters into compacts with Tenants and the Voluntary Sector agreeing ways of working with these two stakeholder groups. The Compacts are reviewed on a regular basis.</p> <p>The Council sets out in its collective agreements, employment policies and procedures, and terms of reference for forums and meetings involving trade unions, and how it consults with staff and Trade Unions.</p> <p>Members meet with the Trade Unions in a Joint Staff/ Employer Forum. Each Strategic Director has staff forums and there are Joint Trade Unions Group meetings.</p>	<p>Single Equality Scheme, including action plan and annual reports</p> <p>Terms of Reference and Agendas for these Meetings</p> <p>Compact documents</p> <p>Collective Agreements</p> <p>Employment policies and procedures</p> <p>Joint Staff/Employer Forum</p> <p>Terms of Reference and Agendas/Joint Trade Unions</p> <p>Group Agendas and Minutes</p> <p>Trade Union Facilities Agreement</p>
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Principle C - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits		
Sub-Principles	How does the City Council achieve this?	Supporting Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining Outcomes Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits 	<p>The Council has a clear vision for the City and sets objectives to guide the Council's activities.</p> <p>It reviews those objectives each year, through the Annual Statement agreed at the Annual Council meeting and the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>The Council actively considers the environmental impact of the Council's decisions before those decisions are made.</p> <p>The Council agrees with partners a plan for the Local Enterprise Partnership, and contributes to the agreement of priorities for the Health & Wellbeing Board and other relevant countywide partnerships including the Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.</p>	<p>Vision</p> <p>Annual Statement</p> <p>Environmental Assessment Tool for Council Policies Plans and Projects</p> <p>Environmental Policy Statement</p> <p>Committee reports</p> <p>Budget Setting Report</p> <p>Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Strategy</p>

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Principle D - Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		
Sub-Principles	How does the City Council achieve this?	Supporting Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining Interventions Planning Interventions Optimising achievement of intended outcomes 	<p>The Council has a Medium Term Financial Strategy to resource the Council's aspirations and to assess and plan for any financial risks. The strategy is reviewed annually.</p> <p>The Council puts service to the public first. The annual business planning process is used to agree the priorities for the Council. The Corporate Plan expresses the strategic objectives for the Council over the financial year 2017/18 and beyond.</p> <p>Alongside each of the objectives are detailed the particular outcomes to be achieved and performance measures that provide evidence that the outcomes have been achieved.</p> <p>This information enables members and the services contributing to the delivery of the plan to be clear about the priorities for the Council and assists in decisions about where resources should be focussed.</p> <p>Heads of individual service areas prepare operational plans indicating how they will meet objectives set in the corporate plan and setting out their priorities and work programmes for the year ahead.</p> <p>The Council's overall spending plans are set out in an annual Budget-Setting report for both revenue and capital expenditure.</p> <p>There are arrangements in place for regular budget monitoring and the reporting of significant variances to senior management.</p> <p>The Council works to maximise its resources by delivering services as efficiently as possible, working in partnership with others and using other providers where these are the best options.</p>	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy</p> <p>Corporate Plan Agendas for Strategy and Resources Committee – January 2016/17 Cycle</p> <p>Operational Plans</p> <p>Budget Setting Report</p> <p>Budget Variance Reports</p>

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	<p>The Council seeks expertise from outside the authority when it does not have the necessary skills in-house, making use of peer reviews and other mechanisms for ensuring challenge of Council services. The Council has LGA membership.</p> <p>Performance against key Performance Indicators for each service are prepared for and presented to the Strategic Leadership Team to consider necessary remedial action.</p>	Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports
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Principle E - Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it		
Sub-Principles	How does the City Council achieve this?	Supporting Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing the Council's capacity Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals 	The Council sets out a clear statement of the roles and responsibilities of Executive Members, other Members and Council Officers in its Constitution.	Constitution
	The scheme of delegation within the Constitution makes clear what matters are reserved for collective decision-making by full Council.	
	A Member/Officer protocol is used to aid effective communication between Officers and Members and to clarify their respective roles and appropriate ways of working.	Member/Officer Protocol
	The Council's Chief Executive is its Head of Paid Service responsible and accountable to the authority for its operational management.	Constitution
	When working in partnerships the Council ensures that Members are clear about their roles and responsibilities, both individually and collectively, in relation to the partnerships and to the Council.	Partnership Terms of References Principles of Partnership Working
	The behaviour expected of staff and managers is set out in the Council's competency framework and this is used as the basis for staff performance appraisal.	Competency Framework Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures
	The Council seeks to maintain its Investors in People accreditation.	IIP Accreditation
	Staff joining the Council are offered an induction programme and their training and development needs are reviewed regularly through	Council Induction Programme Performance Review Process

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	<p>the Council's annual performance review process, which applies to all staff.</p> <p>The Council has up-to-date job descriptions. It sets and monitors clear objectives for Officers through the annual performance review process.</p> <p>It agrees appropriate remuneration for officers based on an agreed framework of national and local agreements which include job evaluation.</p> <p>The Council offers all new Members an induction programme and the opportunity to develop, with a briefing and development programme to meet their needs. The Council also provides resources for training, attending conferences/seminars and briefings in-house for all elected Members. It keeps a register of the training received by Members and involves Members in reviewing training needs and the resources available during the year.</p> <p>The Council encourages and facilitates Members to have appropriate training or briefing before performing certain roles (e.g. dealing with staff recruitment or disciplinary issues, being a member of the Planning or Licensing Committees).</p>	<p>Job Descriptions Performance Review Process</p> <p>Member Induction Programme</p>
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Principle F - Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management		
Sub-Principles	How does the City Council achieve this?	Supporting Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing Risk Managing Performance Robust Internal Control Managing data Strong public financial management 	<p>The Council has a Risk Management Strategy, supplemented by procedures and guidance.</p> <p>It undertakes systematic risk assessments in all areas of Council activity, including those covered by Health and Safety legislation.</p> <p>It maintains a corporate risk register detailing the Council's strategic and service risks and reviews this regularly.</p> <p>The Council ensures that risk management is embedded into the culture of the authority, with managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their job.</p> <p>Risk assessment is incorporated into the Council's decision making and Members are advised of the Council's risk profile at key stages.</p> <p>The Council respects the personal data of its citizens, employees, suppliers and others the Council may communicate with in line with the principles of the Data Protection legislation and makes this clear in its own Data Protection Policy. The Council respects the privacy of members of the public when carrying out investigations and ensures that privacy is only interfered with when the law permits and there is clear public interest justification.</p> <p>The Head of Finance is the Council's Chief Financial Officer and S151 Officer, responsible to the authority for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal financial control.</p>	<p>Risk Management Strategy Risk Management Procedures and guidance on the Intranet</p> <p>Risk Assessments</p> <p>Risk Register</p> <p>Risk Management Strategy and Guidance</p> <p>Data Protection Policy</p> <p>Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 200 – Guidance</p> <p>Job Description for the Head of Finance</p>

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	<p>The Council develops and maintains an effective Scrutiny process to encourage constructive challenge and enhance the Council's performance.</p> <p>It also has clear protocols about Members' access to information and officer advice to enable them to perform their roles.</p>	<p>Terms of Reference of Scrutiny Committees</p> <p>Protocol</p>
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Principle G - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability		
Sub-Principles	How does the City Council achieve this?	Supporting Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing good practice in transparency Implementing good practices in reporting Assurance and effective accountability 	<p>The Council makes sure members of the public have access to information about the workings of the Council. It makes clear what information is routinely published through its Freedom of Information Publication scheme and responds promptly to requests for information. The Council publishes on its website all responses to Freedom of Information requests.</p>	<p>Publication Scheme Freedom of Information Requests Monitoring Reports on Council Website – Open Data</p>
	<p>Each year the Council publishes an Annual Report and Statement of Accounts giving information on the authority's vision, strategy, performance, future plans and financial statements.</p>	<p>Annual Report and Statement of Accounts</p>
	<p>Shared services arrangements with other local authorities or partners document their governance arrangements, which are clear, open and accountable.</p>	<p>Shared Services Collaboration Agreements</p>
	<p>The Council maintains an independent Internal Audit function, with a risk-based annual audit plan, designed to test regularly that the Council's policies and processes operate in practice and that the Council complies with legislation and good practice.</p>	<p>Annual Audit Plan</p>
	<p>The Head of Internal Audit produces an annual opinion on the Council's internal control environment and the risk management framework to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.</p>	<p>Head of Internal Audit Annual Opinion</p>
	<p>The Head of Internal Audit Opinion is used to inform an Annual Governance Statement and this is signed off by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.</p>	<p>Annual Governance Statement</p>

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	<p>The Council also agrees an annual work plan with its External Auditors to test the Council's response to major legislation and the soundness of its financial and governance processes.</p> <p>Recommendations arising from internal and external audit and inspection processes are used to inform future decision-making.</p> <p>The Council uses an Independent Remuneration Panel to give advice on payments for Members and considers their advice when setting the Members' Allowance Scheme.</p> <p>The Panel operates in an open and transparent manner, making their agendas, reports and minutes available to the public.</p> <p>The Members' Allowance Scheme is also made available to the public and on the Council's website and the scheme is reviewed annually.</p>	<p>Terms of Reference of Civic Affairs Committee</p> <p>Risk Register</p> <p>Annual Audit Letter</p> <p>Independent Remuneration Panel Terms of Reference</p> <p>Independent Remuneration Panel agendas, reports and minutes</p> <p>Members' Allowance Scheme</p> <p>Pay Policy Statement</p>
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