

CORE PRINCIPLES AND SUB-PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

<p>Core Principles [Acting in the public interest requires a commitment to and effective arrangements for...]</p>	<p>Sub Principles [Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice are ...]</p>	<p>The County Council's Governance Framework/Internal Control Systems</p>
<p>A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law</p> <p>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 across all activities and have mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and to respect the rule of law.</p>	<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 organization.</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 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>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</p>	<p>The Constitution which is used as a basis for Corporate and service planning and performance agreements. It sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and procedures followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent & accountable to local people.</p> <p>It contains Articles which set out the basic rules governing all aspects of the working of the Council (Part 2), elements which define the Council's internal organisation, standing orders, financial regulations, schemes of delegation and terms of reference, procedures covering Cabinet and Scrutiny, risk management and codes of conduct (Parts 3-9) and documents which focus on the Council's external operation through service delivery, community engagement and partnership working (Part 11).</p> <p>The Constitution sets out the principles of decision making, the decisions that may be taken by the Council, the Cabinet, or the Health & Wellbeing Board and the terms of reference of the Council's Committees and delegations to Members and Officers. Article 12 (Part 2 of the Constitution) and the Budget and Policy Framework Rules provide that the Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officers have a duty to ensure lawfulness and fairness of decision making.</p> <p>The <u>Constitution and Policies</u> available on its website contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a Good Practice Guide on outlining Best Practice. ▪ Whistle blowing ▪ Codes of Personal Conduct applicable to Members and Officers. ▪ Details of arrangements for Local determination of complaints in line with revised standards arrangements and in consultation with the Independent Person appointed under the Localism Act 2011. ▪ Complaints procedures (Officers) ▪ Anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy ▪ Equality Policy ▪ Zero Tolerance to Hate Campaign <p>Members Code of Conduct set out at Part 6 of</p>

	<p>legislative and regulatory requirements.</p> <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 are dealt with effectively.</p>	<p>the Constitution together with other relevant Personal Codes of Conduct gives clear guidance.</p> <p>As part of induction process for the Council the Monitoring Officer provides training on the Council's Constitution, the Ethical Framework and the Code of Conduct including and Members Interests; with refresher training provided on a regular basis thereafter.</p> <p>All County Councillors undergo Disclosure and Barring Service Checks.</p> <p>All County Councillors are reminded annually to review/refresh their General Declaration.</p>
<p>B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement</p> <p>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.</p>	<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 appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action.</p> <p>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</p> <p><i>[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].</i></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,</p>	<p>The Constitution set out the Council's rules and procedures for decision-making and the policy and budget frameworks, including the Cabinet and Scrutiny Procedure rules, access to information and public participation rules.</p> <p>Standing orders, codes of conduct and financial regulations well established and publicised throughout the Council.</p> <p>Access to Information and Public Participation rules contained in the Constitution (Part 4).</p> <p>All meetings of the Council, the Cabinet and Committees are normally held in public in accordance with the Council's Access to Information Procedures Rules and Agenda, Minutes & Reports of all Council, Cabinet & Committee meetings are publicly available in line with legislation.</p> <p>Article 12 (Part 2 of the Constitution) and the Budget and Policy Framework Rules provide that the Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officers have a duty to ensure lawfulness and fairness of decision making.</p> <p>The Summary and Explanation to the Constitution summarises the rights of members of the public as amplified throughout this statement.</p> <p>The Constitution has been regularly revised to take account of the provisions of the Local Government and Public Health Involvement Act 2007 in relation to <i>Strong Leader</i> and right of Member to put items on a scrutiny agenda. Amendments consequent of the provisions of the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 being brought into force will necessarily be made as required. Similarly, the impact of the Localism Act and Health is reflected in the Council's governance arrangements.</p> <p>Part 9 of the Constitution identifies joint arrangements entered into with other local authorities and their scope. Part 11 of the Constitution focuses and identifies those</p>

	<p>culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit.</p> <p>Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively</p> <p>Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve communities, individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.</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> <p>Effective engagement requires good communication, trust and respect. Further</p>	<p>external operations conducted through service delivery, community engagement and partnership working.</p> <p>This is delivered through, inter alia,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Financial Statements • Annual Business Plans • Annual Governance Statements • Partnership protocol • Governance code • Compact for Devon • Devon Strategic Partnership • Annual Public Health Reports • Annual Scrutiny Reports • Annual Standards Committee Reports <p>The Annual Budget booklet outlines financial plans. Outturn report outlines financial performance relative to targets. The Statement of Accounts outlines financial performance in code format.</p> <p>Bi-monthly budget monitoring reports to Cabinet.</p> <p>Corporate Engagement Strategy aimed at securing two-way communications and bringing the Council closer to the people of Devon.</p> <p>Consultations. The Have your say webpages - helping to shape services across Devon.</p> <p>DCC promotes/engages actively with community through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections • Democracy week • Devon Voice (Residents Panel) • Devon UK Youth Parliament Team • DCC Senior Council • Meet the Leader 'Tough Choices' Roadshows • Budget Consultations with business community, representatives of young people and older people, the voluntary sector and Trades Unions. • The adoption of a purposeful systems approach with <i>Doing What Matters</i> as part of understanding better what matters to citizens so that they can live their lives well. • DCC Feedback policy available at all DCC premises.
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	<p>that there is clarity about whom the County Council is engaging with and to what ends. Ensuring that views are listened to, thought about and acted upon. Communicating what the Council is going to do as a result – as part of a ‘You Said, We Did’ way of working.</p> <p>To give local people and communities more influence and control over local services and to help develop a culture that supports equal opportunities for everyone to have their say and to be engaged.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webcasting meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny and other major committees. <p>Articles and Part 3 of the Constitution clearly outline roles and responsibilities of Members and Officers.</p> <p>Meetings of the Council, the Cabinet and committees are held in public in accordance with the Council’s Access to Information Procedures Rules and Agenda. Minutes and reports of all Council, Cabinet, Committee meetings, Health & Wellbeing Board and Cabinet Member decisions are publicly available in line with legislation.</p> <p>All reports to committees are required to demonstrate equality, legal, financial, environmental, risk management and public health considerations.</p> <p>Better Together - Devon 2014 - 2020 was developed in conjunction with partners and interested bodies and in light of public consultation and approved by the Council / Cabinet, as are other DCC policy documents and plans. These are reviewed regularly. Priorities in <i>Better Together</i> are included in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p> <p>JSNA, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment approved by Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>Parts 5, 9 and 11 of Constitution refer to partnership working. Part 5 of the Constitution (Financial Regulations) lays down principles for financial management for partnership arrangements, joint ventures and pooled budgets. Part 9 of the Constitution identifies those joint arrangements with other Devon local authorities.</p> <p>Detailed post entry induction process designed for all Members after quadrennial elections, with ongoing training provided for Members over the life of the Council.</p> <p>DCC has twice secured Charter Plus accreditation through the Charter for Member Development developed by the IDeA and the Regional Employers Organisation.</p>
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<p>C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits</p> <p>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 organisation'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.</p>	<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 the best use of the resources available.</p> <p>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</p> <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>Better Together - Devon 2014 - 2020 aims and objectives are reflected in the Council's Corporate Plans and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p> <p>The Councils Code of Business Conduct (Part 5 of the Constitution) also sets out financial protocols to be adopted for partnership arrangements, joint ventures and/or pooled budgets.</p> <p>Performance reporting to Scrutiny – operational and management of risks.</p> <p>Medium-Term Financial Plan forecasts service pressures in future years.</p> <p>The Council must demonstrate it has exercised its Public Sector Equality Duty to highlight any significant implications for the Council's commitment to equality and either <u>confirm</u> that – and how - the policy/scheme will promote equality of opportunity/good community relations and that it will be monitored regularly <u>and/or</u> highlight any action to be taken to reduce any inequality/adverse impact that cannot be justified.</p> <p>To that end a full <u>Impact Assessment</u> or other form of options/project management appraisal that achieves the same objective must be completed for new or refreshed policies, strategies or projects, indicating what impact it has on equality issues etc (in the official jargon 'on the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010).</p>
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<p>D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes</p> <p>Local government achieves its intended outcomes by providing a mixture of legal, regulatory, and practical interventions (courses of action). Determining the right mix of these courses of action is a critically important strategic choice that local government has to make to ensure intended outcomes are achieved. They need robust decision-making mechanisms to ensure that their defined outcomes can be achieved in a way that provides the best trade-off between the various types of resource inputs while still enabling effective and efficient operations. Decisions made need to be reviewed frequently to ensure that achievement of outcomes is optimised.</p>	<p>Determining interventions</p> <p>Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis 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>Planning interventions</p> <p>Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles 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 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 capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy.</p>	<p>The County Council's Corporate Communications Strategy aims to provide a framework to ensure that the Council's work is supported by dynamic and two-way communications and brings the Council closer to the people of Devon (e.g. feedback, consultations, public participation).</p> <p>Article 12 (Part 2 of the Constitution) and the Budget and Policy Framework Rules provide that the Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officers have a duty to ensure lawfulness and fairness of decision making.</p> <p>A revised, streamlined, senior management organisational structure to better reflect the Council's approach to organisational change over the coming years, to respond to challenges facing it and position the Council to focus on its future strategic commissioning responsibilities as well as to be accountable for the delivery of the 'One Plan' process.</p> <p>The Engaging Devon Strategy brings together engagement activities across the Council to oversee, plan, and improve quality. Alongside a programme of engagement activity carried out by, for, or with the Council.</p> <p>In response to increased commissioning activity within the County Council, each Scrutiny Committee appointed a 'Commissioning Liaison Member'. The role of this Member is to work closely with the relevant Cabinet Members and Heads of Service, developing a fuller understanding of commissioning processes, and provide a link between Cabinet and Scrutiny on commissioning and commissioned services.</p> <p>Scrutiny Committees receive a list of all upcoming commissioning activity relevant to their Committee and have the opportunity to put forward any of these pieces of commissioning activity to be looked at in more detail at their next Scrutiny Committee meeting and/or through a Task Group investigation.</p> <p>Council contracts with external providers, with a value of more than £100,000 will include a clause requiring the provider to attend the Council's Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet at the reasonable request of the Council. In addition, the Council has also written to its most significant current service providers inviting a representative to attend future meetings of Scrutiny Committees at the request of Scrutiny Members, and to respond to questions on service delivery or performance.</p>
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<p>E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it</p> <p>Local government needs appropriate structures and leadership, as well as people with the right skills, qualifications and mind-set, to operate efficiently and effectively and achieve 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 organisation operates will change over time, there will be a continuous need to develop its capacity as well as the skills and experience of individual staff members. Leadership in local government is strengthened by the participation of people with many different types of backgrounds, reflecting the structure and diversity of communities.</p>	<p>Developing the entity'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>Developing the capability of the entity'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: ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and</p>	<p>Part 3 of Constitution (endorsed by Procedures Committee), outlines the Council's approve scheme of delegation – to Members and Officers as amended – reflecting statutory provisions, periodically including changes consequent upon County Council assumption of Public Health responsibilities and transfer of NHS staff.</p> <p>Articles and Part 8 of the Constitution set out the roles and accountabilities of Officers and Members.</p> <p>Members Job Profiles are set out at Part 6 of the Constitution and were reviewed for incorporation in development of Members Personal Development Plans following the 2013 elections and the new cohort of Members.</p> <p>The County Council's <u>HR Policies</u>.</p> <p>Detailed Job Descriptions exist for all staff at all levels and for Members (Parts 6 of Constitution).</p> <p>While no formal protocol exists, in terms of the relationship between the Chief Executive and Leader the process effectively starts with appointment process.</p> <p>The Chief Executive's appraisal is undertaken by Group Leaders.</p> <p>Senior Management Structure and Leadership Team Charter revised in 2016 which continues to inspire conversations and actions around positive leadership behaviour.</p> <p>Articles and Part 8 of the Constitution set out the roles and accountabilities of Officers – specifically of statutory officers - and Members.</p> <p>Part 6 of Constitution contains Member/Officer Protocol, and other codes of personal conduct supplemented by Working Practices (Part 10 of Constitution) as endorsed by Procedures Committee.</p> <p>The Council has appointed an Appointments and Remuneration Committee to make recommendations to the Council on pay and remuneration of Chief Officers to ensure decisions on pay and rewards are taken in an accountable and transparent manner, and to review annually the Council's Pay Policy Statement as required by the Localism Act 2012.</p> <p>Ongoing training provided for Members over</p>
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	<p>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 can 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 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>	<p>life of Council and where required specific training provided to enable Members to serve on Committees (e.g. Audit, Development Management, Devon Pension Board).</p> <p>DCC Member Development Strategy being developed with Member Development Group alongside Members Personal Development Plans to identify areas where Members need training).</p> <p>DCC has twice secured Charter Plus accreditation through the Charter for Member Development developed by the IDeA and the Regional Employers Organisation in line with the Council's Member Development Policy.</p> <p>Regular monitoring reports to Council's Procedures Committee.</p> <p>External Assessment and Peer Group Reviews.</p> <p>Annual appraisals process for officers to identify training and development needs.</p>
<p>F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</p> <p>Local government needs to ensure that the organisations and governance structures that it oversees have implemented, and can sustain, an effective performance management system that facilitates effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Risk management and internal control are important and integral parts of a performance management system and are crucial to the achievement of outcomes. Risk should be considered and addressed as part of all decision-making activities.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>It is also essential that a culture and structure for scrutiny are in place as a key part of accountable decision</p>	<p>Managing risk</p> <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>Managing performance</p> <p>Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review.</p> <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>Providing members and senior</p>	<p>Scrutiny Committees receive regular performance monitoring reports in addition to their more general role to review implementation of the Council's policies and consider scope for change/new policy.</p> <p>Whistleblowing policy outlined in Part 5 of the Constitution – Code of Business Conduct.</p> <p>Policy Statement on Proper Conduct of Business Introduction contained in Part 5 of the Constitution (Code of Business Practice).</p> <p>Value for money and performance is reflected on the Council's Performance Plans and reviewed in particular through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation Performance Plan. • External Inspection & Assessment • Annual Budget Consultations. <p>Community Roadshows undertaken by the Leader of the Council since 2009, as part of a wider exercise by the County Council to consult and involve local people in helping to decide future priorities.</p> <p>Scrutiny function.</p> <p>Benchmark data.</p> <p>Financial systems, Internal and external audit</p>

<p>making, policy making and review. A positive working culture that accepts, promotes and encourages constructive challenge is critical to successful scrutiny and successful service delivery. Importantly, this culture does not happen automatically, it requires repeated public commitment from those in authority.</p>	<p>management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement.</p> <p>Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements).</p> <p>Robust internal control</p> <p>Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives.</p> <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: 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.</p> <p>Managing data</p> <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>Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring.</p> <p>Strong public financial management</p> <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>and external inspection and assessment.</p> <p>Regular review of Performance Indicators by Leadership Team and Scrutiny Committees.</p> <p>Article 7 (Part 2 of the Constitution and the Scrutiny Procedure Rule (Part 4 of the Constitution) sets out the principles and practices of the scrutiny process, supplemented by a protocol for relationships and communications between the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees and the Council's Working Practices (Part 10 of the Constitution).</p> <p>Annual Scrutiny Report submitted to County Council.</p> <p>The Council has an Investment & Pension Fund Committee delegated with responsibility to approve accounts of Devon Pension Fund.</p> <p>The Council has a Devon Pension Board which assists the Administering Authority/Scheme Manager in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) securing compliance with the LGPS regulations and other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the LGPS; (b) securing compliance with requirements imposed in relation to the LGPS by the Pensions Regulator; (c) such other matters as the LGPS regulations may specify. <p>An Audit Committee comprises members independent of the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees. It is constituted in line with COPRA recommendations and training provided to members on relevant issues e.g. Risk. AGS, Code of Practice, Statement of Accounts.</p>
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<p>G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Implementing good practice in transparency</p> <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>Implementing good practices in reporting</p> <p>Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and stewardship of resources to stakeholders in a timely and understandable way.</p> <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>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>Assurance and effective accountability</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 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. 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,</p>	<p>The Constitution set out the Council’s rules and procedures for decision-making and the policy and budget frameworks, including the Cabinet and Scrutiny procedure rules, access to information and public participation rules.</p> <p>Following every quadrennial election, an induction process allows for the Monitoring Officer to provide training on the Council’s Constitution and Ethical Framework.</p> <p>The Council has achieved Level III of the Equality Standard for Local Government and has signed up to the <u>Devon Joint Declaration for Equality</u>.</p> <p>The Council’s Fair-Trade status has been renewed for the 10th time.</p> <p>The County Council has achieved compliance with the International Standard on Information security (ISO27001) which defines a management system that provides robust policies and procedures that will help give assurances to the public and our partners that the information it holds will be kept secure.</p> <p>The outcomes of the two Ethical Governance surveys undertaken by Members and Senior Officers have been published by the Council’s Standards Committee. A third survey is being planned.</p> <p>Staff Surveys have included appropriate questions to determine the views and opinions.</p> <p>Customer Feedback Policy and <u>Complaints / Feedback</u> pages.</p> <p>All services are responsible for investigating and responding to complaints at Stage 1 and 2 of the complaints procedure. The responsibility for Stage 2 investigations is now with Business Strategy and Support – Customer Relations Manager. There is no longer a Stage 3 process.</p> <p>The Council has an exemplary record of inviting Peer Group Reviews of services and governance arrangements on a regular basis.</p> <p>The Standards Committee’s independent, co-opted, members attend meetings of the Council, the Cabinet and other committees on an ad-hoc basis to observe and monitor compliance with the Council’s ethical governance framework, in line with the agreed protocol.</p> <p>DCC Annual Risk Assessment was approved by the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee receives regular reports on application of Council’s Risk Management Plan.</p> <p>Reports to Cabinet and Committees recognise need to consider risk management issues and</p>
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	<p>arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider public accountability is recognised and met.</p>	<p>take appropriate action.</p> <p>Para C of Financial Regulations outlines requirements of Risk Management and Control of Resources.</p> <p>Principles for partnership working enshrined in Constitution (Part 11). In addition to the provisions of the Councils Code of Business Conduct & Financial Regulation (Part 5 of the Constitution) a number of clearly defined agreements/protocols exist such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Children, Young People and Families Plan. • Devon Children and Families Partnership • A Warm Response: Our Climate Change Challenge. • Voluntary Sector Compacts. • Protocol of Joint Appointments. • Devon Audit Partnership. <p>Partnership working is integral to the Council's operations, both service specific and more general partnerships. Work is continuing to ensure effective governance, engagement and political leadership in such partnerships including accountability of staff who support these partnerships. For each partnership there will be a protocol which gives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A clear statement of the partnership principles and objectives. ▪ Clarity of each partner's role within the partnership. ▪ Definition of roles of partnership board members. ▪ Line management responsibilities for staff who support the partnership. <p>The Compact for Devon is a practical agreement for improving relationships and working practices between organisations in the statutory sector and the voluntary & community sectors, drawn up by the Devon Hub, comprising representatives of both sectors.</p> <p>A statement of funding sources for joint projects and clear accountability for proper financial administration.</p> <p><u>The Growth Support Programme</u> webpages set out the requirements for preparation of funding bids for businesses in the Heart of the South West region.</p>
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