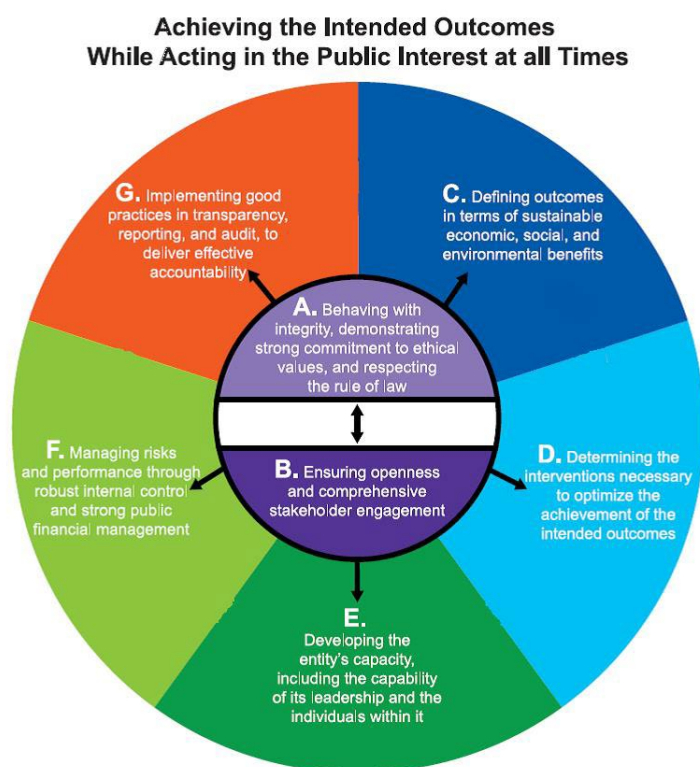


REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL'S CODE OF GOVERNANCE

Corporate governance is the term given to describe the systems, processes and values by which Councils operate and by which they engage with, and are held accountable to, their communities and stakeholders.

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council is committed to demonstrating that it has the necessary corporate governance arrangements in place to perform effectively and ensure that through its actions it delivers positive outcomes for its citizens.

The Council's Code of Governance is built around the principles of good governance, as defined in guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), entitled 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016).



Each of the seven core principles (A-G) is supported by several sub-principles. The following table sets out, in one place, the various systems and processes that together constitute the Council's Governance Framework.

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

Supporting principles

- **Behaving with integrity**
- **Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values**
- **Respecting the rule of law**

To achieve this, we will:

- Publish an Annual Governance Statement reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's Governance Framework.
- Maintain shared values which underpin an ethos of good governance.
- Maintain formal codes of conduct defining the standards of behaviour expected of both Members and Officers, with clear processes in place to investigate any complaints.
- Provide training on expected standards of behaviour for Members through the Member Induction Programme and for staff through the Corporate Induction.
- Demonstrate and communicate, through the authority's leadership – both Members and Officers – the behavioural standards of openness, support and respect to uphold the Council's values.
- Maintain registers of Interest for both Members and Officers.
- Maintain and regularly review the Gifts and Hospitality policy and guidance.
- Maintain a register of gifts and hospitality for both Members and Officers.
- Maintain and regularly review arrangements for making complaints in respect of Council services.
- Appoint an "independent person" to support the complaints process, in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act, 2011.
- Publish an Annual Complaints Report, analysing trends in complaints against the Council, what has been done to address them, and what learning has been gained for the organisation as an outcome Publish the Annual Letter from the Local Government Ombudsman.
- Maintain an effective Governance Committee fulfilling the core functions of an Audit Committee and taking responsibility for constitutional issues, ensuring it remains updated.
- Ensuring policies are in place and effectively communicated to enable confidential reporting of suspected breaches of the Employee Code of Conduct or unethical behaviour. (Whistleblowing and Prevention of Fraud and Corruption Policies)
- Ensure that statutory Officers are in place with the necessary skills, resources and support to perform effectively in their roles and that these roles are properly understood throughout the Council.
- Comply with legislation and all relevant professional standards.
- Maintain and regularly update financial procedure and contract procedure rules as necessary.
- Ensure there is a clear Procurement Strategy in place to meet the Council's wider objectives and Contract Procedures Rules designed to deliver robust and fair procurement processes.
- Define vision and priority objectives through the Corporate Plan.

- Monitor and report on performance in respect of delivery against priority objectives, quarterly and annually.
- Agree and publish a Social Value Policy

Principle B - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Supporting principles

- Openness
- Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders
- Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively

To achieve this, we will:

- Undertake appropriate consultation with stakeholders in the development of the budget and key plans and strategies.
- Publish key documents on the Council's website.
- Complete equality impact assessment in respect of relevant key decisions and policies and publish these on the website.
- Publish a Forward Plan of key decisions.
- Publish records of key decisions taken including decisions taken under delegated powers.
- Maintain the Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme.
- Maintain arrangements for receiving and responding to petitions.
- Maintain a communication strategy to ensure effective engagement with stakeholders.
- Use a wide variety of methods for consultation and engagement with communities and stakeholders to meet different needs.
- Undertake periodic residents' surveys, publish the findings and use them to inform budget setting and policy decisions / corporate plan development.
- Increasingly engage and seek feedback from the public through social media, including video.
- Communicate regularly with staff through an internal bulletin (BBB) and staff intranet, and seek views through staff surveys.
- Facilitate opportunities for the public to ask questions through Cabinet and Council.
- Maintain an open-door policy for the Managing Director and Corporate Directors.

- Undertake a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and use its findings to inform the Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Participate in the Tees Valley Combined Authority arrangements, at both Member and Officer level, connecting with all aspects of TVCA policy / investment.
- Participate in joint scrutiny arrangements with neighbouring authorities in the South Tees and Tees Valley areas, where applicable.
- Participate in the Cleveland Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and all aspects of the LRF operations, as appropriate.

Principle C -Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits

Supporting principles

- Defining outcomes
- Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

To achieve this, we will

- Develop Directorate based delivery plans flowing from the priority outcomes set out within the Corporate Plan.
- Monitor progress against objectives and communicate performance in respect of the financial position and delivery of priority objectives, both quarterly and annually, for consideration by both Cabinet and Scrutiny, and publish on the website.
- Agree and publish strategic planning documents directing the Council's approach to managing its strategic resources such as asset management, information technology, workforce, aligning resource to priorities.
- Regularly review and refresh the procurement strategy, taking account of social value factors.
- Ensure that all Member reports explain how the report contributes to the delivery of the Corporate Plan and any associated impact in relation to environmental, social, financial, legal and safety factors.
- Adhere to the principles of the adopted social value charter to support the voluntary and community sector so that as much of the Council's spending is recycled locally to support the economy and communities.
- Regularly review and update the Equality Policy.

Principle D – Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

Supporting Principles

- Determining interventions
- Planning interventions
- Optimising achievement of intended outcomes

To achieve this, we will:

- Clearly set out the Council's vision for the borough and its priority objectives through the Corporate Plan.
- Develop annually, through the leadership of the Chief Financial Officer, the Medium Term Financial Plan, ensuring close alignment to Corporate Priorities.
- Monitor performance in respect of the financial position and delivery of priority objectives, and report on progress on a quarterly and annual basis.
- Ensure, through its appraisal process, that staff understand their roles and how they support the achievement of the service based, directorate based and corporate objectives.
- Maintain and update the Risk Management Framework, reporting regularly on activity to mitigate risks through Directorate and Executive Management Teams and through Governance Committee.
- Consider, and set out relevant options and reasons for recommended options within decision-making reports.

Principle E - Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Supporting Principles

- Developing the entity's capacity
- Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals

To achieve this, we will:

- Set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council's Executive, full Council, individual Members and statutory officers through the Constitution and Scheme of delegation.
- Develop and maintain a council workforce strategy which outlines the Council's staff support and development programme.
- Assess the skills required by officers through the appraisal process and address any training and knowledge gaps.
- Place a strong focus within the workforce development programme on Leadership Development; Management Development; Growing our Own Talent; Job Competencies; and Addressing Skill Gaps.
- Regularly review and refresh the induction programmes for both Members and Officers and provide development opportunities through eLearning modules and access to wider sector development events.
- Facilitate regular Member briefings on pertinent issues and periodic Member Conferences.
- Build capacity through its apprenticeship scheme, including young person's paid work experience scheme, to bring young people on to replace our ageing workforce.
- Ensure arrangements are in place to support and maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce.
- Encourage participation and feedback from staff through periodic staff conferences and surveys.
- Engage in and use learning from peer reviews across different areas of the Council's business.

Principle F – Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Supporting Principles

- Managing risk
- Managing performance
- Robust internal control
- Managing data
- Strong public financial management

To achieve this, we will:

- Maintain an effective Governance Committee, independent of executive and scrutiny functions, with clearly set out roles, responsibilities and terms of reference through the constitution.
- Through Governance Committee, ensure robust risk management arrangements are in place and adhered to.
- Work within an agreed risk management framework, supported and monitored by the Risk Management Group, chaired by the Governance Director.
- Maintain a Corporate Risk Register that is regularly reviewed, updated and challenged by Governance Committee.
- Review directorate risk registers through Directorate and Executive Management Teams, ensuring that key risks are captured within the Corporate Risk Register which is regularly reviewed and challenged by Governance Committee.
- Develop a risk based internal audit plan informed by the risk register and aligning to corporate priorities.
- Ensure arrangements are in place for Business Continuity Management (including ICT Disaster Recovery) to enable services to be maintained to citizens in the event of a major incident.
- Prepare and publish an Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement.
- Ensure arrangements for Internal and External Audit are clearly defined and that reports on activity and audit opinion are reported to Governance Committee.
- Ensure progress against both corporate plan objectives and financial targets are reviewed by Members through quarterly monitoring of financial and performance information, highlighting any areas of concern where intervention or support may be required.
- Ensure that the Council's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2014), and the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015.
- Establish and communicate clear capital expenditure guidelines and formal project management disciplines for investment projects.
- Maintain and review financial procedure rules and ensure that resources are aligned with corporate priorities.
- Maintain and review Contract Procedure Rules.
- Maintain and support an effective scrutiny function, enabling Members to consider and help shape emerging policy issues before formal adoption through Cabinet and Council.

- Ensure there is a clear process for scrutiny to exercise its power of 'call-in.'
- Commission ad hoc task and finish groups to review individual topics in more depth, making recommendations to Cabinet or Council as appropriate.
- Participate in joint Scrutiny arrangements as appropriate, in relation to health matters, and the key functions of the Tees Valley Combined Authority.
- Maintain transparent complaints procedures and implement learning from complaints.
- Ensure governance arrangements support decision making and provide sufficient information to support the delivery of the priority objectives.
- Ensure appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place.
- Ensure policies and procedures for Information Governance and Security are regularly reviewed and updated, comply with legislative requirement and are published on the Council intranet.
- Include Information Governance and Security / GDPR training within the workforce development plan as mandatory training for both Members and Officers.

Principle G - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Supporting principles

- Implementing good practice in transparency
- Implementing good practices in reporting
- Assurance and effective accountability

How do we achieve this?

- Maintain an effective Internal Audit function which conforms to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit and is independent of the Executive and Scrutiny Committees.
- Maintain compliance with the local government transparency code and publish all required information in a timely manner.
- Prepare and publish an Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement.
- Submit an annual report to Governance Committee on Corporate Complaints and Local Government Ombudsman Letter.
- Maintain an effective Scrutiny function which supports constructive challenge and drives improvement.
- Ensure all key documents and decision-making reports are accessible via the Council's website, except where they deal with confidential issues and there is reason for them to remain exempt.
- Prepare, and make available to residents, an annual report on achievements.
- Maintain a regular programme of performance and financial reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny and an annual out-turn report.
- Welcome the findings from external reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and monitor the implementation of any recommended actions through its established performance management framework.