

Wealden District Council

Local Code of Corporate Governance

INTRODUCTION

Corporate governance is a term used to describe the way that organisations direct and control what they do. For local authorities, it includes the systems, policies and processes as well as the cultures and values that underpin a Council's arrangements for effective:

- Leadership
- Management
- Performance
- Delivery of positive customer outcomes
- Community engagement
- Stewardship of public money

GOOD CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Wealden District Council is committed to the principles of good corporate governance identified in the CIPFA/SOLACE guidance "*Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*" and confirms its on-going intentions through the adoption, monitoring and development of its own Local Code of Corporate Governance. The Council recognises that achieving high standards of corporate governance will encourage stakeholders to have confidence in us and will allow the Council to undertake its role with its community.

This document sets out Wealden District Council's *Local Code of Corporate Governance* and the processes for monitoring its effectiveness. The Code provides the framework for the Council to achieve its aims and objectives. **It applies to all staff, elected Members and any person, agent, contractor or other body carrying out functions on behalf of the Council.**

The Council's Monitoring Officer (and Deputy in their absence) shall be responsible for:

- Overseeing the implementation and monitoring the operation of the Code;
- Reviewing the operation of the Code in practice on an annual basis;
- Reporting annually to the Audit & Finance Committee and full Council on compliance with the Code and any changes that may be needed to ensure its effectiveness in practice;
- Reporting any significant revisions to the Code to stakeholders.

The code has seven core principles:

Core Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law.

Core Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

Core Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.

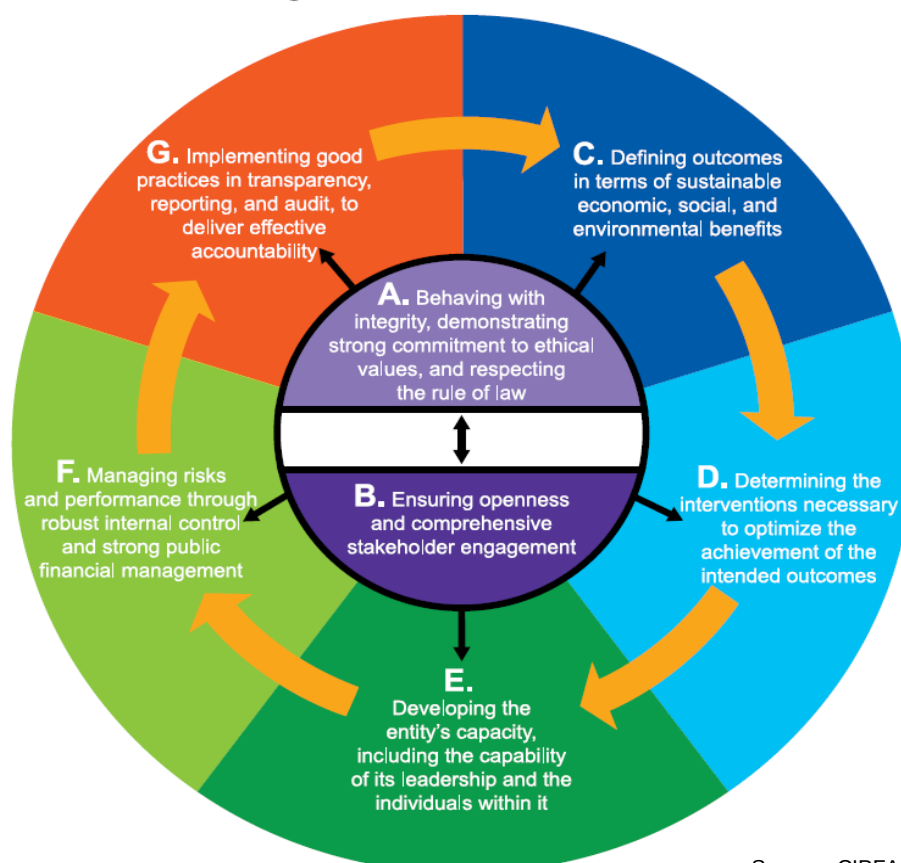
Core Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of outcomes.

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

Core Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.

Core Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability.

Achieving the Intended Outcomes While Acting in the Public Interest at all Times



Source : CIPFA 2016

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The following tables outline how the Council will meet these core principles and summarises the systems, policies and procedures it already has in place to support this. The headings below fully reflect the CIPFA / SOLACE model, compliance with which will be reviewed annually and the outcomes incorporated into a revised Annual Governance Statement for the last accounting year.

Principles	Sub principles	Demonstrated by
Acting in the public interest requires a commitment to and effective arrangements for:		
A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law	Behaving with integrity openness, support and respect	The Council's leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect. Appropriate policies and processes are developed to embed the principles, including Codes of Conduct for members and officers.
	Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values	Shared values, including leadership values are in place for both the Council and its staff. The values reflect public expectations and are communicated to Members, staff, the community and partners.
	Respecting the rule of law	Defined and published standards, including the Constitution, detail the expected conduct of Members and officers across Council functions. Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively, including through effective anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies which are incorporated into all contracts.
B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	Openness	An embedded culture of transparency, openness and honesty.
	Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	Consideration is given to the institutional stakeholders to whom the Council is accountable to, and assessment made on the effectiveness of the relationships and any changes required.
	Engaging with individual citizens	Ensuring that clear channels of communication are in place with all

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	and service users effectively	sections of the community and other stakeholders and engagement is sought through a wide range of methods and channels. Effective monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure that they operate effectively.
Principles	Sub principles	Demonstrated by
In addition to the overarching requirements for acting in the public interest in principals A and B, achieving good governance also requires a commitment to and effective arrangements for:		
C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits	Defining outcomes	Focussing on the purpose of the Council and on outcomes for the community, consulting on the outcomes and publishing them as part of the Corporate Plan.
	Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	Regular review of the Council's vision and its implications for the Council's governance arrangements and economic, social and environmental benefits. Social value outcomes embedded in all procurement.
D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes	Determining interventions	Published reports which communicate the Councils' activities, achievements, financial position and performance. Interventions required are identified through these reports.
	Planning interventions	Performance, audit risk and finance information are used to identify areas of concern and plan required interventions.
	Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	SMART community outcomes underpinned by service plans and outcome focused business activity.
E: Developing the entity's capacity including the capability of its leadership and	Developing the entity's capacity	Clear vision, strategy, and direction, underpinned by capable leadership, partnerships and collaborative working.
	Developing the capability of the entity's	Recruitment and retention of high performing staff and providers.

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the individuals within it.	leadership and other individuals	Ongoing commitment to training and developing staff.
Principles	Sub principles	Demonstrated by
F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management	Managing risk	Embedded risk management processes which are linked to Corporate Plan outcomes and corporate priorities and reported to the relevant committees on a quarterly basis.
	Managing performance	Performance targets set in line with national benchmarks and outturns are regularly monitored and reported to stakeholders.
	Robust internal control	Preventive controls in place include segregation of duties, approval / authorisation processes, security of assets, reconciliations and audits. Regular reports from Internal Audit to committee.
	Managing data	Robust Information Governance standards and training to all staff and members.
	Strong public financial management.	Quarterly budget reports, audited annual statement of accounts, accountable budget owners. Clear links between Corporate Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy and subsequent reporting on outcomes.
G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability	Implementing good practice in transparency	Strikes an appropriate 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.
	Implementing good practices in reporting	Comprehensive consultation process and consideration of implications for published reports (e.g. financial, legal). Ensuring Members and senior management own the results reported.
	Assurance and effective accountability	Ensuring that recommendations for corrective actions made by external / internal audit and other review agencies are acted upon.