



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS
COMMITTEE
25 MARCH 2010**

Report of the Head of Audit and
Risk Management

ITEM 10

GOVERNANCE

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To approve the Local Code of Governance.
- 1.2 To approve the Governance Action Plan.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1. This report has been produced to outline the actions taken to address the Chief Executive's key objective on governance, which is:

"To ensure that an action plan is in place (by 31/3/10) to refresh and improve the robustness of the corporate governance framework that meets the principles of good governance and statutory requirements"

Background

- 2.2. The impetus to improve governance in the public sector increased in 2004, with the publication of the "Good Governance Standard for Public Services". The Standard comprises of six core principles of good governance, each with supporting principles. The publication was based on the notion that good governance leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and ultimately good outcomes.
- 2.3. The Standard formed the basis of the CIPFA/SOLACE publication "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" published in 2007. This publication has developed a framework for local government based on the 6 core principles of the Standard, but adapted for the local government context. The Framework also comprises best practice objectives that provide the basis for each local authority to develop and maintain a local code of governance. A Local Code of

Governance has been drafted based on the best practice requirements of the framework. This is attached at Appendix 2.

2.4. In order to implement the Framework at Derby, a Governance Working Group was established. The objectives of the Group were to:

- consider the extent to which the authority complies with the principles and elements of good governance set out in the Framework
- identify systems, processes and documentation that provide evidence of compliance
- identify the individuals and committees responsible for monitoring and reviewing the systems, processes and documentation identified
- identify issues that have not been addressed in the authority and consider how they should be addressed
- identify the individuals who would be responsible for undertaking the actions that are required.

The Group produced a self-assessment document for each of the 6 core principles having reviewed the supporting principles and the requirements for best practice. This highlights the areas where the Council is not achieving the required best practice.

2.5. To achieve the Chief Executive's governance objective, a smaller Group has been set up and is chaired by the Monitoring Officer. This group comprises of:

- Assistant Director – Democratic Services
- Head of Audit and Risk Management
- Planning and Performance Manager
- Policy and Research Manager

2.6. The Council's governance of its partnerships will be enhanced through the development of a partnership toolkit. The Governance of partnerships has been reviewed by internal audit. The recommendations from the audit review are being incorporated into the toolkit.

Governance Action Plan

2.7. The Governance Sub Group has reviewed the self-assessment exercise and developed an Action Plan. The Governance Action Plan is attached at Appendix 3. The Action Plan incorporates a review of the Personnel Committee and Disputes Sub Committee, and the statutory requirements on a new political leadership model and electoral cycle.

2.8. Timescales have been developed for each action based on a priority assessment by the Group. All high priority actions are scheduled to be completed within the next 6 months. There are some actions which require completion before the Council's Annual General Meeting in May 2010.

- 2.9 The Action Plan and the Local Code have been reviewed and discussed by Chief Officer Group and Leadership.
- 2.10 Updates will be brought to each meeting of this Committee on the progress made with the Action Plan. The Governance Working Group will review the Local Code on an annual basis.

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Background papers:

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Implications
Appendix 2 – Local Code of Governance
Appendix 3 – Governance Action Plan

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|---------------------|
| IMPLICATIONS |
|---------------------|

Financial

1. None directly arising

Legal

2. None directly arising

Personnel

3. None directly arising

Equalities impact

4. None directly arising.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. The functions of the Committee have been established to support delivery of corporate objectives by enhancing scrutiny of various aspects of the Council's controls and governance arrangements.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

LOCAL CODE OF GOVERNANCE

February 2010

LOCAL CODE OF GOVERNANCE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Governance comprises the systems and processes for the direction and control of local authorities through which they account to, engage with and lead their communities. The function of governance is to ensure that authorities, other local government organisations, or connected partnerships fulfil their purpose and achieve their intended outcomes for citizens and service users and operate in an effective, efficient, economic and ethical manner.
- 1.2 Derby City Council recognises that it is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this accountability Members and officers will be responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the authority's affairs and the stewardship of the resources at its disposal.
- 1.3 To this end the Council has approved and adopted this Local Code of Governance which has been produced in accordance with the principles and requirements of the CIPFA/SOLACE "*Good Governance in Local Government: A Framework*".¹ The basis of this Framework are the six core principles of good governance drawn up by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services in its publication "*The Good Governance Standard for Public Services*".

2. WHY DO WE NEED A LOCAL CODE?

- 2.1 Good governance is important because it is crucial to:
- Providing high-quality public services.
Nationally governance weaknesses have led to service failures and critical situations. High-performing organisations, on the other hand, have effective governance arrangements. This is an important area in the Audit Commission's Organisational Assessment.
 - Raising public trust.
The public's trust is increased when the quality of services that they and their families experience is high, and when organisations are perceived to be open and honest in communicating their performance, and in learning from their mistakes.
- 2.2 Good governance means:
- (i) Focussing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community including citizens and service users and creating and implementing a vision for the local area
 - (ii) Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles

¹ CIPFA is the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy; SOLACE is the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers

- (iii) Promoting the values of the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour
- (iv) Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk
- (v) Developing the capacity and capability of Members to be effective and ensuring that officers – including the statutory officers – also have the capability and capacity to deliver effectively
- (vi) Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust local public accountability.

3. HOW WE WILL APPLY THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

To achieve the principles of good governance, the authority supports and will apply the six core principles, and their related supporting principles, as follows:

3.1 Focussing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community including citizens and service users and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.

Supporting principles

- exercising strategic leadership by clearly communicating the authority's purpose and vision and its intended outcome for citizens and service users
- ensuring that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, or in partnership or by commissioning
- ensuring that the authority makes best use of resources and that tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money.

Derby City Council will:

- set out a clear statement of the Council's purpose and vision and use it as basis for corporate and service planning and shaping the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement
- review on a regular basis the Council's vision for the local area and its impact on the authority's governance arrangements
- ensure that partnerships are underpinned by a common vision of their work that is understood and agreed by all parties
- communicate on a timely basis the Council's activities and achievements, its financial position and performance through publications such as Your Derby, the annual Statement of Accounts etc.
- decide how the quality of service for users is to be measured and make sure that the information needed to review service quality effectively and regularly is available. The authority will ensure that this information is reflected in the Corporate Plan, as well as departmental business plans, the financial strategy etc.
- put in place effective arrangements to deal with failure in service delivery, for instance the Corporate Complaints Procedure
- decide how value for money is to be measured and make sure that the Council and its partners have the information needed to review value for money and performance effectively. The results will be reflected in Council's performance plans and in reviewing the work of the Council.

3.2 Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles

Supporting principles

- ensuring effective leadership throughout the authority by being clear about executive and non executive functions and of the roles and responsibilities of the scrutiny function
- ensuring that a constructive working relationship exists between elected Members and officers and that the responsibilities of Members and officers are carried out to a high standard.
- ensuring relationships between the authority and the public are clear so that each know what to expect of the other.

Derby City Council will:

- set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council Cabinet and of the Cabinet's members individually and the Council's approach towards putting this into practice
- set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of other Members and of senior officers
- determine a scheme of delegated and reserved powers within the Constitution, including a formal schedule of those matters specifically reserved for collective decision of the Council taking account of relevant legislation and ensure that it is monitored and updated when required
- develop protocols to ensure effective communication between Members and officers in their respective roles
- develop protocols to ensure that the Leader and Chief Executive negotiate their respective roles early in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained
- make the Chief Executive responsible and accountable to the Council for all aspects of operational management
- make the s151 Officer (Strategic Director of Resources) responsible to the Council 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
- make the Monitoring Officer responsible to the Council for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes, regulations and other relevant statements of good practice are complied with.
- set out the terms and conditions for remuneration of Members and officers and an effective structure for managing the process including an effective remuneration panel
- ensure that effective mechanisms exist to monitor service delivery
- ensure that the Council's vision, Corporate plan, priorities and targets are developed through robust mechanisms, and in consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders, and that they are clearly articulated and disseminated
- when working in partnership :
 - ensure that members are clear about their roles and responsibilities both individually and collectively in relation to the partnership and to the Council
 - ensure that there is clarity about the legal status of the partnership

- ensure that the roles and responsibilities of the partners are agreed so that there is effective leadership and accountability
- ensure that representatives or organisations make clear to all other partners the extent of their authority to bind their organisation to partner decisions

3.3 Promoting the values of the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour

Supporting Principles

- ensuring council Members and officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that uphold high standards of conduct and exemplify effective governance
- ensuring that organisational values are put into practice and are effective.

Derby City Council will:

- ensure that the Council's leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect
- ensure that standards of conduct and personal behaviour expected of members and staff, of work between members and staff and between the Council, its partners and the community are defined and communicated through codes of conduct and protocols
- put in place arrangements to ensure that members and employees of Derby City Council are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice
- develop and maintain shared values including leadership values for both the Council and its staff, reflecting public expectations and communicate these with members, staff, the community and partners
- put in place arrangements to ensure that systems and processes are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards, and monitor their continuing compliance and effectiveness in practice
- develop and maintain an effective standards committee which acts as the main means to raise awareness and take the lead in ensuring high standards of conduct are firmly embedded within the local culture
- use the organisation's shared values to act as a guide for decision making and as a basis for developing positive and trusting relationships within the Council
- in pursuing the vision of a partnership, agree a set of values against which decision making and actions can be judged.

3.4 Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk

Supporting principles

- exercising leadership by being rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and listening to and acting upon the outcome of constructive scrutiny
- having good quality information, advice and support to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs
- making sure that an effective risk management system is in place

- recognising the limits of lawful action and observing both the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on local authorities by public law, but also accepting responsibility to use their legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in their area.

Derby City Council will:

- develop and maintain an effective scrutiny function which encourages constructive challenge and enhances the Council's performance overall and that of any organisation for which it is responsible
- develop and maintain open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based
- put in place arrangements to safeguard members and employees against conflicts of interest and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice
- develop and maintain an effective audit and accounts committee which is independent of the Cabinet and scrutiny functions or make other appropriate arrangements for the discharge of the functions of such a committee
- ensure that effective, transparent and accessible arrangements are in place for dealing with complaints
- ensure that those making decisions whether for the Council or any partnership are provided with information that is fit for the purpose – relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications
- ensure that professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making and used appropriately
- ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the Council, with members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their jobs
- ensure that arrangements are in place for whistle-blowing (Confidential Reporting Code) to which staff and all those contracting with the Council have access
- actively recognise the limits of lawful activity placed on the Council by, for example, the ultra vires doctrine but also strive to utilise powers to the full benefit of the City of Derby
- recognise the limits of lawful action and observe both the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on local authorities by public law
- observe all specific legislative requirements placed upon the Council, as well as the requirements of general law, and in particular to integrate the key principles of good administrative law – rationality, legality and natural justice – into our procedures and decision-making processes.

3.5 Developing the capacity and capability of members to be effective and ensuring that officers – including the statutory officers – also have the capability and capacity to deliver effectively.

Supporting principles

- making sure that Members and officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles

- developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance, as individuals and as a group
- encouraging new talent for membership of the authority so that best use can be made of resources in balancing continuity and renewal.

Derby City Council will:

- provide induction programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for both members and officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis
- ensure that the statutory officers have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and that these roles are properly understood throughout the authority
- assess the skills required by members and officers and make a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively
- develop skills on a continuing basis to improve performance, including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and to recognise when outside expert advice is needed
- ensure that effective arrangements are in place for reviewing the performance of the Cabinet as a whole and of individual members and agreeing an action plan to address any training or development needs
- ensure that effective arrangements designed to encourage individuals from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the Council
- consider the merits of career structures for members and officers to encourage participation and development

3.6 Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust local public accountability

Supporting principle

- exercising leadership through a robust scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders including partnerships, and develops constructive accountability relationships
- taking an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery
- making best use of resources by taking an active and planned approach to meet responsibility to staff.

Derby City Council will:

- make clear to themselves, all staff and the community to whom they are accountable and for what
- consider those institutional stakeholders to whom the Council is accountable and assess the effectiveness of the relationships and any changes required
- produce an annual report on the activity of the scrutiny function
- ensure that clear channels of communication are in place with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, and put in place monitoring arrangements to ensure that they operate effectively
- hold meetings in public unless there are good reasons for confidentiality
- ensure that arrangements are in place to enable the Council to engage with all sections of the community effectively. These arrangements should

- recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish explicit processes for dealing with these competing demands
- establish a clear policy on the types of issues they will meaningfully consult on or engage with the public and service users about including a feedback mechanism for those consultees to demonstrate what has changed as a result
- on an annual basis, publish a report giving information on the Council's vision, strategy, plans and financial statements as well as information about its outcomes, achievements and the satisfaction of service users in the previous period
- ensure that Derby City Council as a whole is open and accessible to the community, service users and its staff and ensure that it has made a commitment to openness and transparency in all its dealings, including partnerships, subject only to the need to preserve confidentiality in those specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so
- develop and maintain a clear policy on how staff and their representatives are consulted and involved in decision making

4 MONITORING AND REPORTING OF OUR GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 The Council will undertake annual reviews of its governance arrangements to ensure continuing compliance with best practice as set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework and it recognises the importance of ensuring that such reviews are reported on both within the authority, to the Audit and Accounts Committee and externally with the published accounts, to provide assurance that:

- governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively in practice; or
- where reviews of the governance arrangements have revealed gaps, action is planned that will ensure effective governance in future.

4.2 The Council will prepare an Annual Governance Statement and in so doing recognises that the process of preparing the Governance Statement should itself add value to the authority's governance and internal control framework. It will be submitted to the Audit and Accounts Committee for approval.

4.3 The Annual Governance Statement will include the following information:

- an acknowledgement of responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of governance, including in particular the system of internal control
- an indication of the level of assurance that the systems and processes that comprise the authority's governance arrangements can provide
- a brief description of the key elements of the governance arrangements
- a brief description of the process that has been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements, including some comment on the role of: the authority; the Cabinet; the Audit and Accounts Committee; the overview and scrutiny function; the Standards Committee; internal audit and other explicit review/assurance mechanisms including risk management arrangements
- an outline of the actions taken, or proposed, to deal with significant governance and internal control issues.

- 4.4 The Council recognises that the Annual Governance Statement should cover all significant corporate systems, processes and controls, spanning the whole range of the authority's activities, including in particular those designed to ensure:
- the Council's policies are put into place
 - the Council's values are met
 - laws and regulations are complied with
 - required processes are adhered to
 - financial statements and other published information are accurate and reliable
 - human, financial and other resources are managed efficiently and effectively
 - high quality services are delivered efficiently and effectively.
- 4.5 It will therefore cover performance issues – good governance promotes good service but poor service performance reflects a failure of governance.
- 4.6 It is accepted that approval and ownership of the Governance Statement should be at a corporate level and should be confirmed by the Chief Executive and Leader signing the statement on behalf of the Council.
- 4.7 In reviewing and approving the Governance Statement, Members will be provided with assurances on the effectiveness of the governance framework, and in particular the system of internal control, and how these address the key risks faced by the Council. Those assurances will be available from a wide range of sources, including internal and external audit, a range of external inspectorates and managers from across the Council. Management will provide the primary source of assurance. However, an effective internal audit function will also be a significant source of assurance.
- 4.8 The Council will strive to establish an assurance framework, embedded into its business processes, that maps strategic objectives to risks, controls and assurances. Such a framework will provide Members with assurances to support the Governance Statement on a structured basis, and will help Members to identify whether all strategic objectives and significant business risks are being addressed.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 **The Monitoring Officer** is responsible for:

- overseeing the implementation and monitoring of this Code;
- reporting annually to the Audit and Accounts Committee and the Standards Committee on compliance with the Code and any changes that may be necessary to maintain it and ensure its effectiveness in practice.
- preparing an annual Monitoring Officer's Report, which will also form part of the assurance required to be demonstrated in the Annual Governance Statement.

5.2 **The Head of Audit and Risk Management** is responsible for:

- reporting annually to the Audit and Accounts Committee on audit activities during the year, with particular emphasis on the systems of internal control

and the arrangements for corporate governance, providing some of the assurance required in the Annual Governance Statement.

- co-ordinating, throughout the year, the Council's internal control assurances, including reporting regularly to Audit and Accounts Committee, and culminating in the Annual Governance Statement.
- Through the Governance Working Group, co-ordinating the production of an Annual Governance Statement incorporating the Statement on Internal Control, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, which will represent the overall levels of assurance within the Council on behalf of all Members and officers.

5.3 The Governance Working Group is responsible for:

- reviewing the operation of this Code
- producing the Annual Governance Statement for submission to the Audit and Accounts Committee for approval at the June meeting each year.
- reviewing the robustness of the Council's governance framework and drawing up action plans for improvement
- assessing best practice

5.4 Audit and Accounts Committee is responsible for:

- approving the Local Code of Governance
- approving the Annual Governance Statement
- monitoring the implementation of the actions for improvement to the Council's governance arrangements.

Governance Action Plan – February 2010

| No | Objective | Action | Priority | Timescales | Resources – Y/N | | Lead Officer |
|--|--|---|----------|--|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | | | | Existing | Additional | |
| Principle 1 - Purpose of the authority, outcomes for authority and implementing vision for local area | | | | | | | |
| 1. | Clear framework in place for managing governance across the Council, which is reviewed annually. Officers and members are clear about their responsibilities in relation to governance. | a) Develop a Code of Governance which sets out the framework for managing governance... - Describes roles and responsibilities for officers and members - Contains updated terms of reference for Governance Steering Group - Includes arrangements for review. | High | May 2010 (Annual meeting) | | Code of Governance | Steve Dunning / Richard Boneham |
| 2. | Regular assessments of performance and value for money across all services. | a) Agree review programme for service performance to link with the DECATS/transformation programme. b) Put in place regular monitoring of VFM indicators. | High | May 2010 June 2010 | Information and Efficiency Board Financial Procedure Rules | Value For Money Strategy | Don McLure |
| 3. | Reinvigorate local democracy and achieve stability in political control of the Council to enable effective long-term planning. | a) Undertake review in light of Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. • Decision on electoral cycle needed i.e. whether to maintain elections by thirds or change to whole council elections every four years. Decision must be taken by 31 December 2010 to comply with statutory | Medium | Proposals to Council meeting in July 2010 followed by consultation and final approval by November 2010 Council | | | Steve Dunning |

| No | Objective | Action | Priority | Timescales | Resources – Y/N | | Lead Officer |
|---|--|--|----------|--|--|--|-----------------|
| | | | | | Existing | Additional | |
| | | requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision on new political leadership model needed – Elected Mayor or Leader appointed for four years. Decision must be taken by 31 December 2010 to comply with statutory requirements. | | | | | |
| Principle 2 – Members and officers working together to achieve common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles | | | | | | | |
| 4. | Standardised policy through central coordination, development and review of policy. Policies accessible to all staff. Clear accountabilities for policy management and implementation. | a) Agree Council definition of policies, strategies and plans. b) Undertake a gap analysis of the policies that are currently active and the adherence to these. c) Put in place a system for managing policy across the Council so policies are accessible and up to date. d) Ensure accountable officers are identified for each policy/ department for specific policies, responsibilities are outlined in their job descriptions and within individual performance objectives e) Develop horizon scanning/policy management tool to consider likely impact of future policies/legislation. | Medium | April 2010 October 2010 October 2010 April 2011 April 2011 | Document library on Derbynet Strategic Policy Framework | Horizon scanning database Policy database Policy Library | Gavin Thompson |
| 5. | Consistent governance framework applied within departments. | a) Ensure every department has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk register, Scheme of Delegation including | High | July 2010 | | Strategic risk register | Richard Boneham |

| No | Objective | Action | Priority | Timescales | Resources – Y/N | | Lead Officer |
|----|--|---|----------|---|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | | Existing | Additional | |
| | Clearly defined accountability for areas of responsibility. Robust risk management framework. | <p>financial and HR (also factored in job descriptions),</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts Register, • Partnership register • Business Plan, • Health and Safety Assessment <p>b) Ensure departmental documents are reviewed on at least an annual basis by having an accountable officer for each.</p> <p>c) Formal sign off mechanism on tools of governance on an annual basis by the Strategic Director.</p> <p>d) Need accessible and dynamic Strategic Risk Register which is monitored quarterly to COG, Cabinet and Audit and Accounts.</p> <p>e) Clear set of strategic risks that directly link into departments and their individual risk registers.</p> <p>f) Clear protocol on how issues are communicated up and down the organisation in relation to risks.</p> | | <p>July 2010</p> <p>May 2010</p> <p>July 2010</p> <p>July 2010</p> <p>July 2010</p> | | Departmental document database | |
| 6. | Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities between officers and members | a) Agree Chief Executive and Leader protocol as part of the Constitution (including arrangements for performance review of Chief Executive). . | High | May 2010 | | Chief Executive/Leader protocol | Rod Wood / Steve Dunning |

| No | Objective | Action | Priority | Timescales | Resources – Y/N | | Lead Officer |
|---|--|---|----------|--|---|--|---|
| | | | | | Existing | Additional | |
| 7. | Defined roles of Members and officers in industrial relations issues including resolving disputes. | a) Undertake review of Personnel Committee and Disputes Sub-committee. | High | May 2010 | | | Rod Wood / Steve Dunning |
| 8. | Improved management of partnership activity. | <p>a) Establish formal policy to outline what a partnership is and when they should be embarked upon</p> <p>b) Partnerships need formal agreements that outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal status • Governance • Objectives • Scheme of delegation • Business continuity • Register of Interests • Risk Register • Resolution of conflicts • Exit strategy • Review arrangements <p>c) Develop business case template for departments wishing to set up partnerships, which are signed off by a Strategic Director</p> <p>d) A single Council manager in charge of reviewing partnership activity.</p> | Medium | <p>June 2010</p> <p>September 2010</p> <p>September 2010</p> <p>March 2011</p> | <p>Shared evidence base to let partnerships share information</p> | <p>Partnership Toolkit to go to COG</p> <p>Partnership formal agreements</p> <p>Business Case template</p> | Gordon Stirling |
| Principle 3 – Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour | | | | | | | |
| 9. | Defined standards of behaviour communicated to and adhered to by all members and officers. | <p>a) Review existing member and officer protocols to ensure fit for purpose...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • member/officer relations • Gifts/hospitality • Use of facilities | Medium | Approval by Standards Committee by October 2010 | | | Stuart Leslie/ Steve Dunning / Richard Boneham / Rod Wood / Alison Moss / Paul McMahon |

| No | Objective | Action | Priority | Timescales | Resources – Y/N | | Lead Officer |
|--|--|---|----------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|--|-----------------|
| | | | | | Existing | Additional | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email/website usage Confidential reporting (Whistleblowing) incl disclosure | | Approval by Council in November 2010 | | | |
| Principle 4 – Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk | | | | | | | |
| 10. | Effective, evidence based decision making. | a) Review definition of key decision. b) Establish clear process for collecting evidence on why a decision was made, in relation to the Council's and partnerships vision. c) Reinforce procedure for obtaining legal and financial implications. d) Maintain database of evidence used on a Chief Officer Group (COG) level to make decisions, kept for a specific period in case external audit want to question decisions made (COG minutes). | Low | May 2011 (Annual meeting) | Council's 6 priorities | Evidence database for COG | Steve Dunning |
| 11. | Decision making based on data and information that is robust and high quality. | a) Clear roles, responsibilities and accountability structures for data quality reported both internally and externally. b) Formalised process for checking data on a monthly basis to account for errors and ensure they do not continue until they are checked on an annual basis. | Medium | October 2010 October 2010 | | Review by Strategic Intelligence Group | Heather Greenan |
| 12. | Regular and effective evaluation of decisions made by the Council. | Introduce better evaluation procedures through Scrutiny and Audit and Accounts committees. | High | May 2010 | | | Steve Dunning |

| No | Objective | Action | Priority | Timescales | Resources – Y/N | | Lead Officer |
|---|---|--|----------|--|---|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | | | | Existing | Additional | |
| Principle 5 – Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective | | | | | | | |
| 13. | Clear roles and responsibilities for people in their jobs. Robust appraisal process for identifying areas for improvement and tackling problems early. | a) Re-evaluate the job roles around the Council to incorporate accountability structures and delegated functions. b) Implement a concise and monitored process to clarify job roles on a regular basis. c) Establish process for re-evaluating team roles when a member of the team leaves, to enquire whether team roles could be fulfilled without filling the role. | Low | May 2010 May 2010 May 2010 | | | Rod Wood |
| Principle 6 – Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability | | | | | | | |
| 14. | Empowered communities. | a) Review of constitution and wider decision making to promote citizenship b) Engagement strengthened through clear communication links to communities through Boards and Committees (part of DECATs) | Medium | May 2010 May 2010 | | | Stuart Leslie Gordon Stirling |
| 15. | Clear consultation with stakeholders and the community. | a) Review Involvement Strategy in conjunction with partners. b) Add engagement data to shared evidence base for SCS. | High | May 2010 May 2010 | Consultation Strategy Consultation Support Team Community Engagement Strategy | Information Bank | Yvonne Wilkinson |
| 16. | Improved staff engagement and greater focus on role as ambassadors. | a) Cascade briefings on a regular basis from Chief Executive and Senior Managers. | Low | March 2010 | | | Yvonne Wilkinson / Richard Boneham |

| No | Objective | Action | Priority | Timescales | Resources – Y/N | | Lead Officer |
|-----|---|--|----------|-------------------------------|--|--|------------------|
| | | | | | Existing | Additional | |
| | | b) Establish rolling communication of plan of briefings focused on different aspects of governance e.g. manager briefings. | | March 2011 | | | |
| 17. | Effective communication mechanisms in place to enhance the reputation of the Council. | a) Review Communication / Reputation Strategy. b) Make improvements to the external Council website. | High | March 2010 August 2010 | Communication Strategy Community Engagement Strategy (2006) Website Strategy – Corporate Action Plan | Annual survey on perceptions | Yvonne Wilkinson |
| 18. | Customer insight data collated and used to improve services. | a) Systematic user feedback recorded and actioned, with improved monitoring of complaints and interventions. b) Fundamental review on how the Council measures customer service (including results of change champions) | Medium | May 2011 May 2010 | Customer Experience Strategy | Council Customer Service Feedback Strategy | Bernard Fenton |