

Cumbria County Council Local Code of Governance 2018-22

Introduction – what is Governance?

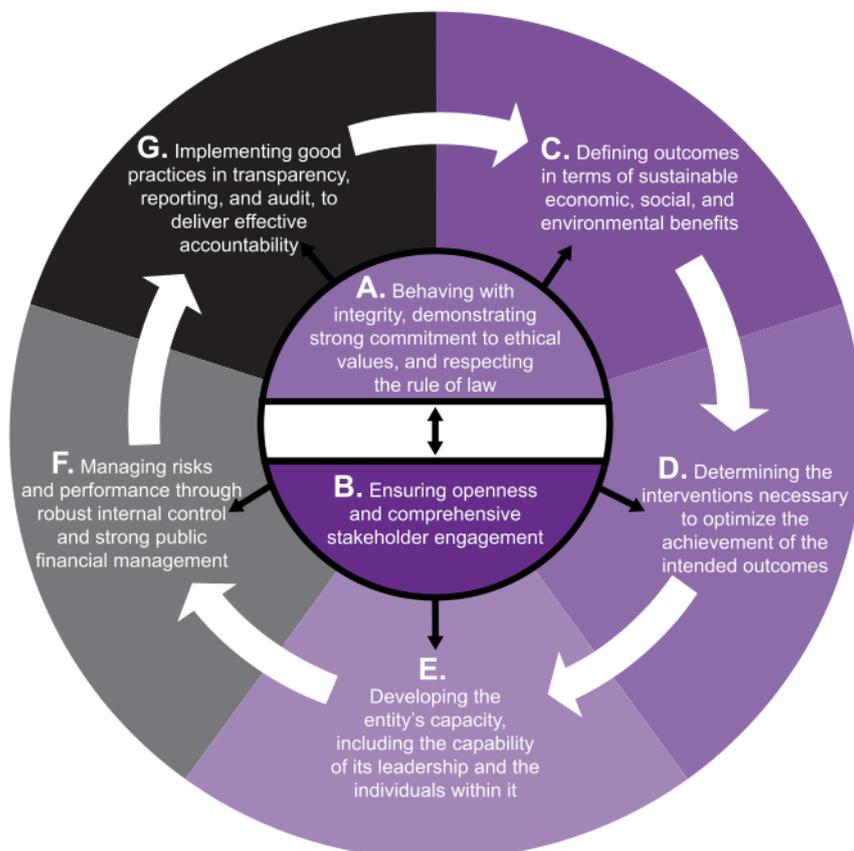
Governance is the framework that the Council uses to direct, manage and monitor its activities to ensure the delivery of its priorities, aims and objectives. Governance comprises the systems, processes, cultures and values that ensure the Council upholds the highest standards of ethical conduct, engages effectively with its stakeholders and is able to demonstrate effective decision making and accountability.

Good governance encourages better informed and longer-term decision making as well as the efficient use of resources and is characterised by robust scrutiny.

The Council has refreshed its Local Code of Governance to align with the CIPFA / SOLACE publication; Delivering Good Governance in Local Government which was updated in 2016. The updated Framework places greater emphasis on attainment of sustainable economic, societal, and environmental outcomes as a key focus of governance processes and structures.

The Framework sets out seven principles on which arrangements for good governance should be based. This code aims to reflect these in describing the arrangements that Cumbria County Council has put in place.

The Seven Principles



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

| Supporting Principles | To achieve this, Cumbria County Council does the following: | This is evidenced by: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaving with Integrity • Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values • Respecting the rule of law | <p>Maintains formal codes of conduct defining standards of behaviour expected of both Members and Officers</p> <p>Complies with legislation and all relevant professional standards</p> <p>Maintains register of business interests and seek declarations at all Council meetings</p> <p>Maintains registers of interests, gifts and hospitality for Officers and publicise the need for all real and perceived conflicts of interest to be recorded and managed.</p> <p>Undertakes appraisals for staff and reinforce the Council's Behaviours through the appraisal process.</p> <p>Maintains a policy framework to address the risks of fraud and corruption including and Counter-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy and Whistleblowing policy.</p> <p>Publishes an Annual Governance Statement which publicly reports on the effectiveness of the governance framework, compliance with the Local Code and declares any significant governance issues arising.</p> <p>Maintains a Corporate Governance Group which co-ordinates the annual review of governance as well as championing good governance across the Council.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members Code of Conduct and Guidance • Members Development Group • Code of Good Practice for Members and Officers involved in the Planning Process • Officers Code of Conduct • Member/Officer Protocol • Constitution, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role description for all members - Guide to decision making • Minutes of council meetings • Documented council behaviours • Register of Interests • Register of gifts and hospitality • Appraisal scheme • Whistleblowing policy • Counter-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption policy • Audit Charter • Internal Audit reports to Audit & Assurance Committee • Contract Procedure Rules |

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| | <p>Maintains an effective Standards Committee.</p> <p>Investigates allegations of irregularities involving Officers or Members.</p> <p>Maintains a complaints policy and arrangements to learn from complaints and feedback.</p> <p>Undertakes training for Officers on the Council's ethical policies.</p> <p>Continues the programme of Corporate Governance training for Officers.</p> <p>Maintains a Recruitment, Appointment and Induction policy.</p> <p>Maintains up to date job descriptions for Officers to ensure clarity over roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Maintains statutory roles of S151 (Chief Finance) Officer and Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Ensures arrangements comply with relevant CIPFA Statements on the roles of the Chief Finance Officer and the Head of Internal Audit.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Regulations • Statement of Accounts • Public inspection of Statement of Accounts • External Auditor's Audit Findings Report • Annual Governance Statement • Standards Committee • Recruitment, Appointment & Induction policy • Complaints policy • Corporate Governance Group • Standards Committee • Corporate Governance Training programme • Leadership and Management Development Programme |
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| Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement | | |
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| Supporting Principles | To achieve this, Cumbria County Council does the following: | This is evidenced by: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness | <p>Seeks the views of stakeholders when setting priorities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Plan • Council Plan Delivery Plan |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders • Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users | <p>Provides a variety of opportunities and channels for stakeholders to engage with the Council</p> <p>Publishes a Council plan setting out the agreed priorities for the County Council.</p> <p>Publishes area plans for the six local districts.</p> <p>Ensures Council business is conducted in public unless legislation deems it appropriate for matters to be considered in private.</p> <p>Publishes agendas and minutes and a full calendar of Council meetings.</p> <p>Publishes all reports and decisions taken at Council meetings including the professional and technical advice received unless legislation deems it appropriate for matters to be considered in private.</p> <p>Ensures compliance with the requirements of the Transparency Code.</p> <p>Publishes an annual Statement of Accounts and facilitate public inspection of the Statement.</p> <p>Publishes information in accordance with our Publication Scheme.</p> <p>Maintains a Consultation Hub to help stakeholders find and participate in consultations.</p> <p>Maintains a Partnership toolkit to ensure the Council has effective arrangements for working in partnership with other organisations.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Plan • Medium Term Financial Plan • Constitution • Area plans • Modern Gov • Calendar of council meetings • Publication Scheme • Disclosure log • Consultation Hub • Have Your Say • Annual report to Council on scrutiny function • Guide to Doing Business with us • Supplier Engagement Days • Partnership Toolkit • Compact (3rd Sector) |
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| | <p>Maintains 'Have Your Say' area on the Council's website to encourage engagement with the Council.</p> <p>Publishes an annual report of the Scrutiny activities for consideration by full Council.</p> <p>Provides opportunities for suppliers to work with the Council through supplier days and use of the Chest procurement portal.</p> | |
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| Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable, economic, social and environmental benefits | | |
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| Supporting Principles | To achieve this, Cumbria County Council does the following: | This is evidenced by: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining Outcomes • Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits | <p>Produces a Council plan setting out the priorities for the County Council.</p> <p>Uses the Council Plan as a basis for Area and Service Plans.</p> <p>Maintains a Council Plan Delivery Plan setting out how the priorities will be delivered.</p> <p>Monitors and reports on delivery of the agreed priorities.</p> <p>Maintains a Medium Term Financial Strategy and a Workforce Development Plan to ensure priorities continue to be appropriately resourced.</p> <p>Identifies and manage risks to delivery of priorities and objectives.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Plan • Area Plans • Service Plans • Council Plan Delivery Plan • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Service plan performance reporting • Performance & Risk Management Framework • Corporate Risk Register • Risk Management policy / strategy • Operational, programme and project risk registers |

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| | Ensures investment decisions take into account a range of factors including economic, social and environmental benefits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Cases for investment decisions • Corporate Procurement Strategy |
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Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

| Supporting Principles | To achieve this, Cumbria County Council does the following: | This is evidenced by: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining interventions • Planning interventions • Optimising achievement of intended outcomes | <p>Makes a clear statement of the council's aims and use this as a basis for service planning.</p> <p>Regularly reports on performance measures which have been established for each service.</p> <p>Ensures budgets are prepared in line with our corporate framework and are monitored and regularly reported on.</p> <p>Provides senior managers and elected Members with timely and accurate financial and performance information.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Plan • Service plans • Service plan reporting • Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan • Budgets held on Budget Manager • Staffing establishment held on Trent and linked to budget monitoring report • Reporting of budgets to DMTs / CMT • Strategic planning reports to Cabinet and Council • Business cases for investment decisions • Strategic Investment Group • Strategic planning |

Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within in

| Supporting Principles | To achieve this, Cumbria County Council does the following: | This is evidenced by: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the entity’s capacity • Developing the capability of the entity’s leadership and other individuals | <p>Sets out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the full Council, Cabinet and individual Members through the constitution.</p> <p>Maintains a workforce development plan to ensure appropriate skills and resources are available to deliver the changing needs of the Council.</p> <p>Maintains officer and Member induction programmes.</p> <p>Provides training and development for Members to continue to develop their skills through a programme of Member Development.</p> <p>Reviews and update the Constitution and Scheme of Delegation as required.</p> <p>Ensures arrangements are in place to support a healthy workforce.</p> <p>Ensures staff receive feedback on their performance and maintain development plans through the appraisal process.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution • Scheme of delegation • Member / officer protocol • Workforce development plan • Induction programmes • Appraisal process • Job descriptions • Better Health at Work • Health advocates • Stress awareness sessions • Leadership and Management Development Programme • ELT Development Programme • Member Development Group • Apprenticeship Programme • IOSH Health and Satefy Training |

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

| Supporting Principles | To achieve this, Cumbria County Council does the following: | This is evidenced by: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing risk • Managing performance • Robust internal control • Managing data • Strong public financial management | <p>Maintains an up to date corporate risk register.</p> <p>Ensures regular reporting of Corporate risks to Audit & Assurance Committee.</p> <p>Maintains an effective Scrutiny function.</p> <p>Maintains a risk management policy / strategy.</p> <p>Ensures risks are considered in service plans, programmes and projects and in operational service delivery.</p> <p>Manages performance by ensuring the corporate Performance Management Framework is adhered to.</p> <p>Provides training for Audit & Assurance Committee to enhance their skills and ability to provide and challenge assurances.</p> <p>Maintains financial procedure rules to provide clarity over the Council's rules.</p> <p>Prepares an annual risk based internal audit plan to provide independent assurance on governance, risk management and internal control.</p> <p>Reports outcomes of Internal Audit work to Corporate Management Team and Audit & Assurance Committee.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Risk Register • Audit & Assurance committee minutes • Annual report on Audit Committee effectiveness • Scrutiny Terms of reference • Risk management policy / strategy • Project / programme management • Outcomes of Internal Audit reviews • Performance and Risk Management Framework • Audit committee training • Financial procedure rules in constitution • Audit plan • Annual audit report and opinion of the Head of Internal Audit • Information Governance policies • Information e-learning training and monitoring of take-up |

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| | <p>Ensures effective information governance policies, procedures and training are in place.</p> <p>Ensures financial management supports decision making and transformation of council services.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Manager system • Training for budget managers • Budget monitoring reports to CMT and Cabinet aligned with the quarterly performance reports and the corporate risk register. |
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| Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability | | |
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| Supporting Principles | To achieve this, Cumbria County Council does the following: | This is evidenced by: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing good practice in transparency • Implementing good practices in reporting • Assurance and effective accountability | <p>Maintains compliance with the local government Transparency Code and publish all required information in a timely manner.</p> <p>Maintains effective Corporate Governance Group to oversee annual review of compliance with Local Code and publish an Annual Governance Statement to report publicly on the outcomes of the review.</p> <p>Publishes an annual Statement of Accounts and respond appropriately to recommendations from the External Auditor arising from the annual audit of the Accounts.</p> <p>Reports on the implementation of actions arising from the external audit to Audit & Assurance Committee.</p> <p>Maintains an effective Internal Audit service which complies with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FoI responses published online • Annual Governance Statement • Statement of Accounts • External Auditor’s Audit Findings Report • Audit Charter • Audit progress reports to Audit & Assurance Committee • Annual audit report and opinion of the Head of Internal Audit • Internal Audit Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme • Performance and Risk Management Framework • Budget monitoring reports |

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| | <p>Ensures performance information is prepared and reported on a timely basis.</p> <p>Produces regular financial information and budget monitoring reports.</p> | |
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