



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

# Code of Corporate Governance

## INTRODUCTION

### **Good governance**

Good governance is about how the Council ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the communities it serves, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

### **Our commitment**

East Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to upholding the highest possible standards of good corporate governance, believing that good governance leads to high standards of management, strong performance, effective use of resources, increased public involvement and trust in the Council, leading ultimately to good outcomes and reputation.

Good governance flows from shared values, culture and behaviour and from systems and structures. This Code of Corporate Governance is a public statement that sets out the framework through which the Council meets its commitment to good corporate governance.

The Governance Framework comprises the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and through which it accounts to, engages with, and, where appropriate, leads the community. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate cost-effective services.

This local code of governance has been developed in accordance with and is consistent with the *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* framework, which builds on the seven Principles for the Conduct of Individuals in Public Life (Appendix A).

### **Core principles of good governance**

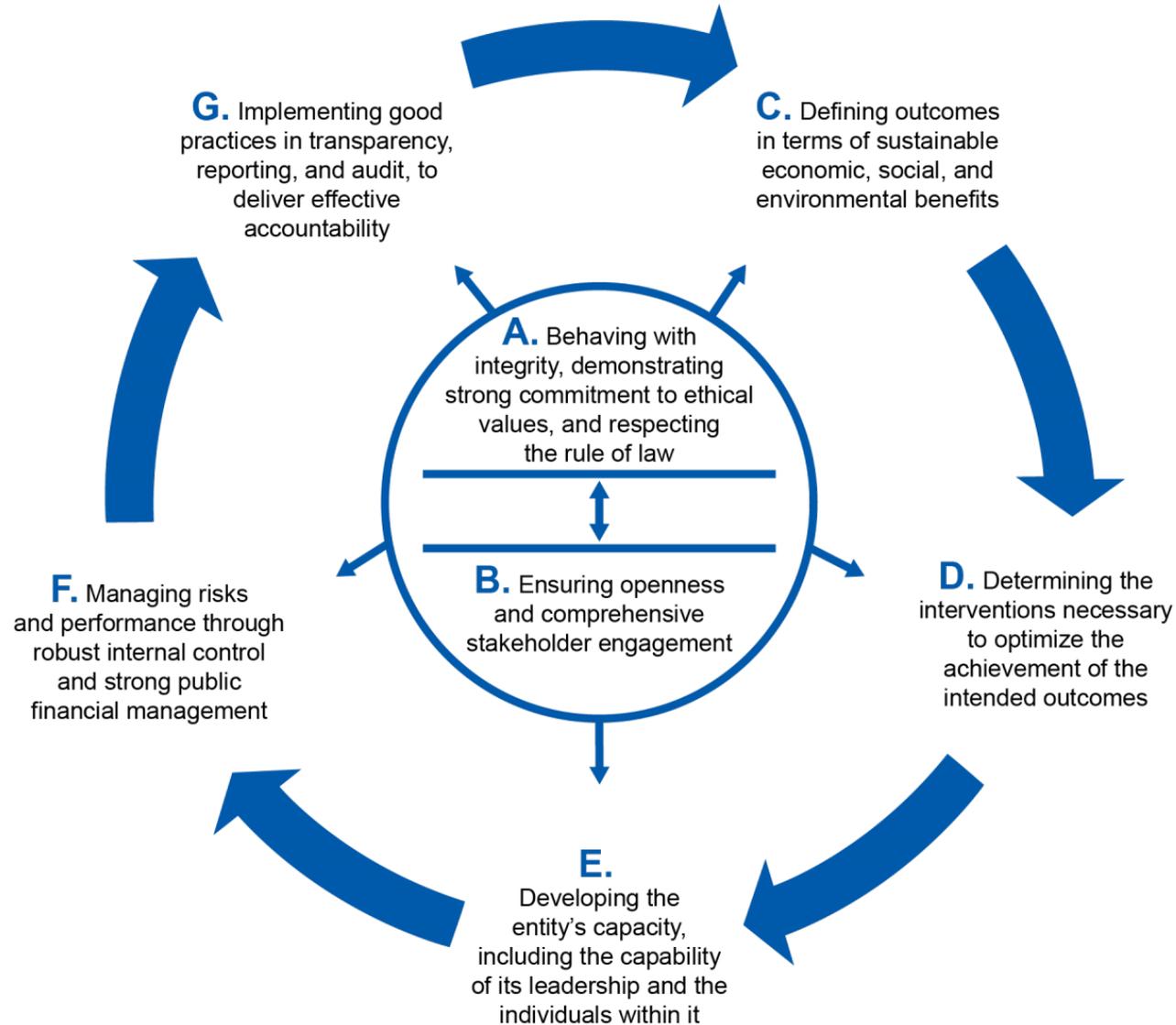
The core governance principles of the Council are:-

- A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
- B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.
- D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
- E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
- F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
- G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability.

## Applying the core principles of good governance

This document describes how the Council achieves the seven principles of good governance and describes how the Council's corporate governance arrangements will be monitored and reviewed.

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



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

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, East Cambridgeshire District Council has supporting controls:	This is evidenced by:
<p><b>Behaving with integrity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect through its Constitution, Corporate Plan and other key policies.</li> <li>• The Council’s Constitution contains Codes of Conduct for employees and members. This communicates the expectation that 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 organisation. The underlying principles which underpin the Codes of Conduct build upon the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles).</li> <li>• The Council has in place arrangements to ensure that Councillors and employees of the authority are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders, and has in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice. This includes maintaining the statutory Register of Members Interests, and requiring officers to make Declarations of Interests.</li> <li>• The Council has in place arrangements to ensure that core corporate policies and processes are designed in conformity with ethical standards, and are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are operating effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• The Council’s Constitution</li> <li>• Members Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Employee Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Register of Members’ Interests</li> <li>• Declaration of Interest Guidance</li> <li>• Rules relating to Gifts and Hospitality</li> <li>• Members Induction / Training</li> <li>• Financial Regulations</li> <li>• Contract Procedure Rules</li> <li>• Scheme of Delegation</li> <li>• Statutory roles</li> </ul>

<p><b>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's Constitution establishes a clear ethical framework for the Council's operation, and core corporate policies and procedures place emphasis on agreed ethical values.</li> <li>• The Council's Codes of Conduct ensures that personal behaviour is underpinned with ethical values which permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation.</li> <li>• The Council maintains an effective Constitution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's Constitution</li> <li>• Members Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Employee Code of Conduct</li> </ul>
<p><b>Respecting the rule of law</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's policies and culture set the tone for members and employees to demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations, and ensure that statutory officers, other key post holders, and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements.</li> <li>• The Council maintains and implements a Whistleblowing Policy to enable employees to raise any concerns of wrongdoing in confidence and without fear of reprisal. External suppliers, members of the public, Councillors and other stakeholders may raise any concerns about suspected illegal or illegitimate practices via the Council's formal Complaints Scheme.</li> <li>• The Council recognises the limits of lawful action and observes both the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on it by public law. The Council observes all specific legislative requirements placed upon it, as well as the requirements of general law, and deals with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively. The Council strives to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• The Council ensures corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively through the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.</li> <li>• The Council's decision making framework is set out in the Council's Constitution including an effective scheme of delegation. The Council's Constitution is kept under continuous review in line with best practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy</li> <li>• Anti-Money Laundering Policy</li> <li>• Whistleblowing Policy</li> <li>• Formal Complaints Scheme</li> <li>• Monitoring Officer protocol</li> <li>• Scheme of Delegation</li> </ul>

## Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, East Cambridgeshire District Council has supporting controls:	This is evidenced by:
<b>Openness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's Constitution, Forward Plan and Committee system ensures that decision-making is open and there is appropriate oversight and challenge, with an organisational commitment to openness.</li> <li>• The Council makes decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. Committee meetings are held in public with minutes and papers being available to the public on the Council's website, including regular financial and performance forecasts. If a decision needs to be kept confidential, then the justification for this is provided.</li> <li>• The Council's Corporate Plan, Statements of Accounts and key strategies are available through the Council Website.</li> <li>• An effective Internal Audit function is resourced and maintained, with regular reporting to the Audit Committee.</li> <li>• The Council is committed to being transparent, accountable and to increasing the amount of data it publishes for reuse by others. The Council maintains a Publication Scheme listing the information available to the public as a matter of course, and publishes responses to many Freedom of Information requests online.</li> <li>• The Council uses formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions / courses of action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forward Plan</li> <li>• The Council's Constitution</li> <li>• Committee System</li> <li>• Internal Audit</li> <li>• Audit Committee</li> <li>• Publication Scheme</li> <li>• Open data</li> <li>• Freedom of Information</li> <li>• Council Website</li> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Statement of Accounts</li> <li>• Committee agendas, reports and minutes</li> <li>• Register of Members' Interests</li> </ul>

<p><b>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council considers those institutional stakeholders to whom the authority is accountable, to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably.</li> <li>• The Council aims to develop formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively.</li> <li>• The Council is part of an Information Sharing Framework, developed by public sector organisations across the County to create a positive culture of sharing information with the aim of improving service delivery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's Constitution</li> <li>• Community Engagement Strategy 2018-2023</li> <li>• Consultation with employees</li> <li>• Agents forums</li> </ul>
<p><b>Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council makes decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. Committee meetings are held in public with minutes and papers available to the public on the Council's website, including regular financial and performance forecasts. If a decision needs to be kept confidential, then the justification for this is provided.</li> <li>• The Council consults on its Corporate Plan proposals and other key aspects of its vision, strategic plans and priorities, with the local community and other key stakeholders. The Council takes account of the impact of decisions on future generations of tax payers and service users.</li> <li>• The Council maintains a customer feedback and complaints scheme to enable stakeholders to submit their views on Council performance and services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Engagement Strategy 2018-2023</li> <li>• Communications strategy</li> <li>• Project consultation (e.g. Ely Country Park and Ely Riverside)</li> <li>• Consultation through taxi forum</li> <li>• Care &amp; repair satisfaction surveys</li> <li>• Equality Impact Assessments</li> <li>• Customer Charter</li> </ul>

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

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, East Cambridgeshire District Council has supporting controls:	This is evidenced by:
<p><b>Defining outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's Corporate Plan states the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes, which provides the basis for the authority's overall strategy, planning and other decisions. It sets out the Council's Objectives and Priorities and defines the commitments and outcomes for East Cambridgeshire District Council. Specific Council strategies and policies link to the outcomes defined in the Corporate Plan.</li> <li>• The Council's five priorities are summarised as: sound financial management, housing; Cleaner, Greener East Cambridgeshire; improving local transport and Social &amp; Community Infrastructure.</li> <li>• The Corporate Plan is supported by Service Delivery Plans which sets out Performance Indicators to be used to assess the achievement of the Council's outcomes. The Council's Performance Indicators are reported to Committees as part of the regular performance reporting.</li> <li>• The Council operates a risk management system to identify and manage risks to the achievement of outcomes. The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed by the Council's Risk Management Group quarterly and Audit Committee twice a year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan 2021-2023</li> <li>• Corporate Management Team</li> <li>• Risk Management Policy and Framework</li> <li>• Corporate Risk Register</li> <li>• Statement of Accounts</li> <li>• Finance and performance reporting</li> </ul>

<p><b>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council considers and balances the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies and plans when taking decisions about service provision. The Council seeks to take a longer-term view with regard to decision-making, which takes account of risks.</li> <li>• The Corporate Plan incorporates the results of consultation with the local community and businesses. The Council seeks to determine the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible.</li> <li>• The Council identifies and monitors corporate performance indicators, which demonstrate performance against the Council’s planned outcomes and how benefits are being delivered.</li> <li>• The Council maintains a prudential financial framework, balancing commitments with available resources and monitoring income and expenditure levels to ensure a sustainable balance is achieved.</li> <li>• The Council looks to identify joint projects with the County Council and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to drive forward key priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Corporate Plan Consultation</li> <li>• Annual Statement of Accounts</li> <li>• External Auditors reports</li> <li>• Finance and performance reporting</li> <li>• Community Engagement Strategy 2018-2023</li> </ul>
---	--	--

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

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, East Cambridgeshire District Council has supporting controls:	This is evidenced by:
<b>Determining interventions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's Corporate Planning process incorporates business cases for proposed projects and savings, ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options for achieving outcomes, indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and associated risks. This ensures best value is achieved, however services are provided.</li> <li>• Feedback from citizens and service users is considered 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</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Business Cases</li> <li>• Corporate Plan Consultation</li> <li>• Community Engagement Strategy 2018-2023</li> </ul>
<b>Planning interventions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has an established annual Corporate Planning process and has set a four-year strategic plan for the Council that informs the development of strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets. The Corporate Plan is supported by Service Delivery Plans which are reviewed annually meaning that mechanisms for delivering outcomes are regularly reviewed and can be adapted to changing circumstances.</li> <li>• The Corporate Plan incorporates medium term resource planning, including estimates of revenue and capital expenditure. Budgets are prepared in accordance with the Council's objectives, strategies and the Corporate Plan.</li> <li>• The Corporate Plan establishes appropriate performance indicators as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured. The Council ensures that capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Planning process</li> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Service Delivery Plans</li> <li>• Consultation Strategy</li> <li>• Annual budget and MTFS</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the Corporate Planning process, the Council engages with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council ensures the Corporate Plan integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints, and that the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term.</li> <li>• The Council's Corporate Plan sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period, in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage.</li> <li>• Achievement of Service Delivery Plan outcomes is monitored and reported to the Council's Committees through finance and performance reporting and other reporting.</li> <li>• The Council maintains a robust system of risk management which identifies risks to the achievement of the Council's intended outcomes and puts in place mitigating actions to support achievement.</li> <li>• The Council maintains systems of business continuity and emergency planning to deal with failures in service delivery or emergencies which may threaten achievement of the Council's intended outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Risk Management Policy</li> <li>• Corporate Risk Register</li> <li>• Finance and performance reporting</li> <li>• Corporate Management Team</li> <li>• Emergency Planning</li> </ul>

**Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it**

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, East Cambridgeshire District Council:	This is evidenced by:
<p><b>Developing the entity’s capacity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council recognises the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved. Governance arrangements for significant partnerships, such as the East Cambridgeshire Trading Company, East Cambs Street Scene Limited and the Anglia Revenues Partnership are detailed in the Constitution.</li> <li>• The Council maintains robust recruitment and selection processes to ensure that the Council is able to attract suitable candidates, ensuring a diverse workforce that will add value to the organisation.</li> <li>• The Council seeks to understand the capacity of its workforce and any gaps, and workforce development strategies are in place to develop the organisation’s capacity as required to enhance the strategic allocation of resources.</li> <li>• The Council reviews its operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness, and seeks to improve 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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership Governance</li> <li>• Constitution</li> <li>• Shareholder Agreements (detailing the relationship between the Council and its trading companies)</li> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Corporate Planning Process</li> <li>• Finance and performance reporting</li> <li>• Corporate Risk Register</li> <li>• Members Seminar / Training</li> </ul>
<p><b>Developing the capability of the entity’s leadership and other individuals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s Constitution established functions and delegation to set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council’s Executive, the Full Council and individual members. It clarifies the type of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for collective decision making of the governing body.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s Constitution</li> <li>• Scheme of Delegation</li> <li>• Committee Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Members Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Employee Code of Conduct</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Committee Terms of References set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council's Committees. This ensures that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained</li><li>• The Council maintains protocols to ensure effective communication between Council Members and officers in their respective roles.</li><li>• The Chief Finance Officer is a member of the Corporate Management Team with direct access to the Chief Executive and other members of the management team.</li><li>• The Council develops the capabilities of members, senior management, and officers 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:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring Members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role, and that on-going training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged;</li><li>• Ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis;</li><li>• Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs;</li><li>• Ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external;</li><li>• 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.</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protocol on Members / Officer Relations</li><li>• Corporate Induction</li><li>• Members induction and development</li><li>• Member Seminars</li><li>• Performance Appraisals</li><li>• Role of Internal Audit</li><li>• Chief Finance Officer is a member of CMT</li><li>• Compliance with CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government</li><li>• Compliance with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit in Public Service Organisations</li></ul>
--	---	---

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

<b>Supporting Principles</b>	<b>To meet the requirements of this Principle, East Cambridgeshire District Council has supporting controls:</b>	<b>This is evidenced by:</b>
<b>Managing risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council recognises that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making. Robust and integrated risk management arrangements are in place and regularly reviewed to ensure that they are working effectively. Risk management is embedded into the culture of the Council.</li> <li>• The Council ensures that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated and the Corporate Risk Register is reviewed by the Council's Corporate Risk Group quarterly and the Audit Committee twice a year.</li> <li>• Partnering arrangements are covered by documents such as Memorandum of Understanding and Service Level Agreements. Regular monitoring of contracts is carried out with partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management Framework</li> <li>• Corporate Risk Register</li> <li>• Audit Committee</li> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Shared risk registers with partners</li> </ul>
<b>Managing performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members and management are provided with regular reports on performance and progress towards the achievement of outcomes.</li> <li>• The Council makes 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.</li> <li>• The Council encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives, to support balanced and effective decision making.</li> <li>• The Council undertakes self-reviews of processes to continuously improve performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance and performance reporting</li> <li>• Committee agendas, reports and minutes</li> <li>• Customer Feedback</li> <li>• Internal Audit Reports</li> </ul>

<p><b>Robust internal control</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council ensures effective counter fraud, anti-corruption and anti-money laundering arrangements are in place.</li> <li>• Additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by Internal Audit.</li> <li>• The Audit Committee is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body, and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment; and</li> <li>○ ensures that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-Fraud &amp; Corruption Policy</li> <li>• Anti-Money Laundering Policy</li> <li>• Whistleblowing Policy</li> <li>• Internal Audit</li> <li>• Internal Audit Annual Report</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement</li> <li>• Risk Management Framework</li> <li>• Corporate Risk Register</li> <li>• Audit Committee</li> </ul>
<p><b>Managing data</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's information governance policies and procedures follow those of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and ensure that effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data.</li> <li>• The Council's Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) has lead responsibility to ensure that organisational information risks are properly identified and managed.</li> <li>• The Council ensures effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies.</li> <li>• Annual training of all staff on the GDPR.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Protection Guidance</li> <li>• Senior Information Risk Owner</li> <li>• Freedom of Information / EIR Regulations</li> <li>• Privacy Notice</li> <li>• GDPR Training</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strong financial management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council ensures that its financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance.</li> <li>• Ensures well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls.</li> <li>• The Council ensures that officers with a role in financial management are provided with the support and resources to ensure strong public financial management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Regulations</li> <li>• Finance and performance reporting</li> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Corporate Planning Process</li> </ul>

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

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, East Cambridgeshire District Council has supporting controls:	This is evidenced by:
<p><b>Implementing good practice in transparency</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council seeks to write and communicate reports and other information 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.</li> <li>• The Council complies with the Local Government Transparency Code and publishes information required in a timely manner. The Council actively considers publishing data where there is demand, such as recurring freedom of information requests.</li> <li>• The Council provides appropriate information to the public to ensure transparency, 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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee agendas, papers and minutes</li> <li>• District Council website – Transparency &amp; Open data</li> <li>• Publication Scheme</li> <li>• Forward Plan</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementing good practice in reporting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s Annual Governance Statement ensures robust arrangements for assessing how the principles contained in this Framework have been applied, and the results of this assessment are published.</li> <li>• The Council ensures that 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.</li> <li>• The Council maintains open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based.</li> <li>• Some outcomes of the Council are reported to LG Inform for benchmarking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of Accounts</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement</li> <li>• Annual External Audit Report and Letter</li> <li>• Internal Audit Reports</li> <li>• Finance and performance reporting</li> <li>• Committee agendas, reports and minutes</li> </ul>

<p><b>Assurance and effective accountability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council maintains an effective Audit Committee and ensures that an effective internal audit function, with direct access to Members, is resourced and maintained. The Internal Audit service provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements, and verifies that recommendations are acted upon.</li> <li>• The Council ensures that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon.</li> <li>• East Cambridgeshire District Council welcomes peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies, as a result of which action plans are identified to implement recommendations. Examples include peer reviews undertaken by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Food, Occupational Health and Safety Managers Group and inspections by the IPCO in respect of RIPA</li> <li>• When working in partnership, the Council ensures that arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit Committee</li> <li>• Role of Internal Audit</li> <li>• Peer Reviews</li> <li>• Results of External Inspections</li> <li>• Partnership Governance</li> <li>• Scrutiny membership of external bodies</li> <li>• Risk Management Framework</li> <li>• Council Meetings</li> </ul>
--	--	---

## MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Council will undertake an annual review of its governance arrangements to ensure continuing compliance with best practice to provide assurance that corporate governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively in practice. Where reviews of the corporate governance arrangements have revealed gaps, actions will be planned to enhance the governance arrangements accordingly.

The Council will prepare an Annual Governance Statement which will be submitted to the Audit Committee for consideration and will form part of the Council's annual Statement of Accounts.

The Governance Statement will include:

- an acknowledgement of responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of governance (incorporating the system of internal control) and reference to the authority's code of governance;
- a reference to and assessment of the effectiveness of key elements of the governance framework and the role of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;
- an opinion on the level of assurance that the governance arrangements can provide and that the arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework;
- a reference to how issues raised in the previous year's Annual Governance Statement have been resolved; and
- a conclusion including a commitment to monitoring implementation as part of the next annual review.

The Annual Governance Statement will be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive on behalf of the Council.

In reviewing and approving the Annual Governance Statement, members will be provided with detailed information regarding the effectiveness of the governance arrangements and 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, external inspectorates and managers from across the Council.

The Council will continually strive to operate an assurance framework, embedded into its business processes, that maps corporate objectives to risks, controls and assurances. This framework and regular reports on its application and effectiveness will provide members with assurances to support the Annual Governance Statement and will help members to identify whether corporate objectives and significant business risks are being properly managed.

## APPENDIX A - Seven principles for the conduct of individuals in public life

The governance framework is supported by the seven **Principles of Public Life**, which set the standards of conduct and behaviour to which Councillors and employees should aspire in their day-to-day dealings.

### 1. **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

### 2. **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### 3. **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### 4. **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### 5. **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### 6. **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### 7. **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.