

Code of Corporate Governance 2023/24

What is Corporate Governance?

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

Lancashire County Council is committed to the principles of effective corporate governance and has therefore adopted a Code of Corporate Governance which follows the latest guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), entitled "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016)"

The guidance defines the seven core principles, each supported by sub-principles that should underpin the governance framework of a local authority.

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rules of law.
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
- Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and

strong public financial management.

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

What are the benefits of having a Code of Corporate Governance?

Good governance leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and ultimately good outcomes for citizens and service users. It enables the Council to pursue its priorities effectively as well as underpinning those priorities with mechanisms for control and the management of risk.

Lancashire County Council has a good governance framework in place. The documents and arrangements which comprise the framework demonstrate that the Council continually seeks to ensure it is and remains, well governed, through integration of the core principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework into all aspects of the Council's conduct and operation.

The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring the Code is reviewed annually, and the outcome of the review, along with adoption of any revision to the Code is reported annually to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee. It is then presented to Full Council for approval.

Lancashire County Council Code of Corporate Governance (Principle 1)

Principle 1: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rules of law		
Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, Lancashire County Council will;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaving with integrity • Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values • Respecting the rule of law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain shared values both for the County Council and its officers. These are defined in the corporate strategy and reflect public expectations about the conduct and behaviour of individuals. • Use shared values as a guide for decision making and as a basis for developing positive and trusting relationships within the County Council. We demonstrate this by adherence to the constitution. • Have adopted formal codes of conduct defining standards of personal behaviour for Members and officers. • Maintain the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee to raise awareness and take the lead in ensuring high standards of conduct are embedded within the County Council's culture. • Have put in place arrangements to ensure that Members and staff of the County Council are not influenced by prejudice, bias, or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders. We have put in place appropriate processes to ensure that these arrangements are workable including declaration of interests and anti-corruption policies. • Ensure that systems and processes for financial administration and control together with protection of the County Council's resources and assets, comply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supportive ○ Innovative ○ Respectful ○ Collaborative • Corporate Strategy & Priorities • Annual Governance Statement • The Constitution which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Procedure Rules • Contract Procedure Rules • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy • Anti-Bribery Policy • Rules relating to Members External Interests • Rules relating to Gifts and Hospitality • Codes of Conduct for Members and Employees • Scheme of Delegation • Procedural Standing Orders • Register of Interests

	<p>with ethical standards; and are subject to monitoring of their effectiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making if appropriate. Officers will actively recognise the limits of lawful activity placed on them but also strive to utilise their powers to the full benefit of their communities. • Officers will observe all specific legislative requirements placed upon the Council as well as the requirements of general law and integrate the key principles of administrative law – rationality, legality and natural justice into the procedures and decision making. • Have put in place effective systems to protect the rights of staff. We ensure that policies for whistleblowing which are accessible to staff and those contracting with the Council, and arrangements for the support of whistle-blowers, are in place. • Have established a corporate information governance group (CIGG) with the remit of collecting assurance information across all council functions. Establish a Senior Information Risk Officer and Data Protection Officer. • Publish an Annual Governance Statement, signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to confirm that we are satisfied that we have effective governance arrangements in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of reference • Information Security Policy • Information Governance Policy • Money Laundering Policy • Whistleblowing Policy • External inspections of accounts • Member's induction • Complaints Policy • Partnership Protocol • Job descriptions and Person Specifications • Clearance of committee reports • Anti-money laundering policy • Calendar of meetings • CCTV Policy • Companies – compliance with Companies Act 2006, directors' duties, LEP assurance framework • Councillor – Use of resources, social media, AUP • Employee policies & procedures • FOI Publication Scheme • Grants rules, process, decisions and website
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-election guidance• Election's complaints process, fly posting, website• Identifying politically restricted posts• Local Resilience Forum Agreement (LRF)
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Lancashire County Council Code of Corporate Governance (Principle 2)

Principle 2: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement		
Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, Lancashire County Council will;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness • Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders • Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the Council’s vision, strategic plans, priorities, and targets are developed in consultation and that they are clearly articulated and disseminated. • Maintain a culture of accountability so that Members and Officers understand to whom they are accountable and for what. • Strive to engage with stakeholders on an individual and collective basis to demonstrate that we deliver services and outcomes that meet the needs and expectations of the public. These arrangements will recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish robust processes for dealing with these competing demands. • Publish reports giving information on the County Council’s strategies, plans and financial statements as well as information about outcomes, achievements. • Deliver effective scrutiny of the County Council’s business as appropriate and produce regular reports on the activities of the scrutiny function. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate strategy • Corporate priorities 2021-25 and communication strategy • Lancashire 2050 • Staff Survey • Local Member Grants • Internal Audit reviews • Annual Governance Statement • Family Safeguarding • Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Improvement Plan • The Care, Support and Wellbeing of Adults in Lancashire Vision • The Housing with Care Strategy • Annual report on members allowances • Annual Pay Policy Statement • Freedom of Information Publication Scheme • Research and Consultation Strategy • Research and Consultation Database • Service Specific consultations • Communication Strategy • Constitution

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the Council as a whole is open and accessible to the community, service users and staff and we are committed to openness and transparency in all dealings. • Attempt to publish all committee agenda items under “part 1” unless there is the need to preserve confidentiality (where it is proper and appropriate to do so). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme of Delegation • Money Matters Budget reports • Lancashire Health & Wellbeing Strategy • Community Safety Agreement • Director of Public Health Annual Report • Children's Partnership Plan • Statement of Accounts • Scrutiny Reports • County Council Website • Joint Strategic Needs Assessment • Strategic Assessment of Crime & Anti-Social behaviour • Anti-Bribery Policy • Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy • Anti-Money Laundering Policy • Calendar of meetings • Companies - Companies database, Companies House database, Compliance with the Companies Act 2006, Directors duties, LCDL - 2020/21 Statement of Accounts, LEP Assurance Framework, LEP website • Employee Policies and Procedures • Equalities, Cohesion and Integration Strategy
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equality/ health Impact Analysis• External inspections of accounts• Grants rules, process, decisions, and website• Health and Safety Policies and Procedures• Information Governance Framework• Information Security Policy• Information sharing policy Partnership Protocol• Privacy Impact Analysis• Privacy Notice• Procedure for complaints against Councillors• Publication of Members' Allowances paid• Privacy Impact Analysis• Scheme for access of information• Outbreak Management Plan• Community Safety Strategy 22-25• Economic Development Strategy 23-25• Environment & Climate Strategy• Children's & Young Peoples participation strategy
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Lancashire County Council Code of Corporate Governance (Principle 3)

Principle 3: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits		
Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, Lancashire County Council will;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining outcomes • Defining outcomes benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a clear statement of the Council’s purpose and priorities and use it as a basis for corporate and service planning. • Publish reports to communicate the Council’s activities and achievements, its financial position and performance. • Ensure that those making decisions are provided with financial and non-financial information that is fit for the purpose – relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications. • Identify and monitor service performance indicators which demonstrate how the quality of service for users is to be measured. • Maintain a Prudential Financial framework, balance commitments with available resources; and monitor income and expenditure levels to ensure this balance is achieved. • Ensure compliance with the CIPFA codes regarding a Prudential Framework for Capital Finance and Treasury Management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Strategy • Corporate priorities 2021-25 and communication strategy • A New Deal for a Greater Lancashire • Local Member Grants • Service Plans • Family Safeguarding model • Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Sufficiency strategy • The Care, Support and Wellbeing of Adults in Lancashire Vision • The Housing with Care Strategy • Money Matters Budget Reports • Director of Public Health Annual Report • Reports to Audit, Risk & Governance Committee • Performance reports to Cabinet • Monthly budget monitoring reports

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statement of Accounts• External Auditors letter & reports• External Inspections• Approach to Risk & Opportunity• Treasury Management Strategy• Capital Investment Strategy• Adult Services Annual plan• Boost Lancashire's Business Growth Hub• Care Act Policies, Procedures and Guidance• Children's Social Care• Community & Resilience Plan• Companies - annual business plans• Consultancy Code• Consultation and Engagement Procedures• Corporate Procurement Strategy, policies and guidance• Customer Access Strategy• Development Plan• Digital First Strategy• Equalities, Cohesion and Integration Strategy• Full Council Framework documents
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Plan• Lancashire Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy• Lancashire CLA Residential Strategy• Lancashire County Council Dementia Strategy• Lancashire Economic Development Strategy 23-25• Lancashire Economic Partnership (LEP)• Lancashire Environment Strategy• Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Strategy• Lancashire Renewables• Libraries, museums and culture strategy• Local Transport Plan• Notice of forthcoming Executive Key Decisions (Forward Plan) and intention to conduct business in private• Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan• Property Asset Management Strategy• Transport Asset Management Strategy• Risk Management framework
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roads, parking and travel plans• Treasury Management Strategy• Youth Justice Plan• Digital First Strategy• Adult Social Care Winter Plan• Strategy for Libraries, Museums, Culture and Archives 2019-24• Capital Strategy for Schools• Community Safety Strategy 22-25• Outbreak Management Plan• Family Safeguarding model• Adherence to the Financial Management Code• School Place Planning Strategy• Lancashire 2050• Community Safety Strategy 22-25• Environment & Climate Strategy
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Lancashire County Council Code of Corporate Governance (Principle 4)

Principle 4: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		
Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, Lancashire County Council will;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining interventions. • Planning interventions • Optimising achievement of intended outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a clear statement of the Council’s purpose and priorities and use it as a basis for corporate and service planning. • Have risk management arrangements in place including mitigating actions to support the achievement of the Council’s intended outcomes. • Ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to monitor service delivery • Put in place effective arrangements to deal with a failure in service delivery and explore options for improving service delivery and outcomes for our residents. • Have prepared contingency arrangements including a disaster recovery plan, business continuity plan and arrangements for delivering services during adverse weather conditions. • Provide senior managers and Members with timely financial and performance information. • Ensure that budget calculations are robust and reserves are adequate. • Align financial and performance data to provide an overall understanding of performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Strategy • Corporate priorities 2021-25 and communication strategy • A New Deal for a Greater Lancashire • LGA Peer Review action plan • Family Safeguarding model • Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Improvement Plan • The Care, Support and Wellbeing of Adults in Lancashire Vision • The Housing with Care Strategy • Our approach to Risk & Opportunity Management • Corporate Risk & Opportunity Register • Corporate & service performance dashboards • Highlight Reports • Business Continuity Plans • Emergency Plan • Money Matters Budget Reports • Social Value Policy & Framework

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy• Committee specific training for Scrutiny members• Companies - Articles of association, Directors duties, LEP Assurance Framework, Service level agreements• Scrutiny Committee's• Scrutiny Task Group Meetings/Reports• Webcast of all Scrutiny Committee meetings• LRF arrangements• Corporate Emergency Response Team
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Lancashire County Council Code of Corporate Governance (Principle 5)

Principle 5: Developing the County Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it		
Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, Lancashire County Council will;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the County Council's capacity • Developing the capability of the County Council's leadership and other individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the constitution set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council's Executive Committee and the Members individually. • Set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council's other committees and senior officers. • Have developed protocols to ensure effective communication between Council Members and officers in their respective roles. • Have developed protocols to ensure that the Leader and Chief Executive negotiate their respective roles early in their relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained. • Set out the terms and conditions for remuneration of Members and officers and publish an Annual Pay policy statement in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. • Have determined a scheme of delegated and reserved powers within the constitution and ensure that the scheme is monitored and updated when required. • Ensure that effective management arrangements are in place at the top of the organisation. • Ensure the Chief Executive is responsible and accountable to the Council for all aspects of operational management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Improvement Journey and organisational development programme • New Ways of Working • Constitution • Annual Pay Policy • Scheme of Delegation • Leadership Development Programme • Performance Engagement Reviews • Member Development Strategy and Programme • Member Development Working Group • Family Safeguarding model • Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Improvement Plan • Scheme of delegation to officers • Induction programme • Health & Wellbeing Policy • Children's Partnership Board - Terms of reference • Code of conduct training for councillors

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Section 151 Officer is responsible to the County 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. • Have appointed a professionally qualified and experienced S151 Officer who will lead the promotion and delivery of good financial management, safeguarding public money and ensuring appropriate, economic, efficient and effective use of funds; together with professional accountability for finance staff throughout the County Council • Ensure the Monitoring Officer is responsible to the County Council for ensuring that the constitution is adhered to. • Assess the skills required by Members including the understanding of financial systems. We will agree a personal development plan to develop skills and address any training gaps, to enable roles to be carried out effectively. • We will assess the skills required by officers through the performance engagement process and address any training gaps, to enable roles to be carried out effectively. • We will 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. • We will 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 Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies - Articles of association, Directors duties, Directors induction packs, Directors induction training, Internal controls manuals • Corporate induction e-learning • Councillors - Internet and email acceptable use policy, Provision and use of resources, Use of social media, Fair Use Policy for Mobile Phones • County Councillor Training Records • Generic Job descriptions/specifications for officers • Internet, Email and Telephone Acceptable Use Policy for staff • Lancashire County Council Behaviour Framework • Leadership Development Programme • Mandatory e-learning modules • Recruitment & Selection Policy • LRF accountable body • Draft People's Strategy
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We provide the Director of Finance with the resources, expertise and systems necessary to perform the role effectively within the County Council.• We will provide the Executive Director Education & Children's Services with the resources, expertise and systems necessary to perform the role effectively within the Council and respond to the last Ofsted & Special Educational Needs & Disability inspections.	
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Lancashire County Council Code of Corporate Governance (Principle 6)

Principle 6: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.		
Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, Lancashire County Council will;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing risk • Managing performance • Robust internal control. • Managing data. • Strong public financial management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an effective Audit, Risk & Governance Committee which is independent of the executive and scrutiny functions. • Enable the s151 and the Director of Finance to bring influence to bear on all material decisions and provide advice on the levels of reserves and balances to be retained. • Ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the County Council, with Members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their job. • Ensure our arrangements for financial and internal control and management of risk are formally addressed within the annual governance reports. • Ensure effective internal control arrangements exist for sound financial management systems and processes. • Maintain a Performance Board that meets quarterly. The Board receives a suite of performance dashboards, which draw attention to concerns with performance, describe recovery plans, and escalate issues for discussion and action to EMT. • Ensure that a regular Corporate Performance report is produced and used to hold Cabinet Members and officers to account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit, Risk & Governance Committee • Money Matters Budget Reports • Approach to Risk Management and publication of a quarterly Corporate Risk & Opportunity Register • Annual Governance Statement • Performance Board • Corporate Performance report • Internal Audit Reports • O&S arrangements • Information Governance Strategy • Data Protection Policy • Companies - account filed in accordance with all regulations, Companies House Database, LEP performance committee, own audit

		<p>& finance committees e.g. active companies, Quarterly monitoring reports, Regular financial monitoring reports, Risk Management reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit, Risk & Governance Committee - terms of reference• External Auditors letter & reports• Internal Audit Plan 2023/2024• Internal Audit Reports• Lancashire County Pension Fund - Annual Governance Statement of Compliance• Peer Reviews• Local Code of Corporate Governance• External reports protocol• Directors Assurance statement• Project Plans and Risk Registers• Health and Wellbeing Board revised terms of reference
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Plan• Lancashire Insight website• Medium Term Financial Plan• Minutes of committee meetings• Monthly budget monitoring reports• Notice of forthcoming Executive Key Decisions (Forward Plan) and intention to conduct business in private• Partnership Protocol• Peer Review• Performance Management• Quarterly Performance Highlight Reports• Statement of Accounts 2022/2023• Treasury Management Strategy• Webcasting of committee meetings• Public Bond issue• Data Strategy
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Lancashire County Council Code of Corporate Governance (Principle 7)

Principle 7: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability		
Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle, Lancashire County Council will;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing good practice in transparency • Implementing good practices in reporting • Assurance and effective accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with the local government transparency code and publish all required information in a timely manner. • Have established a medium-term business and financial planning process in order to deliver - a financial strategy ensuring sustainable finances, a robust annual budget process ensuring financial balance and an adequate monitoring process; all of which are subject to regular review. • Put in place effective transparent and accessible arrangements for dealing with complaints. • Maintain an effective scrutiny function which encourages constructive challenge and enhances the Council's performance overall. • Maintain an effective Audit, Risk & Governance Committee which is independent of the Executive and Scrutiny committees. • Ensure an effective internal audit function is resourced and maintained. • Maintain open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based. • Attempt to publish all committee agenda items under "part 1" unless there is the need to preserve confidentiality where it is proper and appropriate to do so • Put in place arrangements for whistleblowing to which staff and all those contracting with the County Council have access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Complaints Procedures • Scrutiny Committees • Audit, Risk & Governance Committee • Constitution • Modern.Gov • Whistle-blowing Policy • Monthly budget monitoring reports • Annual Pay Policy • Statement of Accounts • External Audit Reports • Annual Governance Statement • Approach to Risk Management & publication of a quarterly Risk & Opportunity register • Companies - Companies House database, LCDL - 2022/23 Statement of

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce clear, timely, complete, and accurate information for budget holders and senior officers relating to the budgetary and financial performance of the Council. • Maintain effective arrangements for determining the remuneration of senior staff and publish an Annual Pay Policy statement in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. • Publish annually details of County Councillors remuneration and expenses 	<p>Accounts, LEP Assurance Framework, own audit & finance committees e.g. active companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection Policy • External inspections e.g., Ofsted • External inspections of accounts • Information Governance Framework • Internal Audit Plan • Internal Audit Reports • Money Matters Budget Reports • O&S arrangements • Performance Reports
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