

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL  
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CODE

## INTRODUCTION

1. The purpose of this Code is to state the importance to the Council of good corporate governance and to set out the Council's commitment to the principles involved.
2. The Code is based on guidance to all UK local authorities.
3. The Code is included in the Council's Constitution and therefore applies to all Members and employees of the Council and also to any individuals or bodies authorised to act on its behalf.
4. How the effectiveness of the Code is reviewed is set out in Section 4.
5. The Code will be reviewed in its entirety by no later than 31 March 2025, but minor reviews and updates will be made annually as required.

### Approvals

Approved by Audit and Corporate Overview Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Approved by Head of Finance and Resources and section 151 Officer  
and Head of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

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## SECTION 1: THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

1.1. Corporate Governance refers to the processes by which organisations such as the Council are directed, controlled, led and held to account. It is also about culture and values - the way that Councillors (Members) and employees think and act. In summary, if management is about running the Council, corporate governance is about seeing that it is run properly.

1.2. The Council is a complex organisation which affects all who live and work in Bolsover District Council's area and businesses and organisations that are based here. It is therefore essential that there is confidence in our corporate governance, and the Council must therefore ensure that:

- as a democratic body, we engage with and account to our citizens and stakeholders effectively;
- we conduct our business in accordance with the law and to proper standards;
- public money is properly accounted for and is used economically, efficiently and effectively;
- controls are proportionate to risk so as not to impede performance;
- we continuously improve the way in which we function, in terms of effectiveness, quality, service availability, fairness, sustainability and innovation; and
- we fulfil our purpose and meet our priorities as set out in the Council Ambition.

1.3. The Council is therefore committed to good corporate governance and to doing the right things in the right way for the right people in a way which is timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable. This Code sets out that commitment and how we evidence it.

1.4. This commitment includes improving governance on a continuing basis across the Council as a whole, through a process of evaluation and review. This is detailed further in Section 4.

## SECTION 2: THE BASIS OF THIS CODE

2.1 This Code is based on guidance provided to all UK local authorities which are centred on seven Core Principles, designed to underpin the governance arrangements of all public sector bodies.

1 Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016, issued jointly by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE).

2 From the International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector (CIPFA/International Federation of Accountants, 2014)

2.2 These Core Principles are as follows:

**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**

2.3 Core Principles A and B are fundamental to the application of the other principles. Further good governance requires all of the principles to be met and through a dynamic approach good governance can be achieved.

2.4 This Code sets out our commitment to all seven of the Core Principles shown above and to the various elements of our governance framework the policies, strategies and processes - which help us to ensure that the principles are met (Section 3).

2.6 Since effective Corporate Governance relies on the way that Councillors (Members) and employees think and act, the Code also recognises the importance of the seven "Principles of Public Life" (the Nolan Principles) which are the basis of the ethical standards expected of public office holders (Appendix A). These support the seven Core Principles of this Code which in turn underpin the Council's approach to planning fair, effective and sustainable services and its responsibilities for sustainable development.

## SECTION 3: COMMITMENTS TO GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

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

The Council is accountable not only for how much it spends, but also for how we use the resources under our stewardship. This includes accountability for outputs, both positive and negative, and for the outcomes we have achieved. In addition, we have an overarching responsibility to serve the public interest in adhering to the requirements of legislation and government policies. It is essential that, as a whole, we can demonstrate the appropriateness of all our actions and have mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and to respect the rule of law.

**To support Principle A, the Council is committed to:**

<b>Behaving with integrity</b>	<b>What is in place to support this?</b>
<p>A1. Ensuring 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 Council</p> <p>A2. Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the Council and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)</p> <p>A3. Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions</p> <p>A4. Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed Values</li> <li>• Organisation Development and Workforce Strategy</li> <li>• Codes of Conduct for members and employees</li> <li>• Registers of interests, gifts and hospitality</li> <li>• Induction training for members and employees</li> <li>• Members Allowances Scheme</li> <li>• Financial Regulations rules</li> <li>• Contract Procurement rules</li> <li>• Planning Protocol</li> <li>• Standards and Audit Committees</li> <li>• Anti-Fraud Bribery and Corruption Strategy</li> <li>• Anti-Money Laundering Policy</li> <li>• Whistleblowing Policy</li> <li>• Compliments, Comments and Complaints Procedure</li> <li>• Internal Audit Charter</li> <li>• Safeguarding Responsibilities</li> <li>• Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Single Equality Plan and review</li> <li>• Transparency around decision making</li> <li>• Member Development Plan</li> </ul>

<p><b>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</b></p> <p>A5. Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the Council's ethical standards and performance</p> <p>A6. Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the Council's culture and operation</p> <p>A7. Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values</p> <p>A8. Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the Council are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the Council</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed Values</li> <li>• Organisation Development and Workforce Strategy</li> <li>• Codes of Conduct for members and employees</li> <li>• Registers of interests, gifts and hospitality</li> <li>• Financial Regulations rules</li> <li>• Contract Procurement rules</li> <li>• Planning Protocol</li> <li>• Induction training for members and employees</li> <li>• Regular governance awareness raising for employees</li> <li>• Planning Principles</li> <li>• Commissioning, Procurement &amp; Contract Management Strategy</li> <li>• Partnership &amp; collaborative working arrangements</li> <li>• Bolsover Sustainable Community Strategy</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Respecting the rule of law</b></p> <p>A9. Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations</p> <p>A10. Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements</p> <p>A11. Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders</p> <p>A12. Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key statutory responsibilities set out in the Council's Constitution</li> <li>• Compliance with CIPFA Statement of the ~Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government)</li> <li>• Protocol on Member/Officer relations (Constitution)</li> <li>• Job Descriptions</li> <li>• Regular governance awareness raising for employees</li> <li>• Standards Committee</li> <li>• Audit Committee</li> <li>• Anti-Fraud Bribery and Corruption Strategy</li> <li>• Anti-Money Laundering Policy</li> <li>• Whistleblowing Procedure</li> <li>• Complaints Procedure</li> </ul>
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A13. Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General Data Protection Regulation guidance</li><li>• Governance Codes of Practice</li></ul>
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## Principle B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Local government is run for the public good, and organisations therefore should ensure openness in their activities. Clear, trusted channels of communication and consultation should be used to engage effectively with all groups of stakeholders, such as individual citizens and service users, as well as institutional stakeholders.

### To support Principle B, the Council is committed to:

<b>Openness</b>	<b>What is in place to support this?</b>
<p>B1. Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating our commitment to openness</p> <p>B2. Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided</p> <p>B3. Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear</p> <p>B4. Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitution</li> <li>• Commissioning, Procurement &amp; Contract Management Strategy</li> <li>• Contract Procedure Rules</li> <li>• Whistleblowing Procedure.</li> <li>• Council Ambition</li> <li>• External audit and inspection reports</li> <li>• Directory of published information.</li> <li>• Online Council Tax information</li> <li>• Reporting and publishing &amp; distribution timetables</li> <li>• Delegation of Powers Scheme</li> <li>• Meetings open to public</li> <li>• Minutes</li> <li>• Webcasting page</li> <li>• Codes of Conduct for members and employees</li> <li>• Bolsover TV</li> <li>• Bolsover Partnership Executive Board</li> <li>• Public Participation in Council and Planning meetings</li> <li>• Webcasting Meetings and library of Meeting recordings</li> <li>• Publishing of Delegated Decisions</li> </ul>

<p><b>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</b></p> <p>B5. Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably</p> <p>B6. Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively</p> <p>B7. Ensuring that partnerships are based on trust, a shared commitment to change and a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation and Engagement Strategy</li> <li>• Current consultations</li> <li>• Complaints Procedure</li> <li>• Partnership &amp; collaborative working arrangements via Bolsover Partnership Executive Board and Thematic Action Groups</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users</b></p> <p>B8. A clear policy on the type of issues that the Council will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes</p> <p>B9. Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement</p> <p>B10. Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation and Engagement Strategy</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• Planning Principles</li> <li>• Complaints Procedure (and compliments)</li> <li>• Employee survey</li> <li>• Children and Young People's Participation Strategy</li> <li>• Bolsover Partnership statutory partners, public, private and the Community and Voluntary sector infrastructure provider</li> </ul>
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B11. Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account

B12. Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity

B13. Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users

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

The long-term nature and impact of many of local government’s responsibilities mean that it should define and plan outcomes and that these should be sustainable. Decisions should further the authority’s purpose, contribute to intended benefits and outcomes, and remain within the limits of authority and resources. Input from all groups of stakeholders, including citizens, service users, and institutional stakeholders, is vital to the success of this process and in balancing competing demands when determining priorities for the finite resources available.

**To support Principle C, the Council is committed to:**

<b>Defining outcomes</b>	<b>What is in place to support this?</b>
<p>C1. Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the Council’s purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the Council’s overall strategy, planning and other decisions</p> <p>C2. Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer</p> <p>C3. Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available</p> <p>C4. Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes</p> <p>C5. Managing service users expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Ambition Planning Principles</li> <li>• Local Plan</li> <li>• Consultation and Engagement Strategy</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• Half-yearly performance reports to the Executive</li> <li>• Risk Management Strategy</li> <li>• Bolsover Sustainable Community Strategy</li> </ul>

<b>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</b>	<b>What is in place to support this?</b>
<p>C6. Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• Budget consultation exercises</li> <li>• Risk Management Strategy</li> </ul>

<p>and decisions when taking decisions about service provision</p> <p>C7. Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the Council's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints</p> <p>C8. Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs</p> <p>C9. Ensuring fair access to services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning, Procurement &amp; Contract Management Strategy</li> <li>• Member workshops</li> <li>• Strategic Equality Plan</li> <li>• Equality Impact Assessments</li> <li>• Customer Focus Strategy</li> <li>• ICT &amp; Digital Strategy</li> <li>• Bolsover Sustainable Community Strategy</li> </ul>
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**Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of intended outcomes**

Local government achieves its intended outcomes by providing a mixture of legal, regulatory, and practical interventions. Determining the right mix of these courses of action is a critically important strategic choice that local government has to make to ensure intended outcomes are achieved. They need robust decision-making mechanisms to ensure that their defined outcomes can be achieved in a way that provides the best trade-off between the various types of resource inputs while still enabling effective and efficient operations. Decisions made need to be reviewed continually to ensure that achievement of outcomes is optimised

**To support Principle D, the Council is committed to:**

<p><b>Determining necessary interventions</b></p> <p>D1. Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided.</p> <p>D2. Considering feedback from citizens and service users 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.</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Ambition</li> <li>• Reporting requirements for Full Council and Executive</li> <li>• Decision making Principles (Constitution)</li> <li>• Scrutiny committees and support</li> <li>• Risk Management Strategy</li> <li>• Consultation and Engagement Strategy</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• Senior Management Structure</li> <li>• Officer Delegation Scheme</li> <li>• Calendar of meetings</li> <li>• Pre-meetings</li> <li>• The Forward Plan</li> </ul>
<p><b>Planning interventions</b></p> <p>D3. Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets</p> <p>D4. Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered</p> <p>D5. Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Ambition</li> <li>• Reporting and publishing &amp; distribution timetables</li> <li>• Consultation and Engagement Strategy</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• Partnership &amp; collaborative working arrangements</li> <li>• Half-yearly performance reports to the Executive</li> <li>• Budget and Policy Framework</li> <li>• Procedure Rules</li> <li>• Budget Monitoring &amp; Control Procedures</li> </ul>

D6. Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances

- Council Procedure Rule
- Financial Regulations
- Senior Management Structure
- Regular Portfolio Holder meetings

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

Local government needs appropriate structures and leadership, as well as people with the right skills, appropriate qualifications and mindset, to operate efficiently and effectively and achieve their intended outcomes within the specified periods. A local government organisation must ensure that it has both the capacity to fulfil its own mandate and to make certain that there are policies in place to guarantee that its management has the operational capacity for the organisation as a whole. Because both individuals and the environment in which an authority operates will change over time, there will be a continuous need to develop its capacity as well as the skills and experience of the leadership of individual staff members. Leadership in local government entities is strengthened by the participation of people with many different types of backgrounds, reflecting the structure and diversity.

**To support Principle E, the Council is committed to:**

<p><b>Developing Capacity</b></p> <p>E1. Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources.</p> <p>E2. Reviewing operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness,</p> <p>E3. Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the Council’s resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently,</p> <p>E4. Recognising the benefits</p>	<p>What is in place to support this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny committees and support</li> <li>• Senior Management Structure</li> <li>• Reviews commissioned by Senior Management</li> <li>• External audit and inspection reports</li> <li>• Partnership &amp; collaborative working arrangements</li> <li>• Corporate Land and Buildings Strategy</li> <li>• LGA Peer Review</li> <li>• Employee Celebratory Awards</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Developing the capability of the leadership and other individuals</b></p> <p>E5. Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained</p> <p>E6. Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated</p>	<p>What is in place to support this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitution</li> <li>• Protocol on Member/Officer relations (Constitution)</li> <li>• Regular meetings between Strategic Leadership Team and Lead Members</li> <li>• Delegation of Powers Scheme</li> <li>• Financial Regulation</li> <li>• Contract Procurement Rules</li> </ul>
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and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body

E7. Ensuring the leader and the senior management team have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure, whereby the senior management team leads the authority in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority

E8. Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the Council to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by: ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged, 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, ensuring personal, organisation and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from both internal and external governance weaknesses

E9. Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation

E10. Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections

E11. Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs

- Learning and Development function
- Member Development Working Group and programme of training
- Performance Review and Development Process
- Consultation and Engagement Strategy
- Organisation Development and Workforce Strategy
- Workforce Policies
- Code of Conduct for employees
- Internal Communication
- Health and Safety Policy
- Corporate Health Standard
- HR Policies
- Appraisals
- Member Inductions and midterm Member Induction refresh
- Employee training

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

Local government needs to ensure that the organisations and governance structures that it oversees have implemented, and can sustain, an effective performance management system that facilitates effective and efficient delivery of planned services.

Risk management and internal control are important and integral parts of a performance management system and crucial to the achievement of outcomes. Risk should be considered and addressed as part of all decision making activities.

A strong system of financial management is essential for the implementation of policies and the achievement of intended outcomes, as it will enforce financial discipline, strategic allocation of resources, efficient service delivery, and accountability.

It is also essential that a culture and structure for scrutiny is in place as a key part of accountable decision making, policy making and review. A positive working culture that accepts, promotes and encourages constructive challenge is critical to successful scrutiny and successful delivery. Importantly, this culture does not happen automatically, it requires repeated public commitment from those in authority.

**To support Principle F, the Council is committed to:**

<p><b>Managing Risk</b></p> <p>F1. Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making</p> <p>F2. Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring they are working effectively</p> <p>F3. Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this ?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk management group</li> <li>• Risk Management Strategy, Risk and Control Registers and Internal / External audit coverage of risk management</li> <li>• Audit Committee</li> <li>• Partnership and Collaborative Working arrangements</li> <li>• Reporting requirements for Full Council and Executive</li> <li>• Service Continuity arrangements</li> <li>• Annual review of Constitution</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Managing Performance</b></p> <p>F4. Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post-implementation review</p> <p>F5. Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the Council’s financial, social and environmental position and outlook</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this ?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Ambition</li> <li>• Service Plans and service planning guidance</li> <li>• Commissioning, Procurement &amp; Contract Management Strategy</li> <li>• Half-yearly performance reports to the Executive</li> <li>• Forward Work Programmes</li> <li>• Reporting and publishing &amp; distribution timetables</li> </ul>
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<p>F6. Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made, thereby enhancing the Council's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible</p> <p>F7. Providing members and senior management with regular reports on progress towards outcome achievement.</p> <p>F8. Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (eg financial statements)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny committees and support</li> <li>• Scrutiny reviews</li> <li>• Report preparation guidance</li> <li>• Report screening (Full Council and Executive)</li> <li>• Member Development</li> <li>• Financial Regulations</li> <li>• Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules</li> <li>• Budget Monitoring &amp; Control Procedures</li> <li>• Budget – Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• Annual Statement of Accounts</li> <li>• Bolsover Sustainable Community Strategy</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Robust Internal Control</b></p> <p>F9. Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives</p> <p>F10. Evaluating and monitoring risk management and internal control on a regular basis</p> <p>F11. Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place</p> <p>F12. Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor</p> <p>F13. Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment and that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this ?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management Strategy</li> <li>• Principal Risk Register</li> <li>• Heads of Departments Internal Control Assurances</li> <li>• Internal Audit Charter (inc Annual Plan)</li> <li>• Audit Committee Terms of Ref (Constitution)</li> <li>• Audit Committee effectiveness surveys and training</li> <li>• Financial Regulations</li> <li>• Contract Procurement Rules</li> <li>• Counter Fraud Policy &amp; Procedures</li> <li>• Anti-Money Laundering Strategy</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement &amp; Action Plan</li> <li>• Head of Internal Audit's Annual Report</li> <li>• Audit Committee Chair's Annual Report to Executive</li> <li>• Identification of Assurance Gaps</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Managing Data</b></p> <p>F14.Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data</p> <p>F15.Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies</p> <p>F16.Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this ?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Data Protection Regulation guidance</li> <li>• GDPR clauses in contracts</li> <li>• Freedom of Information guidance</li> <li>• Information Management Strategy and Action Plan</li> <li>• Acceptable Use of ICT Facilities</li> <li>• ICT Security Policy and Guidelines</li> <li>• Secure Data Transfer Standards and Procedures</li> <li>• Information Security Policy</li> <li>• Records Management Policy</li> <li>• Corporate Records Retention Scheme</li> <li>• Regular data protection training</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Strong public financial management</b></p> <p>F17.Ensuring financial management supports both long-term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance</p> <p>F18.Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this ?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget monitoring</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement</li> <li>• External Audit reports</li> </ul>
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**Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability**

Accountability is about ensuring that those making decisions and delivering services are answerable for them. Effective accountability is concerned not only with reporting on actions completed, but also ensuring that stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the organisation plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner. Both external and internal audit contribute to effective accountability.

**To support Principle G, the Council is committed to:**

<p><b>Implementing good practice in transparency</b></p> <p>G1. Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate</p> <p>G2. 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</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report preparation guidance</li> <li>• Report screening (Full Council and Executive)</li> <li>• Website including summary and easy-to-read reports</li> <li>• Compliance with access requirements</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementing good practice in reporting</b></p> <p>G3. Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of resources</p> <p>G4. Ensuring owners and senior management own the results</p> <p>G5. Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (annual governance statement)</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly reporting of performance</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement and Action Plan</li> <li>• Risk Management Strategy</li> <li>• Risk and Control Registers</li> <li>• Annual Statement of Accounts</li> </ul>

G6. Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate	
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<p><b>Assurance and effective accountability</b></p> <p>G8. Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon</p> <p>G9. Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon</p> <p>G10. Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations</p> <p>G11. Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement</p> <p>G12. Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met</p>	<p><b>What is in place to support this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit Committee Terms of Reference (Constitution)</li> <li>• Regular reporting of progress on implementing audit recommendations to Audit Committee</li> <li>• External audit and inspection reports</li> <li>• Internal Audit Charter</li> <li>• Head of Internal Audit's Annual Report</li> <li>• Internal Audit self assessment and compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards</li> <li>• Partnership and collaborative working arrangements</li> <li>• Annual review of Constitution</li> </ul>
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#### **SECTION 4: HOW CORPORATE GOVERNANCE IS REVIEWED**

1. The Leader and Senior Management Team are required to ensure that each year, a review is undertaken to measure the extent to which the Council as a whole has met the requirements of this Code.
2. The results of the review are included in the Annual Governance Statement which is published with the Annual Statement of Accounts.
3. Where the review reveals possible gaps or weaknesses, action is agreed to ensure effective governance in future. Agreed action is monitored for implementation.
4. Where necessary, this Code will be amended as a result of the annual review, changes in best practice or statutory changes. Minor amendments to wording, titles and to details of 'what is in place' to support the principles (Section 3 above) may be approved by the Head of Finance but any substantive changes to the Code and the principles will require Executive approval.
5. This code will be renewed no later than 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

## **APPENDIX A.**

### **THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE (THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES)**

These apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes people who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in:

- the civil service
- local government
- the police
- the courts and probation services
- non-departmental public bodies
- health, education, social and care services.

#### **1. Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **2. Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

#### **3. Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

#### **4. Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **5. Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **6. Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

#### **7. Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.