



St. Helens Borough Council

Code of Corporate Governance

December 2023

Version Control

Date	Author	Version	Reason for Change
April 2017	Deputy Chief Executive & Strategic Director of Corporate Services	1.1	Compliance with CIPFA Guidance Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016)
March 2022	Monitoring Officer	1.2	Organisational Change
Dec 2023	Monitoring Officer	1.3	General Review

Statement

St. Helens Borough Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

St. Helens Council is committed to its responsibility for ensuring the Council has an effective governance framework and has developed a Code of Corporate Governance based on the seven core principles of Good Governance as agreed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). These principles are set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE publication *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016*. The Council's Code of Corporate Governance is underpinned by these principles and is comprised of a framework of policies, procedures, behaviours and values by which the authority is controlled and governed.

What is Corporate Governance?

Corporate governance is the system of rules, practices and processes by which an organisation is directed and controlled. It comprises the arrangements (including political, economic, social, environmental, administrative, legal, and other arrangements) put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.

Corporate governance refers to how the Council governs itself and to what purpose. It defines who has authority and accountability and how decisions are made. In summary, it is a toolkit that enables the Council to deal more effectively with the many and varied challenges of running an organisation as diverse as a local authority. Governance is about how the Council ensures that it does the right things in the right way and in a timely, open, honest and accountable manner.

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and 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.

To achieve good governance, each local authority should be able to demonstrate that its governance structures comply with the core and subprinciples contained in the Framework. The Council therefore developed and has maintained a local code of governance reflecting the principles set out. The Framework is applied in a way that demonstrates the spirit and ethos of good governance which cannot be achieved by rules and procedures alone. Shared values that are integrated into the culture of an organisation, and are reflected in behaviour and policy, are hallmarks of good governance.

The governance framework for St. Helens Council will remain subject to regular review to ensure its operational effectiveness in the future.

The Decision-Making Framework

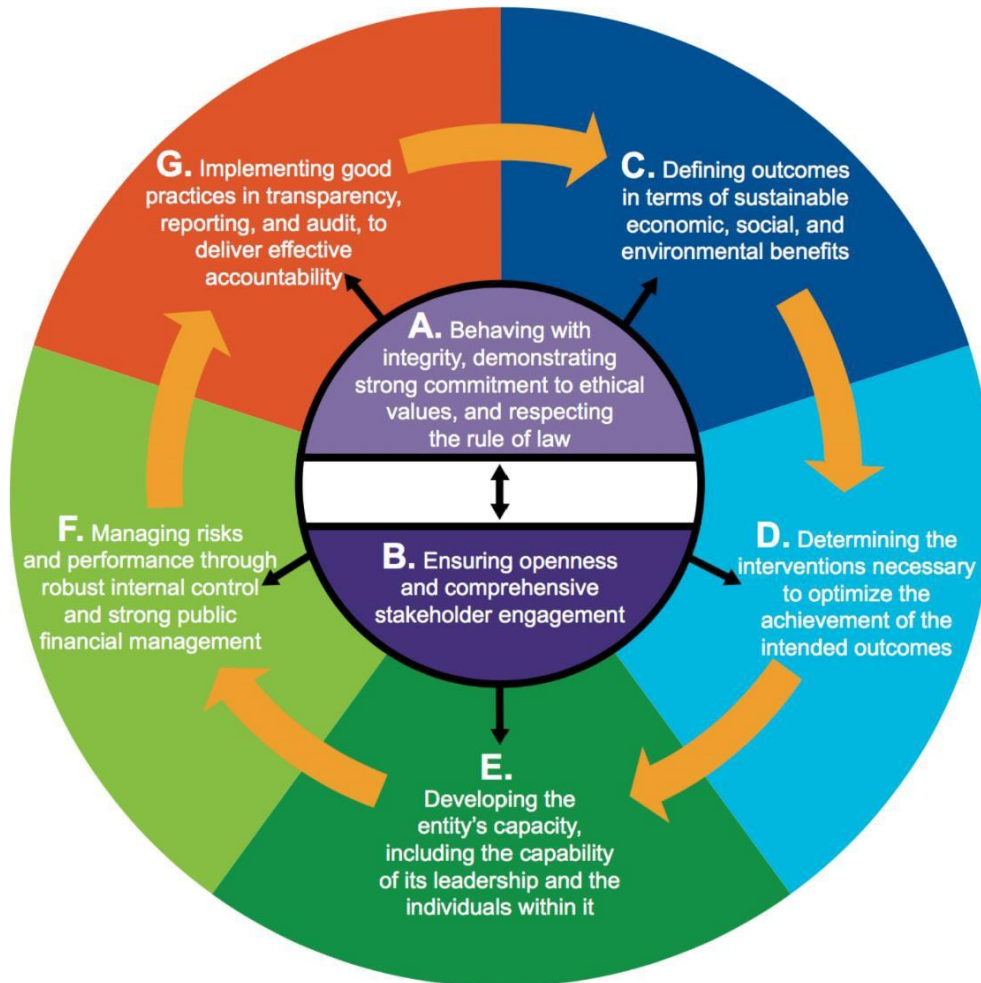
The Council has adopted and approved a constitution that establishes an efficient, transparent and accountable decision-making structure. Member and Officer roles are clearly defined within the Constitution. The Cabinet is the principal decision-making body of the Council. It is made up of the Leader, who is appointed by the Council, and a Cabinet of up to nine Councillors whom they appoint as Portfolio Holders. Each Member of the Cabinet has a portfolio of responsibility that relates to a service or function of the Council. Supporting these arrangements is a scheme of delegation which is established in the Constitution and well understood and adhered to.

The International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector

The core principles of good governance have been identified 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 optimize 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.

The International Framework - Achieving the intended outcomes while acting in the public interest at all times



The documents and systems that make up this framework provide the structures and guidance that our members and employees require in order to ensure effective governance across our organisation.

Principles and Sub Principles of Good Governance

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

Local government organisations are accountable not only for how much they spend, but also for how they use the resources under their stewardship. This includes accountability for outputs, both positive and negative, and for the outcomes they have achieved. In addition, they 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, they can demonstrate the appropriateness of all their actions across all activities and have mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and to respect the rule of law.

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Examples of systems, processes, documentation and other evidence demonstrating compliance
A1	Behaving with integrity
A1.1	<p>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 organisation</p> <p>Constitution Members' Registers of Interests Publication Scheme Code of Conduct for Employees Code of Conduct for Elected & Co-Opted Members Protocol on Member/Officer Relations Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy Equality Impact Assessments Whistleblowing Policy Annual Appraisal process Induction programme for members and staff "Welcome to St Helens" includes a focus on the Code of Conduct for Employees and the Nolan Principles Our Workplace Vision, Values, Behaviours & Bonds</p>
A1.2	<p>Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation 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>Induction programme for members and staff Standards Committee Communicating shared values through briefings and engagement sessions Constitution and Codes of Conduct for Members and Employees include the Nolan Principles</p>
A1.3	<p>Leading by example and using the above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions</p> <p>Standards Committee Governance arrangements/Terms of Reference for all partnership forums such as the Peoples Board Partnership Governance Framework Members' Registers of Interests Declaration of Interests as a formal element of committee meetings Systems and processes built around these values, for example officer decisions (Delegated Executive Decisions and Operational Decisions) and Cabinet Reports</p>
A1.4	<p>Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on</p> <p>Codes of Conduct for Members and Employees Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy Whistleblowing Policy Protocol on Member/Officer Relations Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy</p>

	a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively	Annual Governance Statement Registers of interests (members and staff) Register of Gifts and Hospitality Complaints Policy Internal Audit Charter Training on members' Code of Conduct
A2	Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values	
A2.1	Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance	Annual Governance Statement Standards Committee Monitoring and oversight of complaints Overview and scrutiny of decision making Communicating shared values through briefings and engagement sessions
A2.2	Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation	Mandatory Code of Conduct Training for all members and staff Training programme encompassing equalities, sustainability etc. Appraisal process Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy Codes of Conduct and Seven Principles of Public Life VIP Employee Awards promote the Council's organisational values Culture Champion Network
A2.3	Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values	Policies subject to annual review and update. Appraisal process Recruitment & Selection Procedure Complaints Policy and process Registers of Interests are maintained, and the declaration of interests is a formal element of committee meetings Contract Procedure Rules Land and Property Disposal Procedure Rules
A2.4	Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation	Terms of Reference and governance arrangements for key partnership forums Partnership Governance Framework Procurement Strategy communicates commitment of values to providers
A3	Respecting the rule of law	
A3.1	Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations	Constitution Regular policy briefings Legal support provided to all services Reports include legal implications

A3.2	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	Role of Statutory Officers Job Descriptions of Statutory Officers Council Constitution specifies professional role and responsibilities of Statutory Officers Council Committees serviced by appropriately qualified Democratic Services Officers
A3.3	Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders	Legal advice recorded by officers and retained in accordance with Law Society Lexcel accredited practice management standards
A3.4	Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively	Statutory Officer Functions Investigation of all breach of legal and regulatory provisions Audit and Risk function People Management policies
A3.5	Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively	Anti-fraud, bribery and corruption policy and procedures Annual fraud risk assessment Policies communicated to employees and Members E-learning training provided on fraud and corruption Audit Function Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members The Internal Audit Plan includes an allocation of time for anti-fraud reviews into fraud risk areas Joint working arrangements with relevant stakeholders such as the Department for Work and Pensions to investigate potential fraud People Management policies

Core Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Local government is run for the public good; 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.

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice

Examples of systems, processes, documentation and other evidence demonstrating compliance

B1 Openness

B1.1 Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness

Publication Scheme
Online council tax information
Authority website – minutes and reports of Council committees available
Public attendance at Council meetings

		Public speaking at Planning Committee Public budget consultation
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		<p>Statement of Accounts Whistleblowing Policy Annual Governance Statement The Council complies with the requirements of the Transparency Code of Practice Our Borough Strategy which outlines the Borough's vision and priorities Our Workplace Vision, Values, Behaviours & Bonds</p>
B1.2	<p>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>The Council's Constitution provides the framework for the decision-making process and reports to the Council's Committees require documented consideration of a range of issues in support of any recommendations made. Delegated Executive Decisions and Operational Decisions</p>
B1.3	<p>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>Council Constitution Delegated Executive and Operational Decisions Council Committee Report Template</p>
B1.4	<p>Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action</p>	<p>A Consultation Suite is maintained on the council website, which manages all council surveys with stakeholders. Communication Strategy Review of consultation & engagement. Key proposals are reviewed to determine whether they require statutory consultation e.g. findings of the engagement process resulted in Our Borough Strategy which outlines the Borough's vision and priorities and sets a new relationship with residents and communities. Stakeholder bulletins Parish Council briefings</p>

B2	Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	
B2.1	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	Stakeholder mapping exercises are carried out as part of a Communications Plan on specific campaigns. They help formulate the development of key messages and channels which will be used to communicate to each stakeholder and audience group. They are also used to assist objective setting and to measure outcomes
B2.2	Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively	Database of partnership agreements Partnership Governance Framework All new partnerships are subject to appropriate decision making and require the consideration of all implications and risks
B2.3	Ensuring that partnerships are based on trust, a shared commitment to change, a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit	A number of strategic and operational partnerships are in place within the Borough and terms of reference are in place for each partnership which set out the expectations and commitments of all partners.
B3	Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users	
B3.1	Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.	Range of communication and engagement methods in place. Consultation Code and toolkit sets out current methodology for undertaking public consultations with stakeholders. Outcome from consultation reported via Cabinet or Delegated Executive Decision Call in mechanism for scrutinising Member decisions

B3.2	Ensuring that communication methods are effective, and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement	Range of communication and engagement methods in place. Corporate Communications team Borough Strategy setting six key priorities, accompanied by relevant branding.
B3.3	Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs	Views and experiences of service users and citizens are gathered in relation to consultation on specific issues and activities. Residents' Surveys Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Communication and engagement campaigns e.g. the redevelopment of St Helens Town Centre, the development of the Local Plan and the Parkside Link Road development
B3.4	Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account	Updating members of the public and stakeholders who provided information as part of a number of communication campaigns on the development of the activity
B3.5	Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity	Consultations e.g. those involving the Local Plan and Parkside Link Road have provided opportunity for groups to participate via local events and leaflet door drops. Our Borough Strategy offered (covid secure) face to face feedback to be given, online engagement sessions and paper-based surveys to ensure that people had a variety of formats of engagement. Consultation Code and toolkit sets out current methodology for undertaking public consultations with stakeholders.
B3.6	Taking account of the interests of future generations of taxpayers and service users	Young Advisers Youth Council Member of Youth Parliament

Core 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.

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Examples of systems, processes, documentation and other evidence demonstrating compliance
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C1	Defining outcomes	
C1.1	Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions	<p>Our Borough Strategy is the key strategic planning document that defines the authority's vision, objectives, outcomes and key measures of success.</p> <p>Climate Change Action Plan St Helens Borough Council Community Safety Plan St Helens Borough Council Local Plan 2020-2035 Public Notice of Key Decisions Service plans include actions and objectives linked to key outcomes</p>
C1.2	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>Our Borough Strategy is the key strategic planning document that defines the authority's vision, objectives, outcomes and key measures of success.</p> <p>Performance and Financial Monitoring Framework</p> <p>The Council has a template of factors which are required to be considered when seeking a decision from Members. This template includes community impact assessment, statutory framework, financial implications, alternative options and risk</p>
C1.3	Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available	<p>Quarterly performance reports for each directorate. Financial Monitoring Report</p> <p>Monthly budget and performance meeting with The Executive Director Corporate Services and Executive Directors Regular meetings between senior officers and Members Regular briefing meetings for Cabinet Members</p> <p>The Council has set out its Revenue Budget, three-year capital programme, the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and its Medium-Term Financial Strategy</p> <p>Climate Change Action Plan</p>
C1.4	Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes	<p>Performance and Financial Monitoring Framework Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy and Policy Risk owners detailed for strategic and directorate risks Risk profile reviews throughout the year Directorate Risk workshops</p>

		<p>Annual review of risk at service/operational levels as part of planning cycle which links into the Council's overall risk management framework.</p> <p>Risk identification and analysis process in service plan development</p> <p>Risk management embedded in strategy and policy development and Cabinet/committee reports</p> <p>Business continuity plans and framework</p> <p>Reporting on the Strategic Risk Register to Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Audit and Governance Committee.</p>
C1.5	Managing service users expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available	<p>Quality standard measures</p> <p>Performance measures linked to key outcomes</p>
C2	Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	
C2.1	Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision	<p>Decision Making Processes</p> <p>Equality impact assessment for decisions</p> <p>The decision-making process in committee reports requires an assessment of the community impact and includes social value, sustainability and environment, health and wellbeing, equality and human rights, customers and resident, amongst others</p>
C2.2	Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints	<p>Medium-Term Financial Strategy</p> <p>Performance Management Framework</p> <p>Our Borough Strategy</p>
C2.3	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	The constitution determines how decisions are made and what is required to be taken into account. Decisions are taken with the widest view of the implications of the proposed decision

C2.4	Ensuring fair access to services	Community impact assessment including equalities embedded in decision making
Core Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		
<p>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.</p>		
D1	Determining interventions	
D1.1	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>Template of factors which are required to be considered when seeking a decision from Members & SLT/Executive Directors.</p> <p>Decision Making process</p> <p>Public Notice of Key Decisions</p>
D1.2	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>Decisions on service changes are made within the Budget and Policy framework of the Council. Those affected by a decision will be subject to formal consultation.</p> <p>The outcome of consultation exercises is made available to stakeholders and decision makers.</p> <p>Learning from complaints and compliments.</p>
D2	Planning interventions	
D2.1	Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets	<p>Adherence to a Corporate Planning Timetable covering forward planning and budget and performance monitoring is contains details of key events, reports, committees and dates</p> <p>Budget savings options</p> <p>Public Notice of Key Decisions</p>

D2.2	Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered	Decision Making process Consultation Suite Review into consultation and engagement Corporate Communications Team review of internal communications
D2.3	Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks	Risk and Opportunity Management Policy and Framework Strategic risk register Corporate decision-making templates prompt the consideration of risk
D2.4	Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances	Our Borough Strategy is reviewed and amended annually Directorate and Department Plans and Service Plans are reviewed and amended annually and on a rolling basis throughout the year Medium-term financial plan reviewed regularly Performance measures relating to key outcomes Timetable for budget reporting
D2.5	Establishing appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured	Our Borough Strategy Directorate and Department Plans and Division/Service/Team Action Plans which are completed annually, and the objectives inform the appraisal process Performance Management Framework Key performance indicators (KPIs) Quarterly performance reports detail KPIs performance against target Detailed financial monitoring and performance reports presented to Cabinet, Council and Scrutiny quarterly highlighting areas of underperformance and corrective action
D2.6	Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly	Action plans following external inspection Budget and performance reports presented to Cabinet, Council and Scrutiny regularly Internal Audit annual programme of work Follow up process for internal audit recommendations Service planning process Performance Management Framework Complaints Policy and Procedures
D2.7	Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium-term financial plan	Council Delivery Plan Medium Term Financial Strategy Medium Term Financial Strategy Budget monitoring process

		Budget and Performance report.
D2.8	Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy	Medium Term Financial Strategy Annual budget process Revenue and capital monitoring process Budget monitoring process
D3	Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	
D3.1	Ensuring the medium-term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints	Budget strategy and annual budget setting process Revenue Budget, three-year capital programme and Capital Strategy, the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and its Medium-Term Financial Strategy
D.3.2	Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term	Budget strategy Performance management framework
D3.3	Ensuring the medium-term financial strategy 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	Medium Term Financial Strategy Budget strategy and setting process Performance management framework Revenue Budget, three-year capital programme and Capital Strategy Treasury Management Strategy Statement Regular financial and budget reports that inform the Council's financial planning aimed at ensuring the availability of appropriate resources for priority areas, and promoting value for money
D3.4	Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 states that this is "the additional benefit to the community...over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes"	Procurement Strategy explicitly references Social Value The Commercial Strategy incorporates social value and will offer a further commitment to delivering measurable social value outcomes as part of its implementation Lead Commissioners utilise Social Value in procurement opportunities

Core Principle E: Developing the entity'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 mind-set, 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 of communities.

E1	Developing the entity's capacity	
E1.1	Reviewing operations, performance use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness	Performance Management Framework Decision Making Processes Transformation programme
E1.2	Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the authority's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently	Dataset to support the budget process which pulls together key information on performance, unit costs, spending trends and comparative cost data. Comparative data used where available
E1.3	Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved	Collaborative working practices explored across the Liverpool City Region Pooled budget within Social Care and Health and manages this through a joint commissioning team. It also has other joint services with partners. The Council actively works across the LCR to identify opportunities for further collaborative working.
E1.4	Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources	Workforce plans and strategies Social Worker progression Recruitment and Retention plans in Children's and Adult's Services
E2	Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals	
E2.1	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	Constitution clearly defines the statutory roles required including Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and chief financial officer/Section 151 officer. Protocol on Member/Officer Relations

		<p>St. Helens – A Member led Council – Developing effective Member and Officer relations Role of Statutory Officers Covered in New Member Induction Training</p>
E2.2	<p>Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body</p>	<p>Council Constitution Terms of Reference for Committees Scheme of Delegation Role of the Monitoring Officer</p>
E2.3	<p>Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive 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</p>	<p>Constitution of the Council Protocol on Member/Officer Relations Role of the Chief Executive and Leader Job Description of Chief Executive Regular 1:1 meetings.</p>

E2.4	<p>Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared 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 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, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external</p>	<p>Staff Induction Programme Staff online training programme Councillors Induction Programme Training & Development Plan reflect requirements of a modern councillor including leadership and influencing skills, the ability to scrutinise and challenge; to recognise when outside advice is required and how to act as an ambassador for the community. Training & Development Plan Job description/person specifications Workforce Planning Exit Interviews Continuous Professional Development for specific qualifications e.g Accountants. Appraisals Training Needs Audits and Systems Revised Terms of Reference for Audit and Governance Committee Annual Scrutiny Training External training providers used where appropriate Senior and Wider Leadership Teams and Wider Leadership Community briefings and engagement sessions Directorate specific staff engagement sessions</p>
E2.5	<p>Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation</p>	<p>Review of consultation and engagement activities. Range of forums Stakeholder forums Webcast meetings Citizens have the right to participate in Council meetings by submitting questions in advance</p>
E2.6	<p>Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections</p>	<p>Member training, development and induction programmes Member Training and Development Group Leader of the Council has regular meetings with Portfolio holders to hold them to account Peer Review and Inspections supported by the authority</p>
E2.7	<p>Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs</p>	<p>Appraisal process including interim appraisals – linked to Directorate, Department Plans and Service Plans People Management policies and review schedule</p>

E2.8	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	<p>Various People Management policies support employee health and wellbeing including attendance, welfare and health initiatives and provision of Occupational Health and Counselling services.</p> <p>Health and Safety advice and guidance through risk assessments and implementation of policies and procedures</p> <p>Display Screen Equipment online course and assessment form</p> <p>Mental health first aiders across the organisation. Workplace Health and Wellbeing Group in place implementing a range of mental wellbeing initiatives via an action plan.</p> <p>Culture Champions in place across the organisation to support physical and mental wellbeing.</p>
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Core 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.

F1	Managing risk
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F1.1	The management of risk is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making	<p>Safety & Risk Management Forum Head of Audit & Risk and Team Manager - Health & Safety and Resilience Manager roles Annual Directorate and Department Plans and Service Plans include consideration of risk Link between internal audit and risk management functions is clearly defined in Terms of Reference of Internal Audit reports Committee reports and Delegated Executive Decisions set out options for change and include an appropriate risk assessment. Strategic Risk Register and Directorate Risk Registers Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy Directorate Risk workshops RIPA (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act) Policy and training</p>
F1.2	Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively	<p>Risk and Opportunity Management Risk workshops Risk and Resilience Manager guidance and support Planned mitigation actions for risks with target dates Risk monitoring and governance process Safety & Risk Management Forum Business continuity arrangements are in place for critical services. Audit and Governance Committee has oversight of the Council's effectiveness of governance, control and risk management</p>
F1.3	Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated	<p>Risk Management process Directorate Risk workshops Risk profiles updated each quarter by risk owners and lead officers</p>
F2 Managing performance		
F2.1	Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review	<p>Performance management framework. Our Borough Strategy outlines the Borough's vision and priorities. A suite of performance indicators have been developed which link to the Strategy's priorities. Strategic Risk Register Quarterly performance reporting has taken place throughout the year Directorate and Department Plans and Service Action Plans Service reviews, internal audit reviews, and quality assurance of service plans</p>

		Appraisals and one to one “My Catch Up2 conversations
F2.2	Making 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	Council Constitution Standard reports template for Cabinet and Council’s Committees Equality Impact Assessments
F2.3	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 organisation’s performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible	Role of Scrutiny clearly defined in the Constitution Scrutiny arrangements Terms of Reference clearly defined for each Scrutiny Committee Responsibility for Scrutiny of bodies external to the Council is also well defined with good relationships with relevant bodies who frequently interact with Scrutiny Scrutiny is supported by robust evidence and data analysis Member training and briefings Effective communication with Cabinet Wide consultation amongst stakeholders is carried out to determine the Scrutiny Work Programme for the forthcoming year
F2.4	Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement	Budget and performance reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny Panels, highlighting budget, service delivery and performance issues Performance and Financial Monitoring Reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny Internal Audit undertake an annual programme of assignments and report on findings to Audit and Governance Committee Progress on management of strategic risks reported to Audit and Governance Committee
F2.5	Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements)	Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules provide a framework to ensure consistency of approach
F3	Robust internal control	

F3.1	Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the objectives	Risk and Opportunity Management Policy and Framework Audit and Assurance Plan Health and Safety Plan Audit Reports Health and Safety Audit reports
F3.2	Evaluating and monitoring the authority's risk management and internal control on a regular basis	Risk and Opportunity Management Policy and Framework Internal Audit and Assurance Plan and reports Risk based internal auditing and links between the compilation of the Internal Audit Plan and the Strategic Risk Register Follow up of internal audit recommendations Ongoing risk management process through directorate management teams and SLT Effectiveness of Risk Management arrangements is reported to Audit and Governance committee Strategic Risk Register updates Annual Head of Audit opinion in line with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS)
F3.3	Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place	Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy compiled in reference to national anti-fraud strategies Participation in regional groups Whistleblowing Policy National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching exercises
F3.4	Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor	Annual Internal Audit Plan Annual Head of Audit and Risk opinion as set out in Annual Audit Report Summary reporting of audit and assurance outcomes to Audit and Governance Committee Assessment of conformance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards – self assessment annually and an external peer review every 5 years (next review scheduled for 2023)
F3.5	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 that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon	Audit & Governance Committee in Council Constitution Revised Terms of Reference External Audit reporting to Audit and Governance Committee Training provided to members of Audit and Governance Committee

F4	Managing data	
F4.1	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data	Information Management Framework provides the overarching policies and governance surrounding the Council's management of information and information systems. Designated Data Protection Officer Data Protection policies and procedures Data Retention schedule Data breaches investigation and reporting process Data protection training mandatory
F4.2	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies	Data sharing principles and Data Sharing Agreement templates Senior Information Management Officer Health Information Governance Toolkit Designated Data Protection Officer Inclusion of Information Governance related audits in the Internal Audit Plan
F4.3	Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	Data quality policy and protocols Data validation procedures Data Protection Officer Reported data breaches (including near misses) are investigated with remedial action identified
F5	Strong public financial management	
F5.1	Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance	Financial Management is part of the overall Performance Management Framework Quarterly Financial Monitoring and Performance reports are considered by Cabinet Medium Term Financial Strategy Budget & Policy Framework Procedure Rules in Constitution Financial Procedure Rules in Constitution

F5.2	Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls	Budgetary management and monitoring process and indicators Quarterly reporting Financial Procedures External Audit Audit and Governance Committee oversight Treasury Management Strategy
Core 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.		
G1	Implementing good practice in transparency	
G1.1	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	Compliance with the requirements of the Transparency Code of Practice (the Code) and has implemented a process of independent assessment of compliance. Committee report templates and committee reports available on website. Review of website Performance and financial reporting Engagement with LGA Revised scrutiny arrangements for performance reports agreed. Quarterly Organisational Health Dashboard
G1.2	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	Compliance with the local government transparency code and publishing all required information in a timely manner. Transparency information is publicly available and open to challenge. Procurement information published through the web-based procurement system and publicly available
G2	Implementing good practices in reporting	
G2.1	Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources	Performance Monitoring reports summarise service delivery and performance Annual Audit Report Financial Monitoring Reports Statement of Accounts Annual Audit Letter Medium Term Financial Strategy

G2.2	Ensuring members and senior management own the results	Transparency Code of Practice Information publicly available on website
G2.3	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)	Annual Governance Statement that outlines how it has monitored its governance environment. Director of Finance is the responsible Officer to the Council for the proper management of its financial affairs in order to meet the statutory requirements of Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 Head of Audit and Risk annual opinion on the effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal control environment to the Audit and Governance Committee
G2.4	Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate	Annual Governance Statement Review
G2.5	Ensuring 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	Performance Management Framework Financial bench-marking – CIPFA Resilience Narrative report accompanying the Statement of Accounts provides details key performance information Audit and Governance Committee considers the Statement of Accounts, matters raised by the external auditor, risk management, internal audit outcomes and the arrangements for fraud, bribery and corruption.
G3	Assurance and effective accountability	
G3.1	Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon	External Audit reports considered by Audit and Governance Committee
G3.2	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	Compliance with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit Compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) Internal Audit Charter Internal Audit Peer Review Audit actions follow up process Committee agendas are published on the internet using Modern.Gov and the meetings are webcast Audit and Governance Committee

G3.3	Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations	LGA Corporate Peer Review Findings and Recommendations Resulting Action Plans developed and adopted Supportive of Inspection process Inspection findings implemented
G3.4	Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement	Risk Management Strategy and Reporting mechanisms Annual Governance Statement
G3.5	Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met	Terms of Reference for committees Agendas published and committee meetings are webcast St Helens Peoples Board operates as a public meeting providing accountability for the Council's statutory health and well-being functions Community Safety Partnership Collaborative governance arrangements