

Lincolnshire

COUNTY COUNCIL



**Good Governance
In
Lincolnshire County Council**

THE BACKGROUND

Introduction

To ensure the public has confidence in the way we work, we need to show high standards in public life. It's about how we run our business or organisation – it's about good governance.

What is good governance?

Good governance is about showing we are:

'Doing the right things, in the right way for the people we serve in a timely, open and honest way'.

Good governance leads to:

- good management
- good performance
- good stewardship of public money
- good public engagement and as a result
- good outcomes for the public and service users.

What is the purpose of this code?

We have produced this code to show our commitment to maintaining the highest possible standards of public life.

Why is it important?

Lincolnshire County Council (the Council) spends over £700 million of public money every year. It is our duty to ***“ensure the greatest benefits for the people in Lincolnshire from the resources we use.”***

The public have a right to expect high standards and value for money in how we spend this money to improve the lives of the people of Lincolnshire.

Local Government has been and will continue to undergo significant change. The way we operate and deliver services – either directly, with or through other organisations will provide challenges for managing risk, ensuring transparency and demonstrating accountability. We need to aim for the standards of the best and our governance arrangements should not only be sound but also seen to be sound.

Whose responsibility is it?

Having good governance arrangements is important to everyone involved in the Council. However, it is a key leadership responsibility of the Leader of the Council and of the Chief Executive. They are accountable for ensuring good governance in the Council.

There is also a **Corporate Governance group** whose role is to support the Council to ensure that it complies with the standards of good governance as set out in the CIPFA / SOLACE – Delivering Good Governance in a Local Government Framework - 2012 .

The group consists of the following people:

- The Assistant Chief Executive – Governance & Performance
- Assistant Director – Finance and Resources
- Head of Internal Audit & Risk Management
- Chairman of the Audit Committee
- Vice Chairman of the Audit Committee

THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Each local government body operates through a Governance Framework which brings together a set of legislative requirements. As we follow the framework it helps us to ensure accountability for the proper conduct of our business, through the publication of an annual governance statement.

The Framework consists of the systems and processes, cultures and values by which the Council is directed and controlled. It sets out how we account to and engage with the people of Lincolnshire - it's about **Community Leadership**.

It helps us monitor our progress in achieving our goals and whether or not those goals are leading to effective and top quality services.

Our Governance Framework is defined by the six principles of good governance as shown in the following diagram.



This document shows our commitment to these six principles.

Principle 1 ~ Good governance means...engaging with local people to raise the profile of the Council and demonstrate public accountability.

Supporting Principles	Our Commitment	Want more information?
To make sure we are doing the right things, in the right way we will use leadership to engage with local people and relevant organisations developing strong accountable relationships.	We will make clear to all staff and the community to whom we are accountable and for what.	The Constitution
	We will be open and transparent in all our dealings – preserving confidentiality only in specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so.	Freedom of information policy Data protection policy
	We will continue to put the public first in seeking their views to help make decisions on how we use resources.	Consultation Strategy Performance Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report Annual report on complaints / compliments
We will take an active approach to consult and give an account to the public to ensure effective services - whether directly provided, with or through other organisations.	We will make sure that clear communication and consultation is in place with all sections of the community and operates effectively.	Communications Strategy Community Engagement Strategy
	We have built and will continue to build strong relationships with our partners.	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
	We will ensure that we engage with the public effectively on inspection results and reviews.	Outcomes of inspections are published and available on our web page http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/
We will make sure we use the best use of our people by taking an active and planned approach to managing our staff.	We will have a clear policy on how staff and their representatives are consulted and involved in decision making.	Change Management / Joint Consultative Committee Learning and Development People Strategy

Principle 2 ~ Good governance means...focusing on the purpose of the Council and improving future outcomes for the whole county.

Supporting Principles	Our Commitment	Want more information?
We will communicate to the public the vision and purpose of the authority and what we will achieve for the people of Lincolnshire.	We will set out our objectives and priorities for the year within our business plan.	Organisational Strategy Business Plan
We must make sure the public receive high quality services.	We will continue to set out the overall strategic direction and long term vision for the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of Lincolnshire.	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Health and Wellbeing Board
	We will measure our success and publicly report how we are doing.	Statement of Accounts Business Plan Annual Report
	We will provide world class customer service to help show we deliver services and learn from what customers tell us.	Community Engagement Strategy Customer Service Charter
We must ensure the authority delivers excellent value for money and makes the best use of our resources.	We will continue to review our financial strategy.	Financial Strategy
	We will use our Value for Money strategy to set out how we will respond to the economical challenges that we are facing and still provide top rate services.	
	We will continue to work with our partners and suppliers to manage our money wisely and deliver top rate services.	

Principle 3 ~ Good governance means... members and officers working together to achieve a shared purpose and being clear about roles and responsibilities.

Supporting Principles	Our Commitment	Want more information?
We must make roles and responsibilities within the Council clear to ensure effective leadership.	We will show how the Council operates and how decisions are made to make sure we are accountable to local people.	The Constitution Code of Conduct Codes and Protocols
We must ensure that a strong and constructive working relationship exists between elected Members and Officers.	We have set out the roles of staff and our democratic decision making process.	Employment manual Codes and Protocols
	We will set out the conditions for employment of staff and maintain effective management of the process.	Members Allowance Employment manual
Ensuring relationships between the authority and the public are clear so that each know what to expect of the other.	We will open meetings to the public except where there are confidential matters being discussed.	Consultation Strategy Council Meetings
	We will be effective in monitoring the way services are delivered and act on any complaints we receive.	Role of Monitoring Officer
	We will ensure that the Council's vision, aims and priorities are carried out in consultation with the community.	Consultation Strategy

Principle 4 ~ Good governance means... demonstrating the values of the Council through excellent standards of conduct and behaviour.

Supporting Principles	Our Commitment	Want more information?
Ensuring members and officers display the highest standards of conduct and effective governance.	We will promote a strong culture to prevent and detect fraud.	Counter Fraud Policy Whistleblowing Policy
	We will promote good conduct and behaviour in our staff and members.	Code of Conduct
	We will effectively deal with complaints and ensure the fair treatment of all.	Local Arrangements for dealing with standards complaints Audit Committee Terms of Reference
Ensuring that organisational values are put into practice and are effective.	We will make sure that the Council's leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating an atmosphere of respect, openness and support.	Codes and Protocols
	We will promote good ethical conduct of Councillors and non elected staff.	Audit Committee Records Codes and Protocols
	We will use our commitment to Equality and Diversity when making decisions and to develop positive, trusting relationships.	Equality and Diversity

Principle 5 ~ Good governance means...taking informed transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk

Supporting Principles	Our Commitment	Want more information?
We must be clear about how decisions are taken and listen and act upon constructive scrutiny.	We will develop and promote high standards of good governance.	Audit Committee Records Audit Lincolnshire CIPFA statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit in Local Government
	We will develop and maintain ways of effective, constructive challenge in the way we work and our overall performance.	Overview and Scrutiny
	We will have a designated Monitoring Officer with responsibility for ensuring the lawfulness of decisions taken by us.	Constitution part3.
Having good quality information, advice and support to make sure that services are delivered effectively and are what the Community wants / needs.	We will share experiences and work together with our partners to promote good governance and accountability across Lincolnshire.	Annual Report
	We will ensure that relevant information is provided to those who make decisions for the Council.	Constitution part2 ,article11 CIPFA statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government
Ensuring that we manage our risks effectively.	We will ensure we have good Risk Management process in place to head off any major problems.	Risk Management Strategy Audit Committee Strategic Risk Register
Using our legal powers to the full benefit of the community based on sound business strategies, delivery models and business cases.	We will obtain appropriate legal and financial advice when making key decisions.	Big Society Fund
	We will use our powers to the full benefit of our communities and not act beyond them	Constitution – Decision Making – Article 10

Principle 6 ~ Good governance means...developing the capability of members and officers to be effective in their work.

Supporting Principles	Our Commitment	Want more information?
<p>Making sure that members and officers have the skills, training, experience they need to perform well in their roles.</p>	<p>We will ensure staff learning opportunities are available and communicated to all.</p>	<p>People Strategy Employee Induction</p>
	<p>We will make sure that statutory officers have the skills; recourses and support needed to fulfil their roles and these roles are communicated.</p>	<p>Role of Monitoring Officer Role of Director of Resources Constitution-Responsibility for Functions</p>
	<p>We will ensure that skills required by Members and staff are assessed and developed to enable roles to be carried out more effectively.</p>	<p>Employee Appraisal and Development</p>
<p>We must encourage new talent and make the best use of the skills that staff have.</p>	<p>We will show a commitment as an employer that achieves the most by getting the best from its people.</p>	<p>Investors in People/Development and Training Policy</p>

Assurance Arrangements – Is it working?

There are a number of ways we assess if our governance arrangements are working. These are:

Our first line of assurance	Our second line of assurance	Our third line of assurance
<p>Assurances by Managers Our managers have the day to day responsibility for managing and controlling services. They are accountable for successful delivery. They set 'the tone from the top' and develop and implement the policies, procedures, processes and controls – ensuring compliance.</p> <p>Assurance is continually provided by each Head of Service and members of Senior Management on the effectiveness of governance, service delivery and management of risk for their area of responsibility.</p> <p>Assurances by Members</p> <p>The Council has 10 Overview and Scrutiny Committees whose work of scrutiny and review support and improve Council services. They look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ new policies that are being developed ~ existing policies to see how well they are working 	<p>Risk Management Risk Management is about taking providing an effective framework for the Council to manage the key risks facing the Council.</p> <p>For more information go to: Risk Management Strategy</p> <p>Performance and Programme Service The aim of this service is to support the business to realise it's vision by investing in the right things, maximising return and benefits on that investment. They provide oversight and challenge.</p> <p>For more information go to: Performance</p> <p>Governance Group The Governance Group was set up to help ensure the Council adopts good governance in how it runs its business and making sure we are <i>'doing the right things, in the right way, for</i></p>	<p>Internal Audit Internal Audit provides independent assurance designed to add value and improve how the council operates. It helps the Council achieve its priorities and objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the management of risk, control and governance processes.</p> <p>It provides constructive and independent challenge to management on the way things are done.</p> <p>For more information go to: Audit Lincolnshire web site</p> <p>External Audit External Audit review and report on our: ~ financial statements (including the annual governance statement): providing an opinion on our accounts. ~ use of resources – concluding on the</p>

Our first line of assurance	Our second line of assurance	Our third line of assurance
<p>ad performance information to check that the Council is meeting the standards that have been set.</p> <p>For more information go to: Overview and Scrutiny Annual report 2012/13</p>	<p><i>the right people, in an open, honest, inclusive and timely manner</i>'. It includes the statutory officers and the Chairman of the Audit Committee.</p>	<p>arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of our resources.</p> <p>Audit Committee The Audit Committee is a vital in promoting good governance, ensuring accountability and reviews the way things are done. The Audit Committee examines areas such as audit, risk management, counter fraud, standards and financial accountability. The Committee exists to challenge the ways things are being done and making sure the right processes are in place. It also seeks to promote an open and honest system of Local Government by making sure both officers and members follow their Codes of Conduct.</p> <p>For more information go to: Audit Committee records</p> <p>External Inspections External inspections aim to drive improvements in public services. They review a specific service area to evaluate how efficient and effectively the service meets the needs of the people of Lincolnshire.</p> <p>For more information go to: (Ofsted and Social care inspections)</p>

We hope you found this Good Governance guide helpful – for further information please refer to the following website: For more information on any of the above please visit our website by following this link: <http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>

This page is intentionally left blank