Annual Governance Statement

2021-2022

Supporting information

Shaping the *future* of our borough

WOKING
BOROUGH COUNCIL

How Woking Borough Council intends to meet the Principles of Good Corporate Governance

This Appendix sets out how Woking Borough Council aims to work to the principles of good Corporate Governance.

What is Corporate Governance?

Good governance is how the Council ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. It comprises the systems, processes, cultures and values by which the Council is directed and controlled. Through effective governance the Council is accountable to, engages with and, where applicable, leads the community.

The Council is committed to the principles of good governance, and has adopted the seven core principles of the CIPFA and SOLACE framework as follows:

A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rules 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 Council'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

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

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

for control and the management of risk. The Council has a robust governance framework in place. The documents and arrangements which comprise the framework demonstrate that the Council continually seeks to ensure it is and remains, well governed, through integration of its processes and structures with the core principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework into all aspects of the Council's conduct and operation.

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

Summary:

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 and have mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and to respect the rule of law.

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
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	The statutory roles of the Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) and Monitoring Officer are set out in the Constitution. They provide oversight of propriety and lawfulness. The Council and its Officers maintain shared values. These are defined in the Constitution and reflect public expectations about the conduct and behaviour of individuals. The Council has adopted formal codes of conduct defining standards of personal behaviour for Members and Officers. The Council has a complaints procedure, details of which are on the Council's website.	The Constitution which includes: • Financial Procedure Rules • Contract Standing Orders • Members Code of Conduct • Officer Employment Procedure Rules • Code of Conduct for Employees Register of Members Interests Employee Policies which include: • Employee Handbook • Staff Induction Procedure • Staff briefings Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy Anti-Bribery Policy Corporate Complaints Policy

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
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)	The Council has both Employee and Member Code of Conducts which reflect the 'Seven Principles of Public Life'. Staff and Member inductions cover these Codes. Training is provided as considered necessary.	The Constitution which includes: • Members Code of Conduct • Arrangements for dealing with Standards Allegations • Scheme of delegation to Officers • Officer Employment Procedure Rules • Code of Conduct for Employees Register of Members Interests Employee Handbook Staff Induction Procedure Staff briefings Members Induction and refresher Training which includes Code of Conduct and Probity in Planning
Leading by example and using the above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions	The responsibility for functions and standing orders require Members and officers to ensure that all decisions are compliant with internal policies and procedures as well as the law. The Council has a written Constitution which sets out, amongst other things, the organisational structure of the Council, the responsibilities of committees and members as individuals, a scheme of delegation to officers and codes of conduct.	The Constitution which includes:- • Part 2 – articles of the Constitution • Part 3 – Responsibility for functions, Management Arrangements and Scheme of Delegations • Part 5 – Codes and Protocols
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	Policies are reviewed on a regular basis. The Behaviour & Skills Framework for staff is part of the Performance Development Review process.	Internal Audit function HR Policies which includes the PDR Framework

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	Internal Audit review for appropriate and regularly updated policies, and undertake specific work in areas such as gifts and hospitality.	
Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance	We have put in place arrangements to ensure that Members and Officers of the Council are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders. We have put in place appropriate measures to ensure that these arrangements are workable including the declarations of interests. The Standards and Audit Committee oversees the democratic arrangements of the Council and takes the lead in ensuring high standards of conduct are embedded within the Council's culture. Guidance and advise is provided to members and officers together with a comprehensive training programme.	Members Code of Conduct Members Induction Training and Annual Mandatory Training Code of Conduct for Employees Policy Employee Handbook Staff Induction Procedure Staff briefings Standards and Audit Committee
Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation	The constitution contains a member code of conduct together with a number of statements and protocols covering registration of interests, anti-fraud and corruption policy. The Council has a code of conduct for Members and officers. The Council has a Customer Code of Conduct together with an equalities and diversity policy designed to define the relationship with customers and to remove any bias in dealing with the community.	The Constitution which includes:- • Members Code of Conduct • Code of Conduct for Employees Policy • Code of Conduct for Employees Policy • Officer Employment Procedure Rules Employee Handbook Staff Induction Procedure Members Induction Training

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	We also have a number of HR policies such as Anti bullying and Whistleblowing that relate to conduct and personal behaviour.	Anti Bullying Policy Whistleblowing Policy Equality and Diversity Policy, Training and Monitoring
Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values	The Council operates within a framework which includes codes of conduct, customer service policies, equality and diversity policies, vision and values all of which serve to provide an environment promoting ethical standards and equality of treatment. The Council ensures that systems and processes for financial administration and control together with protection of the Council's resources and assets comply with ethical standards; and are subject to monitoring of their effectiveness. The Member code of conduct and the constitution require the declaration of interests of officers and members to be made at meetings where matters require such a declaration. The Council has a confidential reporting 'whistleblowing' policy which is accessible via the intranet and internet.	The Constitution which includes: • Members Code of Conduct • Arrangements for dealing with Standards Allegations • Scheme of delegation to Officers • Officer Employment Procedure Rules • Code of Conduct for Employees • Officer Conflicts of Interest Protocol Anti Bully Policy Whistleblowing Policy Equality and Diversity Policy, Training and Monitoring Register of Interests Declarations of Interest
Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with ethical standards expected by the organisation	The council clearly understands its role as a leader within the local community and has set out within its values the way in which the authority should operate - e.g. openness, honesty, transparency - when dealing with all elements of the community and the expectation that others associated with the Council will operate similarly to engender a positive and trusting relationship.	Corporate Strategy and Policy documents Contractual negotiations

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	Expectations are incorporated into contractual arrangements where appropriate and addressed at contract meetings.	
Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations	The statutory roles of the Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) and Monitoring Officer are set out in the Constitution. They provide oversight of propriety and lawfulness. The Council's Monitoring Officer, responsible for ensuring the Council acts in accordance with the Constitution. The Council ensures that professional advice on matters that have legal and/or financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making. Officers will actively recognize the limits of lawful activity placed on them but also strive to utilise their powers to the full benefit of their communities. Officers will observe all specific legislative requirements placed upon the Council as well as the requirements of general law, in particular – rationality, legality and natural justice into the procedures and decision making. The constitution sets out the limits of activity. Legislation around the power of general competence means the Council has wide legislative powers to undertake activities for the benefit of its community and seeks to make full use of these.	Role of Monitoring Officer Inclusion of Legal and Financial advice in Committee Reports The Constitution Annual Governance Statement Internal and External Audit Corporate Complaints Policy

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
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	The Constitution sets out the responsibilities of the statutory officers. The 3 statutory officers (Chief Executive – Head of Paid Service, Director of Democratic and Legal Services – Monitoring Officer, and Finance Director – Chief Finance Officer/Section 151 Officer) are members of the Council's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). CLT meets weekly, there are regular meetings between the Chief Executive and Leader and with portfolio holders to discuss and challenge proposals.	The Constitution which includes:- • Part 3 – Responsibility for functions, Management Arrangements and Scheme of Delegations Chief Officers Meetings
Striving to optimize the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders	The Council has adopted a Corporate Strategy which sets key strategic objectives for the next five years, as well as the priority actions for 2022 and 2023, providing a comprehensive and integrated approach to service and financial planning. It is the responsibility of the relevant CLT member to identify opportunities to benefit local citizens, prioritising those considered most beneficial to the community and meeting the locally identified needs, in line with the Council's Corporate Strategy. These actions are outlined in the Directorate Service Plans and closely monitored.	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans The PDR Framework
Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively	The Council has effective processes in place in the event of any breaches. It is the responsibility of the Monitoring Officer to assess the appropriate actions. We have put in place effective systems to protect the rights of staff. We ensure that policies for whistleblowing are accessible to	Monitoring Officer Money Laundering Policy Whistleblowing Policy

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	staff and those contracting with the Council, and arrangements are in place to support whistle blowers. The council has a confidential reporting policy for staff available through ewokplus. Members of the public normally write to one of the three Statutory Officers.	
Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively	There are procedures for reporting any suspected issues, and for dealing with any identified instances. This may include the involvement of the police. Officers and members are required to declare interests in issues being determined by the Council and generally with regard to any business of the Council. Standing orders and financial regulations have similar requirements governing operational decisions made by officers. The register of interests is a public document and is available on the Council's website.	Monitoring Officer Corporate Complaints Procedure Standards and Audit Committee The Constitution The PDR Framework

Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Summary:

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.

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness	The Council is committed to openness, support and respect. This commitment is included in the Corporate Strategy. The Council's policies are developed in consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders, and are clearly articulated and disseminated. The Council is the principal decision making body and forum for political debate. All Council meetings take place in public and are webcast. The forward plan describes all significant (key decisions) to be taken by the Executive and is published and updated monthly. The forward plan is used by the overview and Scrutiny Committee to help plan business. Decision making operates with a presumption of openness. Agendas and reports for formal meetings, unless considered exempt from publication, are held on our website. The council complies with statutory requirements regarding access e.g. to	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans The Forward Plan and Openness and access to meetings/decisions Data Protection Policy and Publication Scheme Internal and External Communications Strategy Green Book - Performance Management

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	financial information and responses to Freedom of Information requests. There is also extensive information published on the internet. This continues to be developed in accordance with the Local Government Transparency Code. The Council uses the datashare software and continues to add more information here to enable easy access for members of the public. The Green Book performance monitoring and financial information is published monthly and also available on the Council website.	
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.	Decision making operates with a presumption of openness with decisions only made confidential with specific documented reasons provided. Items held in Part II of the agenda are kept to a minimum where there is information of a confidential, commercial third party or personal nature. Wherever possible decisions and discussion is public and broadcast on webcasts also available to view afterwards on the Council's website. If necessary, supporting confidential details are provided in a separate report, with the discussion in Part 1 unless it is necessary to refer to the confidential data.	The Constitution which includes:- • Confidentiality Protocol Part II Register
Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decision 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	The Council maintains a culture of accountability so that Members and Officers understand to whom they are accountable and for what.	The Constitution – Scheme of Delegation Openness and Access to meetings and decisions.

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	Reports are published on the Council's website and formal meetings webcast. All Council and Committee reports are published under Part 1 – Open for inspection to the public – unless there is a legitimate need to preserve confidentiality on the basis of the statutory tests. Reports are drafted using a standard, logical structure which supports decision making and assists clear reasoning and the provision of evidence. Impact assessments are completed for each committee report. Project documentation includes reasoning, justification of the project and post project impact assessment.	Agenda and Minutes of Formal Council Meetings Live Webcast and retention of recording for a 4 year period.
Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective intervention/courses of action	The Council has taken steps to ensure that engagement is at the forefront of everything that the Council does. It strives to engage with stakeholders on an individual and collective basis to demonstrate that we deliver services and outcomes that meet the needs and expectations of the public. These arrangements recognize that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish robust processes for dealing with these competing demands.	Corporate Strategy
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	The Council works with a range of stakeholders. This includes a range of public bodies, local authorities, the NHS and Surrey Police. It also includes commercial partners, suppliers, other public and third sector organisations or organisations to which they are accountable.	

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	The Council has well developed relationships with other local authorities, including Surrey County Council, through joint working groups, health service, voluntary and community groups. There is a Woking Joint Committee which has responsibility for decision making across range of services. Officers have regular contact with government departments and other government bodies on projects and government policies. Members of CLT take the lead on key relationships and feedback through CLT meetings and team meetings as appropriate. The Council's approach is to be supportive of others and engage in discussions and work programmes.	
Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively	The Council has set out its commitment to working in partnership with residents, business, communities, the voluntary sector, and local authority partners through a number of initiatives. These include the delivery of a number of services, where outcomes can be achieved more efficiently and effectively, by third part contractors. Close relationships have been developed with those providers of the outsourced provision such as Leisure. The Council has worked in partnership with 3 other Surrey Districts to create a joint waste solution, which became operational for Woking in September 2017 and generated savings across the partners. The joint team continue to work to ensure the contract is effective.	Corporate Strategy Group Company Structure Business Liaison

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	Where there are areas of expertise/capacity officers work with colleagues across Surrey to make good use of resource – examples include on street parking, fraud, environmental health, home improvement agency and health and safety. The Council supports Community Groups and local partners through its grant scheme. The Thameswey group of companies, wholly owned by the Council, was set up to effectively seek local outcomes in a more commercial environment. The group includes joint venture companies with a development partner. The Council works with Surrey County Council (SCC) where appropriate on projects affecting County Council responsibilities but where local involvement is beneficial. A number of services are managed on an agency basis. There are regular meetings with the Woking Chamber of Commerce.	
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.	The Council's key partners are the group of companies set up to deliver the Council key priorities of affordable housing and energy/environment matters and developments. The Council's Corporate Strategy and the Companies Business Plans shall align to ensure a joint commitment to change and delivery. A new Company Governance model has been agreed to ensure that the Council monitor and challenges the companies to	Group Company Structure and Governance

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	ensure that the partnerships is aligned and delivering the Council's vision. Other objectives are being progressed through joint ventures with other organisations most notably the Victoria Square regeneration. Appropriate arrangements are in place to support these joint ventures. To make efficiency savings the Council has worked with other local authorities and organisations to transform the way services are delivered. This includes joint procurement, sharing accommodation or outsourcing.	
Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve communities, individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes	The Council is committed to working with residents, businesses, communities, service users and partners to help prioritise what it does, to give them a say over the approach and to have the chance to get involved in delivery and change. This requires sound arrangements for engagement and consultation. Consultation takes place on a wide variety of issues where the community can influence the outcome whether they be by whole Borough, geographical areas or service/interest specific. The arrangements for consultation are published on the Council's website. Formal consultation shall be undertaken where there is a statutory duty.	Corporate Strategy
Ensuring that communication methods are effective, and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement	The Council ensures that it is open and accessible to the community, service users and staff and is committed to openness and transparency in all dealings.	Corporate Strategy Engagement Plans

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	The Council uses a variety of ways to engage residents and other stakeholders – publications (printed and digital) press releases and social media to keep people informed of plans and decisions and engagements via public events, workshops, focus groups, surveys and feedback forms. New engagement software, Woking Community Forum, has been introduced to enhance community engagement and consultation.	
Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs.	The Council has an external communications policy and utilises a number of communication channels - self serve via internet; consultation with the residents' panel; appropriate consultation as required for specific issues. Alternative arrangements will be made for hard to reach sections of the community. The Residents' Panel was re-launched in 2020 and a programme of engagement is being established for 2021. The council has adopted a principles of consulting document, published on the internet providing guidance on the arrangements for engaging with all sections of the community recognising their different needs. The Council participates in and actively supports and consults with disabled groups to help frame policy and services. Resources are in place to ensure community engagement is managed strategically and the Council has staff who are trained facilitators offering a range of	Corporate Strategy Engagement Plans Residents Panel

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	skills to engage appropriately with different groups and sections of the community. Where necessary appropriate use is made of specialist resources to engage with particular cultures, languages, disabilities, etc. Work with and use partners' expertise to engage with different groups, e.g. Connect to Innovation and Surrey Chamber of Commerce to engage with businesses and the commercial sector	
Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how views have been taken into account	Any complaints received are used to improve service delivery at a local level. The Council advises on responses to consultations either individually or by way of committee reporting as appropriate.	Corporate Complaints Procedure
Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity	The Council seeks to use objective data sources to balance special interest group representations with wider community interest.	
Taking account of the impact of decision on future generations of tax payers and service users	The Council takes a long term view through preparation of long term plans and strategies – Woking 2027, Core Strategy, Woking 2050, Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Corporate Strategy and supporting Policies Woking 2027 MTFS

Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

Summary:

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.

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Having a clear vision, which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provide the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions	The Council has established arrangements to define outcomes and monitor performance against agreed measures. The Council's Corporate Strategy outlines the Council's key strategic over the next five years. This is supported by Directorate Service Plans. Performance will be monitored in a structured, timely and transparent way by CLT and the Executive. The Council publishes reports to communicate the Council's activities and achievements, its financial position and performance. The Corporate Strategy and Directorate Service Plans feed into PDR objective setting following the 'golden thread'	The Corporate Strategy and policy documents. Directorate Service Plans and Monitoring The PDR Framework.
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	The Council ensures that those making decisions are provided with financial and non-financial information that is fit for purpose, relevant, timely and gives clear expectations of technical issues and their implications.	Council and Committee Agenda and Minutes

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available	Performance management is well imbedded at the Council with detailed reporting published and publicly available each month. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the resources that are available and the actions required to ensure a sustainable future. The MTFS is formally updated annually, with updates during the year through budget and other finance papers. Other decisions are made in the context of the MTFS.	MTFS Programme Management Board and Reporting
Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes	The Council ensures that the Directorate Service and Corporate Risk Registers are regularly reviewed.	Programme Management Board and Reporting Risk Registers
Managing service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available	Service Users expectations are 'managed' by advising of the Council's priorities through the Corporate Strategy and Directorate Planning process. There are ongoing dialogues with groups regarding the best uses of the resources available.	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans
Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies and plans when taking decisions about service provision	The balancing of economic, social and environmental factors is extensively considered as part of the decision making process. The Council maintains a prudential financial framework, which balances commitments with available resources; and monitors income and expenditure levels to ensure this balance is achieved. The Council ensures compliance with the CIPFA codes regarding a prudential framework for Capital Finance and Treasury Management.	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans MTFS Programme Management Board Regular budget reporting Internal and external audit
Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting	In setting policies and strategies, the Council takes a long term view of outcomes, taking	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints	into account sustainable economic, social and environmental aims and has effective comprehensive performance monitoring in place. The Council's Corporate Strategy outlines the Council's key strategic over the next five years. The Council has a Medium Term Financial Strategy which sets out the challenges over the next 3-5 years, together with long term planning, climate change and sustainability strategies. The Capital Strategy and Investment Programme demonstrate the Council's longer term view.	MTFS Capital Strategy and Investment Programme
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 wider public interest is assessed through public consultation on particular issues. Ultimately the public direction is set through the annual election cycle.	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans Extensive Engagement Programme
Ensuring fair access to services	An Annual Equalities Report is provided to the Executive and an external assessment of the Council by the LGA found that we are at the 'Achieving' level on the Equalities Framework.	Equalities and Diversity Policy and Reporting

Determining the interventions necessary to optimize the achievement of the intended outcomes

Summary:

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.

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and associated risk. Therefore, ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided	The Corporate Strategy clearing outlines the Council's priorities over the next five years and is used as the basis for corporate and service planning. The Constitution outlines a clear process for decision making. Executive and Council reports contain detailed information to support decision making and provide options on the course of action. The report format is standard providing information in a consistent and comprehensive way. Members of the Executive have portfolio responsibilities and strong relationships with lead officers enabling rigorous challenge of the information and analysis provided. Matters requiring decisions are reported to the Executive or appropriate committee for approval.	Corporate Strategy The Constitution Executive Decision Process Forward Plan
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	Reviews of service needs inform strategies. The Corporate Strategy was introduced following an extensive engagement exercise. Services shall prioritise services through the Corporate Strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) cycle during 2022/2023 together with the Council's Fit for the Future Programme.	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans PDR Framework MTFS Fit for the Future Programme

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets	Service planning is well embedded at the Council. The plans provide more focused information and link the strategic objectives and operational plans. Targets are agreed and performance monitored through the monthly Green Book publication. The Council has effective arrangements to deal with a failure in service deliver and explore options for improving service delivery and outcomes for our residents.	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans PDR Framework The Green Book Performance Management
Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered	The Corporate Strategy was introduced following an extensive engagement exercise. Internal consultation is through staff briefings, surveys and team meetings. CLT minutes and decisions are available and there are regular meetings between CLT and Unison.	Corporate Strategy Engagement Plans
Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks	The Council is experienced in working closely with partners and will identify and monitor risks through an appropriate review mechanism. The Council has risk management arrangements in place including mitigating actions to support the achievement of the Council's intended outcomes. The Council has prepared contingency arrangements including disaster recovery plans and business continuity plans to ensure resilience in delivering services, for example during extreme weather.	Programme Management Board and Reporting Company Governance Arrangements Contract Performance management Emergency and Resilience Plans
Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering goods and	The Council, where appropriate, builds flexibility into contractual (or other) arrangements with third party providers of	

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
services can be adapted to changing circumstances	goods and services. Larger contracts will have formal change control clauses, with smaller contracts allowing more informal change management through dialogue. The Council has a responsive management style and will make appropriate changes as circumstances dictate building strong relationships with providers which enable flexibility.	
Establishing appropriate key performance indicators as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured	The Council's Corporate Strategy outlines the Council's key strategic over the next five years. This is supported by Directorate Service Plans. Performance will be monitored in a structured, timely and transparent way by CLT and the Executive. Efficiency improvements and income generating assets have been identified to enable the maintenance of service delivery. External Audit continues to assess and report on the Council's value for money approach.	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans PDR Framework Programme Management Board The Green Book – Performance Management Information Fit for the Future Programme Audit function
Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly	Senior managers are provided with financial and performance data in a timely manner. The CLT regularly considers the adequacy of resources and redirects as required It is recognised that it may be necessary to allocate resource in some areas to enable review of service provision and transformation during 2022/2023.	Fit for the Future Programme
Preparing budgets in accordance with objectives strategies and the medium term financial plan	The Council's budget calculations are robust. The Council has an integrated approach to service and financial planning and budgeting processes are therefore closely aligned in the Business planning process. Directorate	MTFS

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	Service plans and budgets are prepared together. The financial strategy makes provision for known changes to services including legislative changes, growth, efficiency savings and the impact of the investment programme. The budget papers provide a summary of the MTFS and high level update. The budget reflects the overarching strategy set in the MTFS and links to the latest plan. The MTFS is subsequently updated to reflect the new base and actions required.	
Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy	The MTFS is regularly updated to reflect changes in the financial outlook as well as government announcements and external factors. Financing costs are based on the approved Investment Programme and any approved changes. The MTFS reflects future risks and establishes the process for setting a sustainable financial strategy.. A cautious view is taken on government funding and the risks to income and expenditure. The Investment Programme is based on best estimated timing and costings for projects which are being worked up. Where it is not possible to include an estimated figure, the narrative report notes the exclusion.	MTFS
Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints	The Council has an integrated approach to service and financial planning. The MTFS aligns with the Council's Directorate Plans, with the latest approved budgets used as a base. Future enhancements and changes to services as well as Council responsibilities are identified and brought into the summary position to establish the medium term financial	MTFS Directorate Plans

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	challenge. Resource constraints are recognized and form the basis for the Council's Fit for the Future transformation and efficiency programme.	
Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term	Budgets cover all services areas, project and Investment Programme spend, together with treasury implications. In setting the annual budget a view on the implications for reserves is provided together with reserves forecasts. Capital spend decisions are subject to consideration of the medium term position including servicing and repayment of any debt. Strategic Properties acquired using borrowing are written down on an annuity basis ensuring that the debt is repaid over the long term.	Corporate Strategy Directorate Service Plans MTFS
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 optimizing resource usage	The MTFS is subject to at least annual review and is the subject of staff briefings when appropriate. It is referred to/updated in each budget report. All committee reports include a financial implications section where any impacts are highlighted and many refer directly to the MTFS.	MTFS Fit for the Future Programme
Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning	Service planning takes into consideration 'social value' including working with partners and voluntary groups across the community.	Directorate Service Plans

Developing the entity's capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it

Summary:

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.

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Reviewing operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness	Performance information is reported on a monthly basis to members and senior officers and is available to the public online. The reporting includes exceptional variations from expected service - both good and bad - together with the action being taken to correct poor service. Complaints are monitored and used to inform the performance of a service.	The Green Book – Performance Management Information
Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how resources are allocated so that defined outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently	Benchmarking is used on particular service reviews and where decisions regarding changes to services are being considered. The Council has relationships, and regularly meets with, other local Authorities and shares/learns from the work they are undertaking. Officers meet at a professional level and provide advice and support to each other. Joint work is completed – eg waste contract – where the opportunities arise. All service options are considered including working with partners to achieve the most efficient provision of services.	HR – Benchmarking Partnership Landscape
Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved	The Council actively looks for opportunities to collaborate and achieve better value for money.	Fit for thr Future Programme Directorate Service Plans and delivery

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
		Contract and Performamce Moniotring
Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources	The management structure reflects the strategic needs and focus of the Council. Officers and Members are expected to have a clear sense of their purpose, roles, and responsibilities in line with the Council's strategy and suite of policies and processes which support it.	The Constitution HR – PDR Process
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	The Constitution sets out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Committees, individual Members and the Council's senior officers. Long term plans/objectives set out the Council's Corporate Strategy and direction. Members and officers have good working relationships and regular communications.	The Constitution Corporate Strategy
Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decision that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body	The Constitution sets out the responsibilities and delegations.	The Constitution: Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions, Management and Arrangements and Scheme of Delegations
Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads 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	The Constitution schedules the responsibilities that are reserved for full meetings of Council and those that are delegated to the Executive or other committees and officers. The delegations are reviewed annually. The Leader of the Council has delegated the functions of a strong leader to the Executive. The Constitution contains schemes of delegation for those activities which are delegated to officers. Those officers have prepared schemes of sub	Corporate Strategy and policy documents The Constitution which includes:- • Part 2 – articles of the Constitution • Part 3 – Responsibility for functions, Management Arrangements and Scheme of Delegations • Part 5 – Codes and Protocols

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	delegations to other officers to enable business to be conducted. Following the introduction of Regulations each time a formal delegated decision is made it is recorded and made available via the internet. The Chief Executive, Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council have frequent meetings concerning the business and operation of the Council. The Chief Executive also meets regularly with other Group Leaders. There is also a regular meeting with between the Chief Executive and and Leader meeting with all Group Leaders and deputies. CLT meet the Executive on a regular basis to discuss formal Executive business and future plans.	
Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by: • 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	The Council's commitment to Member development was first comprehensively assessed by South East Employers in March 2011. Since then, Woking has successfully maintained Charter status for Elected Member Development, achieving reaccreditation every three years. The Council was successfully assessed for reaccreditation in 2018/19. The Council ensures that Members have access to training required to fulfil their role as Members including, a comprehensive induction programme, in depth financial training and mandatory training on saliant topics. Members receive comprehensive briefings and training in overview and scrutiny and a 'Toolkit for successful scrutiny' has been developed and is provided to all Members.	Member Induction and Development Programme HR Polices – PDR Process

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external	Senior Management are developed through the Leadership programme. A range of vocational and non-vocational training is available to officers to develop skills on a continuing basis to improve performance, including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and to recognise when outside expert advice is needed. The organisational structure of the Council provides opportunities for succession planning and internal progression. This is further strengthened by the Behaviour and Skills framework where each post has scored competencies accessible by all so career progression will be easier to identify. The Council ensures that the statutory officers have the skills, resources, expertise and systems necessary to perform effectively in their roles and that these roles are properly understand throughout the Council.	
Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation	The Woking Community Forum has been launched in 2021 to enhance public participation. Members of the public can ask questions of Executive Members at the Executive meetings. The Constitution sets out the processes for consideration of petitions depending on the number of signatures.	Corporate Strategy The Constitution
Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections	The Council has taken part in LGA Peer Reviews and taken steps to implement recommendations.	LGA Peer Review and subsequent reporting

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs	There is a formal annual Performance Development Review process to assess the officer's performance, progress and address any training gaps to enable roles to be carried out more effectively.	HR Polices – PDR process
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	The Council's HR team ensures that Health and Wellbeing of the workforce is maintained. The Council ensures that sickness levels are monitored by managers and HR and reported in the Green Book.	HR Function

Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Summary:

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 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.

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making	The Council has adopted a risk management strategy. Risk is covered in all committee reports and embedded in Service Planning.	Risk Management Strategy Corporate and Directorate Risk Registers
Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively	The Council has ensured that risk management is embedded into the culture and processed of the Council. The Council ensures that risks associated with a course of action are required as part of all committee reports, and a risk log is a requirement of all projects recorded on the project monitoring system within SharePoint. The Council's Strategic risk register is monitored by CLT. Business continuity, particularly for ICT, has been developed. The Council ensures that it has insurance to insure risks. Excesses have been set based on analysis and advice of the broker. Other risks are identified in the budget and a risk contingency provided. Reserves have been set up to address specific financial risks. The risk management information assists in the operational aspects of service delivery. A relatively simple approach is taken to assessing likelihood and severity of risk to determine high, medium, low risks.	Risk Management Strategy Strategic and Directorate Risk Registers Programme Management Board and reporting The Green Book – Performance Management Reporting

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	Major Project dashboards (eg. Victoria Square and Sheerwater projects) report on risks. Key risks are identified and monitored e.g. key budget risks and performance are monitored in the green book. Key risks in projects are monitored as part of the project management methodology. Corrective action is taken to avoid or mitigate the risks.	
Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated	Risk management is embedded into the processes of the organisation. All risk registers allocate risk to individual managers as risk owners. All committee reports require the risks associated with the matter of the report to be included in the report. The Executive is the committee responsible for risk management and business continuity with overview by the Standards and Audit Committee	Risk Management Strategy Strategic and Directorate Risk Registers Programme Management Board and reporting The Green Book – Performance Management Reporting Business Continguity Polices Agenda Reports
Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review	The Council ensures that there is monthly reporting of key performance measures, financial performance against budgets, Treasury Management information and Group company information in the monthly 'Performance and Financial Monitoring Information' publication - the green book. The Executive receives a quarterly report on all projects This summary report is drawn from the SharePoint application used to manage projects.	The Green Book – Performance Management Reporting

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implication and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook	The Council's report structures support decision making, prompting comment on the key considerations. Impact assessments are prepared for committee reports. Delegations to officers are included in the Constitution.	Council and Committees of the Council Agendas and Reports The Constitution – Scheme of Delegation
Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which provides 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	The Council has an O&S committee. The committee is sponsored by a Member of CLT and has a dedicated resource. There are project specific oversight groups for the most significant developments. Members have the opportunity to raise topics for consideration and the public can raise topics for review via the internet. The overview and Scrutiny Committee prepares an annual report on the activities of the committee and task groups reporting to it. The report is available on the internet (part of committee reports).	Overview and Scrutiny Committee CLT Sponsor and dedicated resource
Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement	The Council has a performance management framework in place. The 'Green Book' performance and monitoring report is produced and published online each month. It is considered at each Executive meeting. The Council ensures project reporting is prepared for management and Members quarterly. The Council is monitoring achievements against the priorities and actions set as part of its Corporate Strategy.	The Green Book – Performance Management Reporting Corporate Strategy and monitoring of achievements

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (eg. Financial statements)	The Council ensures that there are effective internal control arrangements in place for sound financial management systems and processes. Budgets and Financial Statements are reconciled, and analysis provided in the foreword to the Statement of Accounts which links the Statutory Accounts to the Green Book monthly management reporting.	Financial Reporting Project Monitoring Programme Management Board
Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives	The Council's internal audit plan is a risk based plan taking into account risks identified through the risk register as well as other factors such as audit knowledge of service delivery, and areas highlighted by CLT. This enables the allocation of audit resources. An annual risk management report is provided to the Executive.	Internal Audit Function Corporate and Directorate Risk Registers
Evaluating and monitoring risk management and internal control on a regular basis	The Council ensures that risk management and internal control processes are regularly considered by Internal Audit as part of the annual programme of work. The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed by CLT 6 monthly. The Standards and Audit Committee receive reports on risk management and internal control from Internal Audit. Internal audit reports are used to provide assurance and improve the internal control framework. Internal Audit provide their opinion on the overall arrangements. Under the PSIAS internal audit is required to give assurance annually. The Internal Audit work programme is prepared using a risk based approach. Senior managers complete an assurance statement	Internal Audit Function Corporate and Directorate Risk Registers

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place	The Council has an anti-fraud policy which is reviewed regularly. The register of Member's interests and register of gifts and hospitality may be reviewed by the Standards and Audit committee. Members interests, gifts and hospitality, are available on the Council's website. An internal audit review during 2019 made recommendations in relation to the Council's management of Fraud and Corruption work. The Council is working with the fraud team from another local authority which will provide support in this area.	The Constitution Anti Fraud Policy Gifts and Hospitality Register of Members Interests
Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor	The internal audit service is provided by Mazars through a framework contract with Croydon Council. The Head of Internal Audit (HIA) role is performed by Mazars. An annual report by the HIA on the overall adequacy of the control environment is considered by Standards and Audit committee. Internal Audit provide updates at each Standards and Audit meeting and CLT on a quarterly basis or as required. Summary Internal Audit reports are reviewed by CLT and made available to Members through their iPad.	Internal Audit Function
Ensuring an audit committee which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body:	The Standards and Audit Committee performs the functions of an Audit Committee. It is independent of the Executive and reports to Council. It receives regular reports and seeks	Standards and Audit Committee Independent Member (Chair)

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
• 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	assurances from Internal Audit and External Audit.	
Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data	The Council has appointed The Director of Democratic and Legal Services to undertake the role of Data Protection Officer at the Council and ensure compliance with regulations. The Council has data protection and security policies to ensure the proper collection, use, storage and control of its assets including data and information.	Data Protection Policies IT Security and Acceptable Use Policy
Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies	Sharing data with other bodies is subject to oversight by the Director of Democratic and Legal Services. The Council has a number of Information Sharing Protocols with 3rd parties which incorporate appropriate safeguards to protect data.	Data Protection Policies MAISP Data Sharing Agreements CCTV Control Room
Reviewing and regularly auditing the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	Performance data is reported regularly to senior management and Members and published publicly. Any issues arising or anomalies are investigated.	
Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance	The Council's Finance team monitors and reports on in-year performance and long term risks/financial pressures and trends. The Treasury management system tracks long term investments, and borrowing. Annual budget setting reports also refer to the MTFS, considering the long term implications of the budget to be approved.	MTFS Treasury Management
Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control including management of financial risks and controls	The Council enables the Chief Finance Officer to bring influence to bear on all material decisions and provide advice on the levels of reserves and balances to be retained.	MTFS

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	The Council ensures that Services are supported by dedicated contacts in the finance team. They have access to finance system providing accessibility to financial information and integrated, electronic processes which produce finance monitoring reports.	
	The Council ensures that financial regulations and other operational instructions are reviewed to ensure they remain up to date with regard to structures, limits and operating practices.	
	An update on audit reports, and the recommendations, is reported to the Standards and Audit Committee at each meeting and summary reports are available to all members.	
	The Council's Treasury Management strategy is agreed by the Executive in February prior to the operational year and a review of activity and performance is published in July of the following year after the year has ended. The Council complies with CIPFA guidance on Treasury Management. Monitoring takes place monthly with information in the green book and the O&S Committee has responsibility for the scrutiny of the function and receives a mid-year report. Capital and Investment Strategies, are approved by the Council annually as part of the February budget papers.	

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

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in a fair, balanced and understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate	The Council ensures that reports are written using plain language, in a standard format which assists with reviewing and ensures key information is covered.	Council Reports

Council website |

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	The Marketing and Communications team review language where appropriate and some communications are reviewed independently to provide confidence that they are easily understood and accessible.	
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	The Council ensures that it complies with the local government transparency code and publishes all required information in a timely manner. Committee documents and webcasts are available online. Reports include an Executive Summary and sections on key implications. Detailed supporting information is included in Appendices.	Council Reports Council Website
Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and stewardship of resources to stakeholders in a timely and understandable way	The Council has established a MTFS planning process in order to deliver a financial strategy ensuring sustainable finances, a robust annual budget process ensuring financial balance and an adequate monitoring process. The Council publishes the Green Book which reports performance issues and variances by exception providing a focused and understandable document.	MTFS Fit for the Future Programme The Green Book
Ensuring members and senior management own the results reported	CLT members and all portfolio holders are accountable for performance and financial monitoring/outturn.	Agendas and Reports HR – PDR process
Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in this Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment, including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (the annual governance statement)	The assessment is led by the Finance Director and Monitoring Officer, supported by CLT. Evidence is compiled from Internal Audit and across the Council. The draft statement is reviewed by the Standards and Audit Committee.	Annual Governance Statement Code of Corporate Governance

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	The draft Annual Governance Statement is published in draft in the Statement of Accounts. The final version is published with final accounts. Improvement Plan is updated, and new actions added if appropriate, as a result of each review.	
Ensuring that this Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate	Where the Council is party to joint arrangements it ensures that appropriate governance arrangements are put in place.	Code of Corporate Governance
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	The annual statutory accounts are prepared following accounting guidelines and standards in accordance with the Code of Practice and to statutory timescales. Reconciliations are prepared to demonstrate consistency with management reporting. The foreword provides a narrative link from the monthly management reporting to the statutory outturn.	Statutory Accounts
Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon	The Council shall ensure that corrective action from internal and external audit reports is undertaken. Any actions are monitored by CLT, and the Standards and Audit committee receive reports from External and Internal Audit with status of any outstanding recommendations.	Standards and Audit Committee Internal audit plan and the monitoring of audit recommendations
Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place, providing assurance with regard to governance arrangement and that recommendations are acted upon	The Council ensures that the audit function is resourced and maintained through the appointment of Mazars. Internal Audit reports directly to each meeting of the Standards and Audit Committee including all reports and all recommendations made in the period. Summary reports are also available to members and independent members via their iPad. The implementation of audit recommendations is monitored, and	Standards and Audit Committee Internal audit plan and the monitoring of audit recommendations

The Council should demonstrate the following requirements	What we have in place	Evidence
	outstanding recommendations are reported to CLT and the Standards and Audit Committee. External Audit reports are presented to the Standards and Audit Committee as appropriate.	
Ensuring that when working in partnership arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider public accountability has been recognized and met	The Joint Committee, which incorporates the 'statutory' Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (Safer Woking Partnership), has agreed Terms of Reference and governance arrangements, that set out collective roles and responsibilities for participating organisations, including the Council. Services which are outsourced and operated by contractors are monitored.	The Constitution