

Warwick District Council

Code of Corporate Governance

Issued: January 2016

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This Code of Corporate Governance is sub-divided into four key sections as follows: -

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Introduction

1. For public sector organisations, corporate governance comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which they are directed and controlled to ensure that they are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open and accountable manner.
2. The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is protected, accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
3. In discharging this accountability, members and officers have a responsibility to set in place proper arrangements for the governance of the Council's affairs and stewardship of the public reserves at its disposals. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to ensure continuous improvement in the way it does things, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
4. In order to ensure that it conducts its business properly and to support the process of continuous improvement, the Council has approved and adopted this Code of Corporate Governance ("the Code").
5. The Code describes how the Council will do this and has been drafted in accordance with the six Core Principles for effective governance set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework for Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.
6. The Council is committed to these principles and this code is a public statement of that commitment. The Code also sets out how the commitment will be reflected in all areas of the Council's business.

Core Governance Principles

7. There are fundamental principles that underpin Warwick District Council's corporate governance arrangements. These are:

Core Principle 1

Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.

Supporting principles:

exercising strategic leadership by clearly communicating the authority's purpose and vision and its intended outcomes for residents and service users;

ensuring that users receive a high quality of service whether provided directly, by contract, in partnership or by commissioning;

making the best use of resources and providing residents and service users with value for money.

8. The Council has produced its Corporate Strategy (2013-2025) – the sustainable community strategy which draws together a shared vision, setting out the Council's objectives and priorities for the District and how these are to be achieved. Linked with this, all the Council's services have their own Service Area Plans, reviewed annually, that set out planned improvement actions and performance targets for the future. Community leadership runs through all the council's work and shapes how we work with our communities.

Core Principle 2

Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

Supporting principles:

ensuring effective leadership throughout the Council by being clear about executive and non-executive functions and of the roles and responsibilities of the Scrutiny function;

ensuring that a constructive working relationship exists between elected members and officers and that the responsibilities of members and officers are mutually understood and respected and carried out to a high standard;

ensuring relationships between the Council and the public are clear so that each know what to expect of the other.

9. The roles and functions of Council members together with those of key officers are set out in the Council's Constitution. There is a protocol on member/employee relations and an agreed set of organisational values underpinning all of the Council's work.

Principle 3

Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

Supporting Principles:

ensuring Council members and officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards and effective governance;

ensuring that organisational values are put into practice and are effective.

10. All Council Members and staff are required to act in accordance with codes of conduct and high standards are promoted across the Council and with its partners.

Principle 4

Taking informed and transparent decisions that are subject to effective scrutiny and risk management.

Supporting principles:

exercising leadership by being rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and listening to and acting upon the outcome of constructive scrutiny;

having good-quality information, advice and support to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs;

ensuring that an effective risk management system is in place and fully used;

using the legal powers available to us to the full benefit of the residents and communities in our area.

11. The Council conducts all business in an open and transparent manner and has formal processes for declaring relationships or interests to ensure that decision-making is transparent and objective. There is a robust system of scrutiny and effective arrangements for managing risks.

Principle 5

Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.

Supporting principles:

making sure that members and officers have the behavioural competencies, skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles;

developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance, as individuals and as a group;

encouraging new talent for membership of the Council so that best use can be made of resources in balancing continuity and renewal.

12. The Council recognises the importance of having highly skilled and motivated Members and staff to deliver its priorities and to sustain public confidence in its services. The Council is committed to the development of Members and staff skills, knowledge and performance through programmes of induction, training and development.

Principle 6

Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

Supporting principles:

exercising leadership through a robust scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders including partnerships, and develops constructive accountability relationships;

taking an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery whether directly by the Council, through contracts, in partnership or by commissioning;

making best use of human resources by taking an active and planned approach to manage and meet the Council's obligations to staff.

13. The Council has a consultation framework aimed at ensuring the community is given the opportunity to be involved in, and influence, policy-making, service delivery and evaluation in order to continually improve services. Key to our success as a council is the way we engage our local communities through Community Leadership.

Monitoring & Review

14. The governance systems and processes in place will be monitored to ensure that they are effective in practice, and will be subject to review on at least an annual basis.
15. This will be performed through the review of the annual governance statement with the results being reported in the normal way to the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee.
16. The annual governance statement will provide assurance that:
 - governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively in practice; or, where the reviews of the governance arrangements have revealed gaps,

- actions are planned to ensure effective governance in future.
17. Monitoring the implementation of any agreed action plans emanating from the reviews will be the responsibility of the Senior Management Team, including the Deputy Chief Executive who assumes the role of Monitoring Officer.
 18. Independent assurance will be provided by the Audit and Risk Manager as part of the annual audit planning process.

WDC policies, systems and processes

19. The Code is underpinned by policies, systems, procedures and structures that determine and control how the Council manages its affairs.
20. Those that are considered key to demonstrating this are shown in the diagram at Appendix 1, depicting the Council's Corporate Governance Framework.

APPENDIX 1: WDC Corporate Governance Framework

Key Principles:

1. Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
2. Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.
3. Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.
4. Taking informed and transparent decisions, which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.
5. Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.
6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

Key Documents:

Principle 1	Principle 2	Principle 3	Principle 4	Principle 5	Principle 6
Sustainable Comm. Strategy	Sustainable Comm. Strategy	Sustainable Comm. Strategy	Fit for the Future Programme	Fit for the Future Programme	Fit for the Future Programme
Fit for the Future Programme	Fit for the Future Programme	Fit for the Future Programme	Risk registers	People Strategy	Sustainable Comm. Strategy
Service Plans	Service Plans	Register of interests	Business Continuity Plans	Job descriptions	Service Plans
Medium Term Financial Strategy	Medium Term Financial Strategy	Codes of conduct	Risk management reports	Communications strategy	Medium Term Financial Strategy
Code of Corp. Governance	Members Allowances	CoFP & CoPP	Codes of conduct	Leadership training	Budget
Annual accounts	Pay & conditions	Constitution	Register of interests	Officer training / induction	Annual accounts
Statement Comm. Involvement	Codes of conduct	Anti-fraud & corruption policy	Committee reports	Member training / induction	Statement Comm. Involvement
Communications Strategy	Statement Comm. Involvement	Standards Committee	Job descriptions	Performance man. system	Communications strategy
Executive reports	Communications strategy	Whistle Blowing procedures	Audit reports	Scrutiny	Minutes of meetings
Committee Reports	Job descriptions	Complaints procedures	Member training / induction	Constitution	Scrutiny reports
Performance Reports	Committee reports	Member / officer protocols	Constitution	Scheme of delegation	Satisfaction surveys
Complaints Procedures	Executive reports	Protocols for gifts / hospitality	Statutory powers	Strategic partnerships	Constitution
Partnership Protocols	Code of Financial Practice	Monitoring Officer	Monitoring officer		Partnership Frameworks
	Constitution	Scrutiny	Scheme of delegation		Scrutiny
	Scheme of delegation	Statutory officers	Risk management framework		Public meetings
	Performance Man. System	Internal Audit	Emergency management		Transparency Agenda
	Statutory powers	External Audit	Complaints procedures		CoPP
	Statutory officers	Partnership protocols	Scrutiny Committees		Elections
	Member / officer protocol	Partnership agreements	Whistle Blowing procedures		
	Partnership protocols		Protocols for gifts / hospitality		

	Annual Review/ Production
	Ad-hoc Review/ Production
	Contributory Processes