

**North Norfolk District Council
Local Code of Corporate Governance 2016/17**

North Norfolk District Council works to improve the lives of its residents while retaining and improving the quality of life and prosperity of the district for future generations – working with and for you. As a Local Authority, we are entrusted with public funds, and aim to spend these wisely to improve outcomes in our District. Our Local Code of Corporate Governance is the framework of policies, procedures, behaviours and values which determine how we work to achieve our priorities, and is based upon the 7 core principles of the International Framework for Corporate Governance in the Public Sector which are as follows;

- Behaving with Integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- Developing the entities capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit, to deliver effective accountability

Good governance supports the Council through:

- Enabling the Council to achieve its objectives in an open and accountable way
- Ensuring decisions are sound and lawful, upholding the Council's reputation and minimising the risk of financial loss
- Ensuring decisions take into account local people's needs and priorities
- Giving the public confidence in the work we do
- Underpinning our Code with our four corporate values which are as follows;
 - We respect people and treat everyone fairly
 - We are open and honest and listen
 - We strive to offer the best value for money service
 - We welcome new challenges and embrace change
- Each year, the Council reviews its governance arrangements through the Annual Governance Statement, ensuring these arrangements are adequate and operating effectively. Where reviews identify any gaps in corporate governance, or areas for improvement, recommendations for improvements are made

North Norfolk District Council – Local Code of Corporate Governance

Principle	Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of the law	Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of intended outcomes	Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it	Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management	Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability
What we aim to achieve	We are accountable for the money entrusted to us. We can demonstrate decisions we take are appropriate and there are strong processes in place to encourage and enforce compliance with the Council's values and the law	Local Government is accountable to its public. We use clear channels of communication to engage with our residents and stakeholders, understanding their needs. We manage expectations and model Service delivery to respond to demand	We form clear, long term priorities in line with our long term ambitions. We balance the competing demands and priorities we face and allocate resources accordingly.	We have robust decision making processes to ensure defined outcomes can be achieved given the varying demands we face. We monitor our performance and delivery on an ongoing basis to ensure intended outcomes are achieved	We are a recognized investor in our people and work to develop our talent to maximize the potential of the resources we hold. We remain at the forefront of national developments to support our commitment to retaining viability.	We have robust management information procedures to ensure that outcomes are accurately reported and monitored. We welcome challenge to the way we operate, and actively learn in order to improve the way we deliver	We pro-actively make information available to give Stakeholders confidence in our decision making. We have strong systems of oversight, including audit and scrutiny, to maintain accountability for our delivery
The key tools we use to support our compliance	Codes of Conduct Constitution Corporate Values Financial Standing Orders Contract Standing Orders Staff/Member induction/training/appraisal Performance Framework Counter-Fraud and Fraud and Corruption Policy Whistleblowing Policy Register of Interests/Gifts Compliments and Complaints Systems and Policy Procurement Policy Partnership Framework	Customer Charter and Management Strategy Publication of minutes and decision notices Compliments and Complaints Systems and Policy Consultation Exercises Communications Strategy Annual Report FOI scheme Council website Corporate Plan Committee timetables Constitution Performance Framework Statutory provisions Partnership Framework Staff/Member Bulletin	Corporate Plan Annual Action Plan Annual Service Planning Budget and Capital Programme Medium Term Financial Plan Asset Management Plan Risk Management Framework/Business Continuity Plan/Policy Programme Management approaches Equality Assessments Performance Framework Communications Strategy Committee reports	Committee work Programmes/timetables Consultation exercises Risk Assessments/Framework Procurement Strategy Reviews of core services Medium Term Financial Strategy Communications Strategy Performance Management Framework Partnership Framework Budget framework Medium Term Financial Plan Committee reports Annual Governance Statement	Digital Transformation Programme Service Reviews Investors in People (Gold) Scheme of Delegation Performance Management Framework Peer Reviews Appraisal and development systems Agile Working Policy Attendance & Absence Policy Employee Code of Conduct Equality & Diversity Policy Asset Management Plan Partnership Framework Job descriptions	Risk Management Framework/Business Continuity Plan/Policy Business Plans Scrutiny Committee Governance, Risk & Audit Committee (GRAC) Internal/external audit Budget Management procedures Health and Safety Policies Information Management Strategy Performance Management Framework SIRO Officer Information Management Strategy Data Protection Policy Data Quality Policy Risk Assessments Corporate Risk Register	Internal/external audit External inspection of internal audit Corporate Governance Frameworks Annual Governance Statement Pay Policy Statement Transparency agenda Council website Annual Report Financial Statements Scrutiny Committee Annual Report Local Code of Corporate Governance Audit protocols Medium Term Financial Plan

Principles of Good Governance	Behaviours and actions that can demonstrate this	How we put this in practice	Source Documents
<p><i>Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law</i></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Ensuring members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation</p>	<p>The Council has approved Codes of Conduct which are included within induction packs. All officers are part of the Council’s performance management framework and expected to perform in line with designated competencies appropriate to their role and job description. The authority’s leadership style is underpinned by the Constitution, Policies, Protocols and Codes of Conduct. The values of the organisation are documented within the Corporate Plan. The Council has introduced and encourages public speaking at Committees and has invested in upgrading its website, actively managing its content to ensure easy access to information.</p>	<p>Constitution, Articles in Staff / Members Bulletin, Head of Paid Service update emails, Corporate briefings held during the year to update staff of key issues and items, Appraisal and Development Scheme, Member/Officer Codes of Conduct, Member/Officer Protocol, Whistle blowing policy, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, Freedom of Information (statement and publication scheme), Planning Protocol, Standards Committee, Officer Register of Gifts and Hospitality, Member / Officer Registers of Interests, Annual Governance Statement, Local Code of Corporate Governance.</p>
	<p>Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)</p>	<p>The Corporate Plan sets out our clear vision for the District, and our ambition. This is further supported by our Annual Action Plan which is monitored through the Council’s Performance Management Framework.</p>	<p>Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan, Performance Management Framework, Standards Committee Annual Report, Member/Officer Codes of Conduct, Member/Officer Protocol, Whistle blowing policy, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, Member / Officer Register of Gifts and Hospitality.</p>

	<p>Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions</p>	<p>The values of the organization are documented within the Corporate Plan. Our decision making processes are embedded into the Council's constitution which is periodically reviewed and endorsed by Councillors. Members are required to make any 'Declarations of Interest' where appropriate.</p>	<p>Corporate Plan, Constitution, Member/Officer Codes of Conduct, Whistle blowing policy, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, Planning Protocol, Member/Officer Register of Gifts and Hospitality, Member/Officer Registers of Interests, Financial Regulations, Contract Procedure Rules, Combined Equalities Scheme, Member / Officer Induction and Training Audit Committee terms of reference</p>
	<p>Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively</p>	<p>The Council has a number of documents which reinforce its commitment to best practice, including Whistleblowing policies, Counter-fraud and Corruption policies, Registers of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality and Complaints policies. These are all subject to periodic review. New staff are required to review the Council's key polices as part of the induction process and to sign to confirm this has been completed.</p>	<p>Member/Officer Codes of Conduct, Whistle blowing policy, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, Planning Protocol, Member / Officer Register of Gifts and Hospitality, Member / Officer Registers of Interests, Financial Regulations, Contract Procedure Rules, Combined Equalities Scheme, Member / Officer Induction and Training Audit Committee terms of reference Constitution</p>

	<p>Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance</p>	<p>The Nolan principles are embedded into Codes of Conduct. The Monitoring Officer produces an Annual Report on the activity of the Standards Committee and its activity to maintain the organisation's standards. The Council has achieved Investors in People Gold status, demonstrating its commitment to monitoring our organisation standards and performance. Shared values have been developed and are documented within the Corporate Plan. Leadership training is undertaken between the Corporate Leadership Team and the Cabinet to reinforce these values. Internal Audit provides assurance that policies built on ethical standards are being complied with. Ongoing monitoring of the application and effectiveness of the local standard regime is undertaken.</p>	<p>Staff and Member Briefings, Corporate Plan, Internal & External Audit Reports, Monitoring Officer's Annual Report.</p>
	<p>Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation</p>	<p>New members and staff are provided inductions, which emphasises areas such as codes of conduct and appropriate behaviours. Ongoing training is then provided, for example through member training sessions</p>	<p>Internal Audit Reports, Competency framework, Constitution, Staff & Member training and development.</p>

	<p>Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values</p>	<p>In addition to policies identified above, the Constitution includes specific rules and procedures with respect procurement; financial governance, and members sitting in a regulatory capacity. These are reviewed and updated on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Constitution, Member/Officer Codes of Conduct, Whistle blowing Policy, Counter-Fraud and Fraud and Corruption Policy, Procurement Strategy.</p>
	<p>Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation</p>	<p>As part of Council procurement exercises, service providers are required to provide statements confirming compliance with ethical standards and, for example, anti-money laundering statements. The Partnership Framework also further supports this.</p>	<p>Council's Website, Constitution, Procurement Strategy, Individual Partnership / Service Level Agreements, Partnership framework.</p>
	<p>Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations</p>	<p>The Constitution is regularly updated to include new specific laws and regulations. Staff are required to hold relevant professional qualifications and comply with the law and codes of conduct. The Council has an appointed Monitoring Officer responsible for the maintenance of the Constitution and for guiding members on the information contained therein. The Council has appropriate legal advice both on the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on local authorities by public law. Induction training for new staff includes review of the Council's policies, which include provisions from legislation.</p>	<p>Constitution, Report Template requiring input from Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer (information quality for decision taking) / Positive Sign Off, Legal advice to Licensing and Planning Committees, Statutory Provisions, Whistle blowing policy, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, Data Protection Policy, IT Policy.</p>

	<p>Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements</p>	<p>Staff are provided with key legal changes where relevant in addition to the Council holding a number of subscriptions to services to ensure staff are provided with appropriate professional support. Members making regulatory decisions are provided with training to ensure they are sufficiently aware of the legal requirements of their role. Areas for focus are highlighted as part of the appraisal process and provided as part of the corporate training plan.</p>	<p>Constitution Monitoring Officer Provisions / Protocol, Report Template requiring input from Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer (information quality for decision taking) / Positive Sign Off, Availability of legal advice to Licensing and Planning Committees Appraisal framework Job descriptions Terms of Reference</p>
	<p>Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders</p>	<p>There are clear, defined decision making processes within the Council to ensure that all appropriate options are considered prior to any decisions being made.</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer Provisions / Protocol, Report Template, Standing Orders, Complaints and Compliments Procedures, Investigations, Records of Delegated Authority decisions, Planning protocol.</p>
	<p>Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively</p>	<p>The Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer are informed of all key decisions to be made and any such occurrences are reported as required.</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer Provisions / Protocol, Records of Delegated Authority decisions, Constitution, Standing Orders.</p>
	<p>Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively</p>	<p>The Council has a well-established Anti-fraud and Corruption policy, access to which is available on the intranet.</p>	<p>Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, Constitution</p>

<p>Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness</p>	<p>The Council has a clear vision, demonstrated through its Corporate Plan. The website has undergone a number of improvements for 2016/17 and provides a large amount of information to the public, including a section dedicated to the requirements of the Transparency Code. The Council has an FOI policy in place and produces an Annual Report to highlight progress against the Annual Action Plan.</p>	<p>Constitution, Stakeholder Identification, Performance Management Framework, Communications Strategy Satisfaction Surveys, Councillor Call to Action, Council Tax online information Norfolk Crime and Disorder Partnership, Council's Website</p>
	<p>Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided</p>	<p>All Committee reports are prepared using pre-agreed templates. If a Cabinet meeting has to consider anything under Part 2 business the press/public will be excluded for that item but the reasons for this need to be justified and is often on the basis of commercial sensitivity.</p>	<p>Meeting minutes, Communications and Consultation Strategy, Statutory Provisions, Council's Website, Forums and Partnerships, Direct communication with Parish & Town Councils (121 newsletter)</p>
	<p>Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear</p>	<p>The Committee schedule is prepared in advance of the year and is then subject to negotiation with key officers to ensure timely decisions can be made. All Committee reports are subject to pre-approval procedures, including pre-meetings with key members and consultation with portfolio holders to ensure relevant matters have been taken into account. Reports are based on agreed templates and must record key considerations and decisions.</p>	<p>Committee timetable, Council's Website, Constitution, Report template, Meeting minutes, Input from Monitoring Officer/S151 Officer.</p>

	<p>Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action</p>	<p>The Council adapts its consultation procedures according to the relevant decision being made with the public on planning decisions. Decisions are considered on a case by case basis and in line with legal requirements.</p>	<p>Planning protocols, Communication Strategy, Legal requirements, Consultation workshops (West prom/Deep History), Direct communication with Parish & Town Councils (121 newsletter).</p>
	<p>Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably</p>	<p>Engagement practices are adapted to the environment rather than operating to a pre-defined strategy. Where appropriate, particularly where major change occurs that is likely to have a significant impact on the public, communication plans are developed to tailor engagement and to plan for responding to particular circumstances.</p>	<p>Communications Strategy, Consultation workshops (West prom/Deep History), Local Development Framework consultation, Council's website.</p>
	<p>Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively</p>	<p>This is an inherent part of the Council's operation. Partnerships are developed to support service delivery and link to activities within the Corporate Plan and Service Plans. Partnerships are subject to periodic review to ensure they remain effective and deliver Council outcomes.</p>	<p>Partnership Framework and Principles Guidance.</p>
	<p>Ensuring that partnerships are based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trust • a shared commitment to change • a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners <p>and that the added value of partnership working is explicit</p>	<p>Partnerships are based on the Partnership Framework and Principles Guidance and include a Service Level Agreement (SLA) where appropriate. Each Partnership will normally have a defined agreement (SLA etc), which will detail the nature of the working relationship and how it operates, including any governance arrangements. Service Managers are accountable for ensuring the successful operation and monitoring or partnerships.</p>	<p>Partnership Framework and Principles Guidance, Service Plans.</p>

	<p>Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.</p>	<p>The Council has a clear Communications Strategy that details how we will engage, consult and listen to our community and stakeholders.</p>	<p>Communications Strategy.</p>
	<p>Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement</p>	<p>Communications come through various forms. Communication Plans are developed for more significant changes that will have an impact on the public. Members receive a monthly bulletin informing them of key events ongoing in the Council of which they need to be aware. Staff receive a weekly Bulletin and Town and Parish Council's receive the 'One to One' monthly newsletter.</p>	<p>Communications Strategy, Members Bulletin Staff Bulletin One to One newsletter</p>
	<p>Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs</p>	<p>As above, engagement comes through a variety of forms and is covered by the Council's Communications Strategy. Specific decisions will be subject to consultation – for example, the Local Plan Process has various forms of communication and engagement to ensure the public and wider stakeholders are fully consulted.</p>	<p>Communications Strategy, Planning Local Plan Review process/protocols, Consultation workshops (West prom/Deep History).</p>

	<p>Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account</p>	<p>The Council welcomes customers to raise concern or compliments with any aspect of service provision. All complaints and compliments are recorded on a corporate database. A summary of complaints and compliments is published on a quarterly basis with decisions fed back to stakeholders.</p>	<p>Communications Strategy, Customer Charter, Customer Complaints, Compliments & Contacts Policy, Customer Management Strategy.</p>
	<p>Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity</p>	<p>This seeks to primarily address how the council can deal with competing demands in a community. The primary competing demand for the Council is the decreasing level of Council resources versus demands from customers for a high level of service.</p>	<p>Communications Strategy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA's).</p>
	<p>Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users</p>	<p>This is considered on a case by case basis and balancing the various needs within the Council.</p>	<p>Committee reports, Budget setting process, Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA's).</p>

<p><i>Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits</i></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions</p>	<p>The Council's Corporate Plan clearly identifies the organisation's vision and purpose. This is supplemented by the Annual Action Plan which identifies specific annual objectives and is reported upon regularly throughout the year. The Service Planning process is directly linked to these plans, and set out specific activities to achieve outcomes in the Plan. Each activity is linked to defined corporate plan themes which then cascades into individual performance and service plan objectives.</p>	<p>Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan, Service Plans, Performance system.</p>
	<p>Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer</p>	<p>The Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan and subsequent Service Plans seek to identify specified performance measures to evaluate how the organisation will deliver its priorities and benefit its local environment and this is reported on regularly throughout the year.</p>	<p>Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan, Service Plans, Performance system.</p>
	<p>Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available</p>	<p>The Service Plans feed into the budget setting process which identifies the level of cost and resources required to deliver the activity. There are frequent updates to committees in terms of budget monitoring and also performance against the targets and objectives contained within the Annual Action Plan to demonstrate how the Council is delivering against its objectives.</p>	<p>Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan, Service Plans, Performance system, Budget monitoring protocols and reports, Committee reports, Medium Term Financial Plan.</p>

	<p>Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes</p>	<p>The Council has an agreed Risk Management Framework, and has embedded reporting of risk (to the Risk management Board) alongside its performance and financial reporting to ensure these are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Individual business plans and key decisions are subject to risk assessment at the time to ensure that issues have been raised and mitigation plans developed.</p>	<p>Risk Management Framework, Risk Management Board reports, Committee reports, Performance system.</p>
	<p>Managing service users expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available</p>	<p>The Annual Action Plan and Service Plans define established performance measures to monitor how services are provided and the outcomes achieved. Service Planning helps to determine how resources should be allocated to defined activities, as well as the core 'business as usual' service delivery. The Communications Strategy and plans help to set expectations to service users on their potential user experience.</p>	<p>Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan, Service Plans, Performance system, Communications Strategy, Budget process, Medium Term Financial Plan.</p>
	<p>Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision</p>	<p>The Council takes into account a wide range of factors when considering the impact of policies and plans when making decisions about service delivery. For example, the capital bidding process requires managers to complete a capital budget template which details not only the cost of their proposals but also any wider benefits in terms of service delivery, environmental enhancements etc. This is supported by the Capital Strategy and the budget framework and monitoring processes.</p>	<p>Medium Term Financial Plan, Capital bidding process, Budget framework, Capital Strategy.</p>

	<p>Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints</p>	<p>All decision making should be linked to the Council's longer term Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Service Planning process helps to support this in that all activities should be identified in the Service Plan and any additional activities would have to be subject to appropriate consideration, taking into account the ability to deliver already identified priorities. This can be evidenced through decisions taken at Cabinet.</p>	<p>Corporate Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan, Budget setting process, Annual Outturn report, Committee reports.</p>
	<p>Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs</p>	<p>Decisions made have to necessarily balance the public interest and achievement of outcomes, as can be evidenced through various committee reports.</p>	<p>Communications Strategy, Committee reports and minutes, Annual Governance Statement.</p>
	<p>Ensuring fair access to services</p>	<p>The Council evaluates equality impacts as appropriate within its decision making, ensuring due regard is given to enabling groups to access services. Our Customer Strategy seeks to support this through identifying how customers access services and ensuring that the Council's service provision responds to this.</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA's), Statutory guidance, Customer Strategy.</p>

<p><i>Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes</i></p> <p>Local government achieves its intended outcomes by providing a mixture of legal, regulatory, and practical interventions. Determining the right mix of these courses of action is a critically important strategic choice that local government has to make to ensure intended outcomes are achieved. They need robust decision-making mechanisms to ensure that their defined outcomes can be achieved in a way that provides the best trade-off between the various types of resource inputs while still enabling effective and efficient operations. Decisions made need to be reviewed continually to ensure that achievement of outcomes is optimised.</p>	<p>Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided</p>	<p>This can be evidenced through papers presented to Cabinet and to the Council's Scrutiny Committee which helps to ensure this is put into practice by engaging with members at the earliest possible stage in the development of plans and strategies, enabling their input into the potential options and ensuring these have been considered before key decisions are made. A recent example is with the update of the Communications Strategy.</p>	<p>Committee reports and minutes, Communications Strategy.</p>
	<p>Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts</p>	<p>This is covered within the Council's Communications Strategy and can be further evidenced through the consultation processes involved with the update of the Local Plan. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan also enables the Council to prioritise competing demands with limited resources.</p>	<p>Communications Strategy, Medium Term Financial Plan, Local Plan protocols.</p>
	<p>Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets</p>	<p>The annual committee programme is developed in advance of the calendar year. Pre-Committee meetings discuss forthcoming reports with key officers and members to ensure these are programmed, with each Committee having its own specified work programme. There are clear programmes in place for the business planning and financial planning cycle, which are complementary to each other.</p>	<p>Committee timetable, Committee reports, Budget setting framework.</p>

	Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered	This is a necessary part of our planning, and can be evidenced through the ongoing work on the development of the new Local Plan.	Communications Strategy, Local Plan protocols.
	Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks	This is a necessary part of planning for partnership working. Each partnership has associated protocols or agreements (SLA's) to outline how it will operate, which would be subject to agreement with each partner to ensure their risks and challenges have been taken into account.	Partnership Framework, Risk Management Framework.

	Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances	Change procedures, poor performance and termination is embedded into agreements and contracts to ensure that the Council is not locked into arrangements which are not effective. Performance targets for individuals and partnerships are reviewed regularly and incorporated within service plans.	Partnership Framework, Performance system.
	Establishing appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured	This is firmly embedded into the Annual Action Plan and Service Planning process. Each year, and then as part of quarterly reporting, key performance indicators are subject to review to ensure to introduce new / amendments to the indicators, and ensure they remain	Annual Action Plan, Service Plans, Annual Report, Quarterly performance reports.
	Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly	The Council has a Policy & Performance Management Officer who works with officers and Members to monitor and track performance cascading down from the Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan and into the Service Plans. There are quarterly performance reports to Committee to monitor performance, highlighting any corrective action that might be required where appropriate.	Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan, Service Plans, Annual report.
	Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan	The Budget and Service Planning process is fully integrated, with priorities cascading down from the Corporate Plan and Annual Action Plan into Service Plans. Managers develop their budgets and resource requirements with the finance team to ensure these objectives are deliverable.	Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan, Service Plans, Budget setting process, Committee reports, Medium Term Financial Plan.

	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 service planning and budget cycles are fully integrated and informed by the production of the Medium term Financial Plan, which sets out how the Council will address the future funding challenges.	Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan, Service Plans, Budget setting process, Committee reports, Medium Term Financial Plan.
	Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints	The Medium Term Financial Plan is updated ahead of the Service Planning and budget setting process to ensure it remains deliverable. Budgets and Service Plans are then based on this work to take account of any potential issues as required.	Service Plans, Budget setting process, Committee reports, Medium Term Financial Plan.
	Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term	As above, the budget and Service Planning process comprehensively links service demands and activities to the projected cost of service delivery.	Service Plans, Budget setting process, Committee reports, Medium Term Financial Plan.
	Ensuring the medium term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage	This is covered within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which considers issues ongoing service delivery costs and issues in the context of the ever changing external environment to ensure resources are optimized and that efficiency plans are developed where appropriate.	Service Plans, Budget setting process, Committee reports, Medium Term Financial Plan.
	Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 states that this is "the additional benefit to the community...over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes"	The Council has committed, through its Procurement Strategy, to supporting social value. The current procurement for the new Cromer Pier contract helps to demonstrate this with some of the scoring being allocated to Social Value.	Procurement Strategy, Pier tender documents.

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

Local government needs appropriate structures and leadership, as well as people with the right skills, appropriate qualifications and mindset, to operate efficiently and effectively and achieve their intended outcomes within the specified periods. A local government organisation must ensure that it has both the capacity to fulfill 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.

Reviewing operations, performance use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness

There are currently two Business Process Reviews (BPR) reviews being undertaken within the Planning and Environmental Health service areas to increase efficiency and improve performance. All changes in staffing are subject to robust procedures to ensure that resources are right for the relevant service.

The Council has defined Asset Management Plan supported by the Disposal, Investment and Acquisitions Policy (both of which are being reviewed and updated for 2017/18). This is complemented by the Community Asset Transfer Policy; all of these policies combine to help ensure that property assets are effectively utilized while supporting the Council's Asset Commercialisation agenda which is a key theme within the Council's efficiency plans.

Asset Management Plan, Disposal, Investment and Acquisitions Policy, Community Asset Transfer Policy.

	<p>Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the authority's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently</p>	<p>The Council is currently undertaking a Digital Transformation Programme, to enable the most efficient forms of service access. There are two BPR reviews being undertaken in Planning and Environmental Health service areas to increase efficiency and improve performance. These are facilitated by an external company who are helping to redesign services based on best practice and benchmarking from other external high performing Councils. The Council also participates in peer reviews to support further improvements.</p>	<p>Peer reviews, Digital Transformation initiative, Business planning Reviews.</p>
	<p>Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved</p>	<p>Partnership agreements are subject to a robust review to ensure they deliver against Council priorities. Services are required to identify within business planning processes the financial resources required to deliver through partnership means as opposed to internal service delivery</p>	<p>Partnership framework, Service Plans, Budget protocols.</p>
	<p>Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources</p>	<p>The Council currently holds IIP Gold and is now due to start the next assessment. There are numerous Organisational Development plans, strategies and policies in place to help support the Council's staff, ranging from the Agile Working Policy, which supports staff to work more flexibly, through to the Employee Code of Conduct which outlines the Council's expectations from staff. The Appraisal and Development scheme is fully integrated into the Council's planning processes.</p>	<p>Appraisal and Development scheme, IIP Gold award, Agile Working Policy, Employee Code of Conduct.</p>

	<p>Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained</p>	<p>The Leader has served in place for a number of years and while there have been changes to the senior management team during the 2016/17 financial year the Council's operational effectiveness has remained strong. The Corporate Directors and joint Heads of Paid Service have regular meetings with the Leader and have introduced Business Planning meetings which follow on from Cabinet to discuss forthcoming issues and reports. These meetings help to clarify objectives and outcomes at an early stage and are supported by the various Cabinet and Portfolio Members. They are strongly empowered to support Portfolio Holders and Heads of Service in developing their roles and relationships.</p>	<p>Job descriptions.</p>
	<p>Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body</p>	<p>The Council has a Scheme of Delegation which is periodically reviewed to ensure it remains current. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are also periodically reviewed. This process is undertaken by the Constitution Working Party.</p>	<p>Constitution, Constitution Working Party.</p>

	<p>Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads the authority in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority</p>	<p>As outlined above, the relationship between the Corporate Directors and joint Heads of Paid Service and Leader is strong and their respective roles and responsibilities are clearly defined'</p>	<p>Job descriptions.</p>
	<p>Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by:</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external</p>	<p>The Council has been well recognised for developing the leadership of staff at all levels in the organisation. The Council has already secured IIP Gold status, and is about to embark on a further review. A robust performance programme is in place to encourage open and honest communication with staff, enable effective performance management discussions and identify future development needs. This is fully supported by the Appraisal Framework which is fully embedded within the Council's processes. Training requirements flowing from the appraisal process feed into the corporate training needs assessment undertaken by the Organisational Development team.</p> <p>Members are provided induction training on commencing their roles at the Council, and encouraged to identify training needs. Ongoing training is held on a knowledge and competency basis, enabling members to develop their skills at all levels. An annual member training programme is produced to support their development.</p>	<p>Appraisal framework, Corporate Training programme, Service specific training requirements, Training update courses/briefings, IIP Gold, Staff/Member induction protocols.</p>

	Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation	The Council welcomes members of the public to engage in decision making, with meetings being held in public where possible and consultations undertaken on relevant decisions.	Committee minutes.
	Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections	The Council periodically has peer reviews and takes part in benchmarking and other relevant processes to evaluate leadership effectiveness. Feedback is welcomed and considered to ensure that it can be implemented.	Peer review, 360 Degree Appraisal, Appraisal framework.
	Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs	The Council has a clearly defined performance management framework and appraisal system. All staff undertake an annual appraisal which is further supported by a 6 monthly review. Objectives and personal development plans are established for staff at all levels.	Appraisal framework.
	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 places strong emphasis on employee health and wellbeing. The Council's Staff Focus Group and the Health and Wellbeing team help senior leadership implement health and wellbeing initiatives, such as active workplace events which staff are encouraged to take part in at all levels. There is a section dedicated to Health and Wellbeing on the Council's intranet which staff and Members can access.	Health and Wellbeing Team, Staff Focus Group, Various Organisational Development policies and strategies, Intranet.

<p><i>Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</i> 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.</p>	<p>Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making</p>	<p>The Council has an agreed Risk Management Framework and operates a Risk Management Board along with the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee (GRAC). The Committee report templates which must be used for all Committee reports include a specific section on risk and staff and managers are encouraged to raise risks, and how these should be managed / mitigated as part of key decision making processes. At an operational level, staff are encouraged to take personal accountability for risks. The Council has a Business Continuity Framework with Business Continuity Plans in place for key service areas which are subject to annual review.</p>	<p>GRAC reports/minutes, Committee report template, Health and Safety Policy, Risk assessments, Business Continuity Framework, Business Continuity Plans, Risk Management Board.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively</p>	<p>The Risk Management Framework has been agreed through the relevant decision making processes and is subject to regular review and updating. On a quarterly basis, key risks are formally evaluated and monitored by the Risk Management Board, however services are expected to maintain a watching brief on all operational level risks on a daily basis. Health and Safety risks are also monitored as part of this process.</p>	<p>GRAC reports/minutes, Health and Safety Policy, Risk assessments, Business Continuity Framework, Business Continuity Plans, Risk Management Board, Corporate Risk Register.</p>

<p>It is also essential that a culture and structure for scrutiny is in place as a key part of accountable decision making, policy making and review. A positive working culture that accepts, promotes and encourages constructive challenge is critical to successful scrutiny and successful delivery. Importantly, this culture does not happen automatically, it requires repeated public commitment from those in authority.</p>	<p>Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated</p>	<p>Each risk within the Risk Register has been formally allocated to individual responsible owners.</p>	<p>Corporate Risk Register.</p>
	<p>Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review</p>	<p>The Annual Action Plan and Service Planning process identifies performance measures for services. Services are subject to periodic review to ensure delivery remains efficient and effective. The Major Projects Board considers and monitors key corporate projects in terms of key project aims, targets/benefits, milestones, progress, risks, financial position etc. At the end of projects there is a formal review process to consider 'lessons learnt' that can be fed back into future projects.</p>	<p>Annual Action Plan, Annual Report, Service Plans, Performance framework, Major Projects Board, Project Management framework, Project Initiation Documents (PIDs), Project review documents.</p>

	<p>Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook</p>	<p>Quarterly reporting of risks at a strategic level highlights core risk factors that may influence the council's ability to deliver objectives over the longer term. Significant decisions are subject to robust challenge and clear processes to ensure that all relevant factors have been considered.</p>	<p>Risk Management Board, GRAC reports/minutes, Committee report template.</p>
	<p>Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the organisation's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible</p>	<p>The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates to scrutinize, challenge and debate policies and objectives, a recent example being the Communications Strategy. The Committee also has its own work programme and will often review previous initiatives to ensure that decisions have been implemented as intended and clear benefits have resulted.</p>	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports and minutes, Overview and Scrutiny Committee terms of reference, Member training.</p>
	<p>Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement</p>	<p>Quarterly reports are presented to Cabinet containing updates on finance, performance and risks for the Council's agreed plans.</p>	<p>Cabinet reports and minutes, Committee timetable.</p>
	<p>Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (eg financial statements)</p>	<p>The quarterly reports evaluate budgetary positions, seeking approval to significant variances and highlighting major changes to agreed programmes. The final quarter reports then seek to align to financial reporting with the outturn position.</p>	<p>Budget reports, Outturn report, Financial Statements, Financial Standing Orders.</p>

	Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the objectives	The Risk Management Framework seeks to establish how organisational risk is managed. Risks form the basis of internal control evaluation through the annual audit programme, and will be subject to ongoing evaluation through each programmed internal audit.	Risk Management framework, Internal Audit Plan, Audit reports, External review of effectiveness, Annual Governance Statement, Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion, Local Code of Corporate Governance.
	Evaluating and monitoring the authority's risk management and internal control on a regular basis	Risks are subject to quarterly reviews, and the Risk Management framework is periodically reviewed to ensure it remains current. The internal audit programme is subject to an annual review and formal review, with planning over the longer term, balancing the Council's priorities and risks. The GRAC undertake regular self- assessments of their performance, regular updates on progress towards the audit plan and implementation of recommendations are provided to the Committee on a quarterly basis along with and Annual Report and Opinion. The internal audit contract is also subject to an external quality control review.	GRAC self-assessment, Risk Management framework, Internal Audit Plan, Audit reports, External review of effectiveness, Head of Internal Audit Statement of Compliance, Annual Governance Statement, Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion, Local Code of Corporate Governance.
	Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place	The Council has an agreed Fraud and Corruption Policy which is in the process of being updated. The Council takes part in national initiatives to reduce the potential for fraud and to identify fraud that may have occurred.	Fraud and Corruption Policy, National Fraud Initiatives.

	<p>Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor</p>	<p>The Council is part of the South Norfolk Internal Audit Consortium. The Consortium is currently subject to External Review to ensure it is delivering in accordance with best practice. Internal Audit plans are developed and the Internal Audit Service is resourced according to these plans.</p>	<p>External review of effectiveness, Annual Governance Statement, Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion, Head of Internal Audit Statement of Compliance, Local Code of Corporate Governance.</p>
	<p>Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body: provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon</p>	<p>The Council has elected to develop the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee (GRAC) to have oversight of internal control while taking responsibility for good governance practice. The Committee has strong oversight and is empowered to hold the organisation to account.</p>	<p>GRAC terms of reference, GRAC reports and minutes, Member training, GRAC self-assessment.</p>
	<p>Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data</p>	<p>The Council has a Data Protection Policy and a Data Quality Policy and is also PSN Compliant to ensure the most sensitive data it holds is held securely. This is further supported by the Council's IT Security Policy. The Council has also taken the decision to introduce a Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) with the Corporate Director and Joint Head of Paid Service being assigned to this role. The audit position statement highlighted some recommendations in relation to this new role which are due to be implemented during 2017/18.</p>	<p>Data Protection Policy, Data Quality Policy, IT Security Policy, PSN compliance, SIRO audit position statement.</p>
	<p>Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies</p>	<p>Information sharing is subject to defined information sharing protocols.</p>	<p>Data Protection Policy, Data Quality Policy, IT Security Policy, PSN compliance.</p>

	Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	The Council does not have formal data validation programmes, however data validity and quality is evaluated through internal audit assessment and during the BPR service review work.	BPR protocols, Audit reports.
	Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance	This is embedded into the Medium Term Financial Plan, which has been developed alongside the Service Plans and budget planning processes. Financial reporting is strongly linked to performance and risk reporting to ensure it correlates to service delivery.	Medium Term Financial Plan, Service Plans, Budget monitoring reports and protocol.
	Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls	Management accounts are produced on a monthly basis for service analysis, and to ensure budgets remain on track to those established within business planning. Significant variances are reported to key decision making.	
Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability Accountability is about ensuring that those making decisions and delivering services are answerable for them. Effective accountability is concerned not only with reporting on actions completed, but also ensuring that stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the organisation plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner. Both external and internal audit contribute to effective accountability.	Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate 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	Report templates have been designed to help highlight key information quickly and easily. Reports undertake review processes to ensure they remain succinct and effective in imparting their messages. All reports are available for the public to review from the Council directly or on the Council's website with contact details for key officers prominently placed. The Council's Annual Report also provides a high level review of the Council's achievements during the year in an easy to understand high level format.	Council website, Annual Report, Committee template, Committee reports.
	Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources	The Council's statement of accounts includes a "narrative" report which outlines how the Council has delivered against its objectives and financial targets during the year. The	Statement of accounts, Annual Report, Annual Governance Statement.

		report makes extensive use of charts to aid users to quickly understanding the information. The Annual Governance Statement provides a key oversight of the Council's governance arrangements and how these can be developed.	
	Ensuring members and senior management own the results	On a quarterly basis, Cabinet receives performance and finance reports outlining how the Council has performed against corporate objectives. Significant areas of concern are highlighted with recommendations for corrective action where appropriate.	Performance reports/framework, Annual Report, Budget monitoring reports, Minutes highlighting appropriate approvals, Outturn report.
	Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (annual governance statement)	The CIPFA Code of Corporate Governance principles have been benchmarked, and this will be subject to evaluation by both the Risk Management Board and also the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee. Necessary actions will then be reviewed and incorporated into the Annual Governance Framework as required.	Annual Governance Statement, Local Code of Corporate Governance.
	Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate	The Council is not presently involved with any shared service arrangements. The Council is however part of Coastal Partnership East and this framework has been applied to the partnership. The annual review process has highlighted some areas for consideration in respect of this partnership and these will be included within the Annual Governance Statement.	Annual Governance Statement, Local Code of Corporate Governance, Terms of Reference.

	<p>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</p>	<p>The Council's financial statements are prepared in accordance with best practice to help support comparison with similar organisations. The Council has accelerated timeframes for evaluated finance and performance outcomes, with the Outturn Report now being produced within 6 weeks of the year end to ensure decisions can be made on a timely basis with insight to the performance and so that this information can then support the production of the Statement of Accounts.</p>	<p>Statement of accounts, Outturn Report.</p>
	<p>Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon</p> <p>Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon</p>	<p>Recommendations made by external and internal auditors are reported to the GRAC as part of the Statement of Accounts approval process. The Internal Audit Consortium Manager has access to report directly to the GRAC with outcomes from her work and any key concerns she may have.</p>	<p>Statement of accounts, External audit opinion, GRAC reports/minutes, Internal Audit Opinion.</p>
	<p>Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations</p>	<p>Peer challenge is undertaken periodically to evaluate how the Council is performing. Regulators will undertake periodic inspections and the outcomes of their reports escalated as appropriate.</p>	<p>Peer review, Regulatory review.</p>
	<p>Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement</p>	<p>The Annual Governance Statement includes a section on the "Review of Effectiveness" which includes consideration of governance arrangements for service delivery through third parties.</p>	<p>Annual Governance Statement, NNDS Self-assessment Assurance Statement.</p>

	Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met	Partnerships are subject to relevant agreements to ensure the nature of the partnership and reporting frameworks / objectives are clear.	Communication Strategy, Partnership Framework, Terms of Reference, Service Level Agreements (SLA's).
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