monmouthshire
sir fynwy

SUBJECT:	**MONMOUTHSHIRE CC**
	CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2020
MEETING:	**CABINET**
DATE:	**15th September 2020**
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All	

1.   PURPOSE

To receive the Council's updated Code of Corporate Governance to support the completion of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

2.   RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Cabinet formerly approve the Council's updated Code of Corporate Governance.

3.   KEY ISSUES

3.1   A **draft** version of the Council's updated Code of Corporate Governance to support the completion of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) was presented to the Council's Governance and Audit Committee (formerly Audit Committee) in June 2020. In line with the report recommendations, the Audit Committee contributed to the appropriateness and content of the draft Code of Corporate Governance and subsequently endorsed it for Cabinet approval.

3.2   Corporate Governance is about doing the right thing at the right time for the right people in an open and transparent way. The AGS sets out how Monmouthshire demonstrates it has appropriate governance arrangements in place and how they are continually reviewed to strengthen them moving forward. The Code of Corporate Governance is the framework on which the AGS is based.

3.3   The original Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the C.I.P.F.A./S.O.L.A.C.E. Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government', was approved by Council in July 2011. This set the standard for local authority governance in the UK. Monmouthshire's Code was revised and updated in May 2014.

3.4   CIPFA and Solace reviewed the Framework in 2015 to ensure it remained 'fit for purpose' and published a revised edition in spring 2016.

3.5   The guidance produced by the Chartered Institute   of Public Finance and Accountancy (C.I.P.F.A.) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (S.O.L.A.C.E.), the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016' and Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Guidance Notes for Welsh Authorities 2016'. It embraced the elements of internal financial control required by the 'Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom'.

3.6   Monmouthshire County Council (the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and to proper standards, and that public money is

safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

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

3.8   Monmouthshire's Code of Corporate Governance has been updated and revised to comply with the CIPFA / SOLACE 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016' (Appendix 1)

4   The Purpose of the Governance Framework

4.1   The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services.

4.2   The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

5   The Governance Framework

5.1   The Council's Code of Corporate Governance has been developed in line with the following principles:

Overarching requirements for acting in the public interest:

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

B.   Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

In addition achieving good governance in the Council requires effective arrangements for:

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

D.   Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

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

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

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

6 REASONS

6.1 The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 require an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) to be prepared and included within the Council's year end financial statements. The Code of Corporate Governance is the Council's framework on which the AGS is based.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

8 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

This report provides Members with information on the updated Code of Corporate Governance for the Authority and carries no decisions. There are therefore no equality of future generations' implications directly arising from this report.

9 CONSULTEES

Deputy Chief Executive & Chief Officer Resources
Strategic Leadership Team
Governance & Audit Committee (formerly Audit Committee)

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

CIPFA / SOLACE Delivering Good Governance 2016

11 AUTHOR AND CONTACT DETAILS

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The Code of Corporate Governance

Monmouthshire County Council

2020

The purpose of this Code is to state the importance to the Council of good corporate governance and to set out the Council's commitment to the principles involved.

The Code is based on guidance to all UK local authorities; CIPFA / SOLACE 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016'

The Code is included in the Council's constitution and therefore applies to all members and employees of the Council and also to any individuals or bodies authorised to act on its behalf.

The Code will be reviewed in its entirety by no later than 31 March 2024, but minor reviews and updates will be made annually as required.

Reviewed and updated April 2020

CONTENTS

1. **The Purpose of the Governance Framework**

   1.1. This Code sets out Monmouthshire County Council's approach to achieving and maintaining good corporate governance.

   1.2. Monmouthshire County Council (the Council) is by nature, a complex organisation which affects the lives of all citizens in the area: As well as providing a diverse range of services, it also works with partner organisations which provide other public services. The Council's aims and priorities reflect these responsibilities.

   1.3. The Council sees Corporate Governance as 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 and processes, and also the culture and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and how it accounts to and engages with its citizens.

   1.4. Strong, transparent and responsive governance enables the Council to put citizens first by pursuing its aims and priorities effectively, and by underpinning them with appropriate mechanisms for managing performance and risk. In order to maintain citizens' confidence, these mechanisms must be sound and be seen to be sound.

   1.5. It is essential that there is confidence in our corporate governance and the Council must therefore ensure that:

   - as a democratic body, we engage with and account to our citizens and stakeholders effectively;
   - we conduct our business in accordance with the law and to proper standards;
   - public money is properly accounted for and is used economically, efficiently and effectively;
   - controls are proportionate to risk so as not to impede performance;
   - we continuously improve the way in which we function, in terms of effectiveness, quality, service availability, fairness, sustainability and innovation; and
   - we fulfil our purpose and meet our priorities as set out in the Council Plan 2017-22.

   1.6. The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture and values, by which the Authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money.

   1.7. The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Authority's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risks being realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

2. **The Governance Framework**

   2.1. The Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 Edition produced by CIPFA and SOLACE (the Framework) defines governance as:

'Governance comprises the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.'

The Framework also states that

'To deliver good governance in the public sector, both governing bodies and individuals working for public sector entities must try to achieve their entity's objectives while acting in the public interest at all times,

Acting in the public interest implies primary consideration of the benefits for
society, which should result in positive outcomes for service users and other stakeholders.

2.2. In local government, the governing body is the full council.

3. Background

3.1. The *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework* published by CIPFA and SOLACE in 2007 set the standard for local authority governance in the UK. CIPFA and SOLACE reviewed the Framework in 2015 to ensure it remained fit for purpose and published a revised Framework in spring 2016.

3.2. The new *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework* 2016 edition applies to annual governance statements prepared for the financial year 2016/17 onwards.

3.3. The new Framework introduced 7 new principles as follows:

A) Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
B) Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
C) Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
D) Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
E) Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
F) Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and string public financial management.
G) Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

COMMITMENTS TO GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

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

The Council is accountable not only for how much it spends, but also for how we use the resources under our stewardship. This includes accountability for outputs, both positive and negative, and for the outcomes we have achieved. In addition, we 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, we can demonstrate the appropriateness of all our actions and have mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and to respect the rule of law.

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:		What is in place to support this?
Behaving with integrity	A1	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 Council	▪ Members Code of Conduct in Constitution which reflects Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct)(Wales) Order 2016
	A2	Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the Council and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)	▪ Officers Code of Conduct in Constitution ▪ Registers of interests / hospitality ▪ Induction training ▪ Member/Officer Protocol in Constitution ▪ Member led Authority principles/document
	A3	Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions	▪ Member training programme ▪ Council Values — Openness, Fairness, Flexibility, Teamwork ▪ Whistleblowing Policy
	A4	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	▪ Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy ▪ Standards Committee ▪ Standards Committee Annual Report presented to Council ▪ Member Dispute Resolution ▪ Complaints procedure
Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values	A5	Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the Council's ethical standards and performance	▪ Council Values — Openness, Fairness, Flexibility, Teamwork ▪ Contract procedure rules ▪ Codes of conduct for members and employees
	A6	Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they	▪ Financial procedure rules

		permeate all aspects of the Council's culture and operation	
	A7	Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values	
	A8	Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the Council are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the Council.	
Respecting the rule of law	A9	Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations	▪ Member and Officer Code of Conduct in Constitution ▪ Role of Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer established in Constitution ▪ CIPFA statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer ▪ Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy ▪ Audit Committee ▪ Internal Audit Section ▪ Internal Audit Annual Report presented to Audit Committee ▪ External Auditors Annual Audit Letter ▪ Standards Committee ▪ Whistleblowing Policy ▪ Complaints procedure
	A10	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	
	A11	Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders	
	A12	Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively	
	A13	Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively	

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.

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:	What is in place to support this?
Openness	B1 Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating our commitment to openness B2 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 B3 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 B4 Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action	▪ Agendas published in advance of meetings ▪ Minutes published following meetings ▪ Democratic meetings live streaming on You Tube ▪ Decision making process described in Constitution ▪ Forward Plan published on internet showing key decisions to be made by Council and Cabinet ▪ Annual budget consultation ▪ Freedom of Information Scheme ▪ Public questions at Council, Cabinet and Select Committees ▪ Engagement with hard to reach groups such as BME, Disability and LGBT communities. As well as engagement with children and young people to meet the requirement of the UNCRC ▪ Publication of open data sets on the Council's website
Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	B5 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 B6 Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively B7 Ensuring that partnerships are based on trust, a shared commitment to change and a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among	▪ Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well- Being Plan ▪ Monnmouthshire Public Service Board Partnership arrangements and structure

		partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit	
Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users	B8	A clear policy on the type of issues that the Council will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes	▪ Ward role of Councillors ▪ Consultations on the council website and social media platforms ▪ Annual Staff Survey ▪ Complaints Policy and Annual Report ▪ MTFP ▪ Complaints procedure ▪ Future Generations evaluation, including Equality Impact Assessment, on decision reports ▪ Strategic Equality Plan
	B9	Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement	
	B10	Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs	
	B11	Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account	
	B12	Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity	
	B13	Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users	

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

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:		What is in place to support this?
Defining Outcomes	C1	Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the Council's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the Council's overall strategy, planning and other decisions	▪ Corporate Plan produced and reviewed annually in accordance with Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and 'Wellbeing Objectives' in Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
	C2	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	▪ Quarterly, six monthly & annual Performance Monitoring Reports
	C3	Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available	▪ Corporate Plan Annual Performance Report ▪ Public Service Board Well-being Plan annual report
	C4	Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes	▪ Service business Plans produced annually and reviewed quarterly by each service area.
	C5	Managing service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available	▪ Monthly Financial Monitoring meetings held for each service area ▪ Risk Management Policy and Guidance ▪ Whole Authority Strategic Risk Register ▪ Capital Review Programme
Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	C6	Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision	▪ Medium Term Financial Plan covering 3 financial years approved annually by Council ▪ Corporate Plan ▪ Risk management Policy and Guidance
	C7	Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the Council's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints	▪ Whole Authority Strategic risk register ▪ Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well-being Plan ▪ Future Generations Evaluation, including Equality Impact
	C8	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

C9   Ensuring fair access to services | Assessment, on decision making reports
▪ Service business Plans produced annually and reviewed quarterly by each service area. |

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 input while still enabling effective and efficient operations. Decisions made need to be reviewed continually to ensure that achievement of outcomes is optimised

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:		What is in place to support this?
Determining interventions	D1	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	▪ Corporate Plan ▪ Scrutiny / Select Committee function ▪ Risk management policy and guidance ▪ Whole Authority Strategic Risk Register ▪ Finance and Legal implications in all Council, Cabinet and Committee reports Report writing template and guidance ▪ Future Generations Evaluation (including Equality Impact Assessment) ▪ Results of consultation exercises
	D2	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	
Planning Interventions	D3	Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets	▪ Monthly Financial Monitoring meetings for each Directorate reviews progress and authorises corrective action where necessary ▪ Medium Term Financial Plan ▪ Annual budget setting process in place including consultation exercise ▪ Financial procedure rules ▪ Senior Management Structure ▪ Corporate Plan produced and reviewed annually in accordance with Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and 'Wellbeing Objectives' in Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ▪ Quarterly, six monthly & annual Performance Monitoring Reports ▪ Corporate Plan Annual Performance
	D4	Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered	
	D5	Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks	
	D6	Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances	
	D7	Establishing appropriate local performance indicators (as well as relevant statutory or other national performance indicators) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured	

			Report
			▪ Public Service Board Well-being Plan
	D8	Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly	▪ Public Service Board Well-being Plan annual report
			▪ Service business Plans produced annually and reviewed quarterly by each service area.
	D9	Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium-term financial plan	▪ Risk Management Policy and Guidance
	D10	Informing medium and long-term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy	▪ Whole Authority Strategic Risk Register
Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	D11	Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints	▪ Quarterly Financial Monitoring reports to Cabinet and scrutiny
			▪ Mid-Year Budget Statement to Cabinet
	D12	Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term	▪ Medium Term Financial Plan
			▪ Budget consultation
			▪ Corporate Plan
	D13	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	

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 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

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:		What is in place to support this?
Developing the entity's capacity	E1	Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources.	▪ Regular performance review f Check in Check Out for all staff ▪ Service planning process includes workforce planning ▪ People Strategy ▪ Quarterly financial reports to Cabinet and Select ▪ Partnership & collaborative working arrangements ▪ Quarterly, six monthly & annual Performance Monitoring Reports ▪ Corporate Plan Annual Performance Report ▪ Public Service Board Well-being Plan annual report ▪ Service business Plans produced annually and reviewed quarterly by each service area.
	E2	Reviewing operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness	
	E3	Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the Council's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently	
	E4	Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved	
Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals	E5	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	▪ Member/Officer Protocol in Constitution ▪ Scheme of Delegation published in Constitution ▪ Monthly One to One meetings are held involving the Leader. Cabinet Members, Chief Executive, Chief Officers, Heads of Service and 3rd tier staff ▪ Councillor Training Programme developed based on a Training
	E6	Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body	
	E7	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	Needs Assessment

other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority

E8   Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the Council to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by:
- ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged,
- ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis,
- ensuring personal, organisation and system-wide development through shared learning, including
- lessons learnt from both internal and external governance weaknesses

E9   Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation

E10   Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections

E11   Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs

E12   Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental well being

Needs Assessment
- Scrutiny member development programme
- Annual performance review for all staff under CICO
- Corporate training and development programme
- Occupational Health and Wellbeing Policy exists with aim of promoting the health and wellbeing of all employees to enable them to achieve their full potential at work
- Internal and external audit reports and action plans

Principle F — Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and string public financial management

Local government needs to ensure that the organisations and governance structures that it oversees have implemented, and can sustain, an effective performance management system that facilitates effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Risk management and internal control are important and integral parts of a performance management system and crucial to the achievement of outcomes. Risk should be considered and addressed as part of all decision making activities. A strong system of financial management is essential for the implementation of policies and the achievement of intended outcomes, as it will ensure financial discipline, strategic allocation of resources, efficient service delivery and accountability. It is also essential that a culture and structure for scrutiny is in place as a key part of accountable decision making, policy making and review. A positive working culture that accepts, promotes and encourages constructive challenge is critical to successful scrutiny and successful delivery. Importantly, this culture does not happen automatically, it requires repeated public commitment from those in authority.

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:		What is in place to support this?
Managing Risk	F1	Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making	▪ Risk Management Policy and Guidance ▪ Whole Authority Strategic Risk Register ▪ Service Business Plans produced annually and reviewed quarterly by each service area, including service risk registers ▪ Strategic Risk Register reported to Audit Committee and Cabinet
	F2	Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring they are working effectively	
	F3	Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated	
Managing performance	F4	Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning specification, execution and independent post-implementation review	▪ Corporate Plan produced and reviewed annually ▪ Corporate Plan Annual Performance Report ▪ Service Business Plans produced annually and reviewed quarterly by each service area. ▪ Quarterly, six monthly & annual Performance Monitoring Reports ▪ Director of Social Services Annual report ▪ Chief Officer Children & Young People Annual Report ▪ Scrutiny function ▪ Bi-monthly Directorate and Financial
	F5	Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the Council's financial, social and environmental position and outlook	
	F6	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 Council's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible	
	F7	Providing members and senior management with regular reports on progress	

		towards outcome achievement	monitoring meetings
	F8	Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post-implementation reporting (eg financial statements)	
Robust internal control	F9	Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives	▪ Audit Committee provides assurance on effectiveness on internal control, risk management and governance
	F10	Evaluating and monitoring risk management and internal control on a regular basis	▪ Audit Committee Annual Report to Council
	F11	Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place	▪ Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy ▪ Role of Internal Audit Section ▪ Annual Plans approved by Audit Committee
	F12	Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor	▪ Annual Reports to Audit Committee ▪ Annual Governance Statement
	F13	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	
Managing data	F14	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data	▪ Data Protection Policy ▪ Information Management Strategy Information management governancearrangements
	F15	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies	▪ Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) in place ▪ Information Asset Register ▪ Information sharing guidance published ▪ Information Risk policy
	F16	Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	▪ Annual National and Local performance Indicator data collection process and internal audit arrangements.
Strong public financial management	F17	Ensuring financial management supports both long-term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance	▪ Financial procedure rules in Constitution ▪ Contract procedure rules in Constitution
	F18	Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls	▪ Accounting Instructions on Intranet ▪ Spending Restrictions document on Intranet

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 it's activities in a transparent manner. Both external and internal audit contribute to effective accountability.

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:	What is in place to support this?
Implementing good practice in transparency	G1 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 G2 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 writing template and guidance
Implementing good practices in reporting	G3 Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of resources G4 Ensuring owners and senior management own the result G5 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) G6 Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate G7 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	▪ Annual Statement of Accounts audited by external auditor and approved by Council ▪ Code of Corporate Governance based on CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 2016 ▪ Annual Governance Statement ▪ Corporate Plan Annual Performance Report ▪ Service Business Plans produced annually and reviewed quarterly by each service area
Assurance and effective accountability	G8 Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon G9 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	▪ External Audit provided by Wales Audit Office ▪ Performance of Internal Audit Section monitored by Audit Committee ▪ Implementation of WAO and Internal Audit recommendations monitored by Audit Committee

	G10 Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations G11 Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement G12 Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met	▪ Peer Review, Corporate Assessment and Corporate Governance Review action plan monitored by Corporate ▪ Management Team ▪ Annual Governance Statement