



Code of Corporate Governance

FOREWORD

From the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee

Good governance is at the heart of good local government. It is not just about systems and process, but how we plan, engage, evolve and adapt to the legislative and risk environment we face in delivering our priorities. Across the Country, over the past few years, we have seen all too frequently the situation where governance flaws have led to Councils failing, and in turn failing to deliver quality services to their residents.

The Audit and Standards Committee plays a critical role at the Council in upholding high standards of governance; we are appointed by Council to scrutinise the Council's financial and non-financial performance, internal control environment and risk management framework, and we receive reports from internal and external auditors to provide evidence, and assurance, as to how the Council's systems of governance are operating effectively.

I am pleased to endorse this Code of Corporate Governance, setting out the commitment of Harborough District towards high standards of governance.

Councillor David Gair
Chair, Audit and Standards Committee

INTRODUCTION

Good governance

Good governance is about how the District Council ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the communities it serves, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

Our commitment

Harborough District Council is committed to upholding the highest possible standards of good corporate governance, believing that good governance leads to high standards of management, strong performance, effective use of resources, increased public involvement and trust in the Council and ultimately good outcomes.

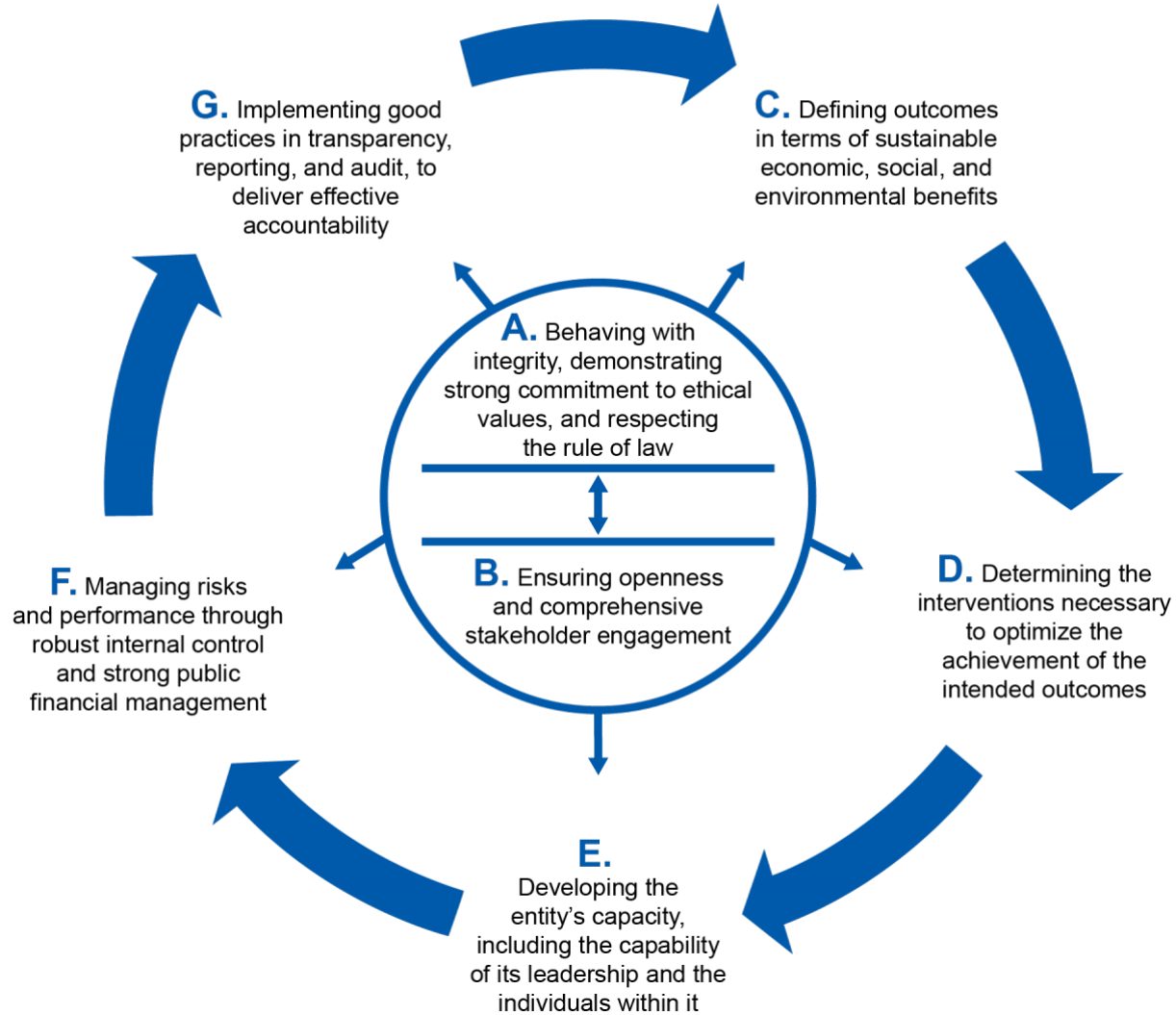
Good governance flows from shared values, culture and behaviour and from systems and structures. This Code of Corporate Governance is a public statement that sets out the framework through which the Council meets its commitment to good corporate governance. The Governance Framework comprises the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and through which it accounts to, engages with and, where appropriate, leads the community. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate cost-effective services

The corporate governance of Harborough is based on the following principles recommended by CIPFA/SOLACE in a joint document entitled 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' which builds on the seven Principles for the Conduct of Individuals in Public Life (Appendix A):

- 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 optimize 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.

This document describes how the Council achieves the seven principles of good governance and describes how the Council's corporate governance arrangements will be monitored and reviewed.

Achieving the Intended Outcomes While Acting in the Public Interest at all Times



How this Code has evolved

This version of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance was first adopted in 2018, based upon the revised CIPFA/SOLACE framework on good governance in local government published in 2016. It has been updated to reflect the Addendum to the CIPFA/SOLACE framework published in 2025.

Since 2016, there have been a number of publications and supporting documents in response to changing risks and pressures within local government. These have included:

- The 'Code of Practice on Good Governance for Local Authority Statutory Officers' (LLG / CIPFA / SOLACE 2024)
- The 'Best value standards and intervention: a statutory guide for best value authorities' (MHCLG, 2024)
- The 'Governance Risk and Resilience Framework' (Centre for Governance and Scrutiny / Localis 2020)

As with many authorities, the basis for the Council's Code continues to be the CIPFA/SOLACE 2016 framework as the underlying best practice guidance for the sector. However, the other publications and guidance have been reviewed to assess the Council's compliance and demonstrate how the Council meets the requirements for each Principle in the framework. This is reflected in strengthening references to peer reviews; reflecting the arrangements in place for oversight of the Council's wholly owned company, and inclusion of references to data protection and accessibility in light of changing legislation. Changes have also been made to reflect developments within the Council, such as the adoption of a Climate Emergency.

The Code is expected to act as a standing framework to represent the governance arrangements the Council has in place. How the Council has complied with its governance framework and the steps it has taken to strengthen this each year are reflected in the Annual Governance Statement, which accompanies the statement of accounts and is approved by the Audit and Standards Committee.

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

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle:	This is evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for ethical conduct on the part of members and officers • Arrangements for the ethical conduct of external service providers • Whistleblowing arrangements • Complying with laws, regulations and spending lawfully • How breaches are identified and learning happens • How those in leadership demonstrate an ethical culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect through its Constitution, Corporate and Team Plans and other key policies. • The Council’s Codes of Conduct for officers and members, and supporting guidance, communicate the expectation that members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated, thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation. The Council’s Constitution (Part 5) sets out the principles which underpin the Codes of Conduct, based on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles). Training on the code of conduct and protocols is a requirement for all councillors. • The Council has in place a Values Handbook and performance management Framework, which ensures that Harborough’s vision and values are communicated to, and understood by, staff. This framework forms the basis of the annual staff appraisal process. • The Council has in place arrangements to ensure that Councillors and employees of the authority are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders, and has in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice. This includes maintaining the statutory Register of Members Interests and requiring officers to make Declarations of Interests. • The Council has in place arrangements to ensure that core corporate policies and processes are designed in conformity with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Corporate Plan • Council Team plans • The Council’s Constitution • Members Code of Conduct • Officers Code of Conduct • Performance management Framework • Values Handbook • Members’ Interests disclosures • Declaration of Interest Guidance • Gifts and Hospitality guidance • Members Induction/Training • Financial Regulations • Contract Procedure Rules • Scheme of Delegation • Grievance Policy and Procedure • Adoption of “debate not hate” • Audit and Standards Committee

	<p>ethical standards and are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are operating effectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council welcomes peer review to support its improvement. The most recent review (November 2024) included consideration of ethical governance. The Council's Constitution establishes a clear ethical framework for the Council's operation, and core corporate policies and procedures place emphasis on agreed ethical values.• The Council's Codes of Conduct and Values Handbook ensures that personal behaviour is underpinned with ethical values which permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation.• The Council maintains an effective Audit and Standards Committee which reviews the volume and nature of complaints against councillors. There are agreed procedures for handling complaints against councillors with escalation to the Standards Sub-Committee where appropriate.• The Council's policies and culture set the tone for members and staff to demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations, and ensure that statutory officers, other key post holders, and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements.• The Council maintains and implements a Whistleblowing Policy to enable employees to raise any concerns of wrongdoing in confidence and without fear of reprisal. External suppliers, members of the public and Councillors may raise any concerns about suspected illegal or illegitimate practices via the Council's formal Complaints Procedure.• The Council recognises the limits of lawful action and observes both the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on it by public law. The Council observes all specific legislative requirements placed upon it, as well as the requirements of general law, and deals with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively. The Council strives to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anti Bribery Policy and Money laundering Policy• Peer Challenge outcomes report and follow-up action plan• The Council's Constitution• Audit and Standards Committee• Members Code of Conduct• Officers Code of Conduct• Values Handbook• Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy• Counter Fraud response plan• Anti-Bribery Policy• Anti-Money Laundering Policy• Whistleblowing Policy• Formal Complaints Procedure• Role of the Monitoring Officer as per the Constitution and Complaints Procedures.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council ensures corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively through the Anti-Bribery Policy, The Counter Fraud Response Plan and the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.• The Council actively promotes its adoption of the Local Government Association's "Debate not Hate" campaign to support civil behaviour across the organisation and those that engage with it	
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Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions are made in the public interest and the rationale recorded • Being open and transparent, with open internal challenge and assessment • Arrangements for consultation and how they inform decision making • Communicating with stakeholders and citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Constitution, Forward Plan and Executive system ensures that decision-making is open and there is appropriate oversight and challenge, with an organisational commitment to openness. • The Council makes decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. Committee meetings are held in public, livestreamed and minutes and papers are available to the public on the Council's website, including regular financial and performance forecasts. If a decision needs to be kept confidential, then the justification for this is provided. • The Council's Corporate Plan, Statements of Accounts, and key strategies are available through the District Council Website. • An effective Internal Audit function is resourced and maintained, with regular reporting to the Audit and Standards Committee. • The Council is committed to being transparent, accountable and to increasing the amount of data it publishes for reuse by others. The Council maintains a Publication Scheme listing the information available to the public as a matter of course, regularly requested information and performance figures are published regarding responses to FOI requests. • The Council provides appropriate privacy statements in its communication where personal information is involved, with transparency on its website regarding the use of cookies • The Council uses formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/courses of action. • The Council considers those institutional stakeholders to whom the authority is accountable, to ensure that the purpose, objectives and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward Plan • The Council's Constitution including recording of Officers delegated decisions • Committee System and access to meeting livestreams • Internal Audit • Audit and Standards Committee • Publication Scheme • Freedom of Information guidance • Compliance Performance reports for FOI's • District Council Website • Corporate Plan • Statement of Accounts • Committee agendas, reports and minutes • Register of Members' Interests • Privacy statements • Partnerships policy including Partnership Register • Information Sharing Protocol • The Council's Constitution • Business Plan Consultation

	<p>intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council aims to develop formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively. • The Council appoints members to a range of partnership bodies to support effective working including East Midlands Councils, the Community Safety Partnership and Safer Communities Strategy Board • The Council is part of the Information Sharing Protocol, developed by public sector organizations across Leicestershire to create a positive culture of sharing information with the aim of improving service delivery. • The Council makes decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. Committee meetings are available to the public, and minutes and papers are available to the public on the Council's website, including regular financial and performance forecasts. If a decision needs to be kept confidential, then the justification for this is provided. • The Council consults on its Corporate Plan proposals and other key aspects of its vision, strategic plans and priorities, with the local community and other key stakeholders. The Council takes account of the impact of decisions on future generations of tax payers and service users. • The Council has an adopted statement of community involvement to support development of the local plan • The Council encourages, collects and evaluates the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs. The Council maintains a customer feedback and complaints procedure to enable stakeholders to submit their views on Council performance and services. The Council works to ensure compliance with accessibility standards, as set out in its accessibility statement and periodic testing to evaluate compliance • The Council has an adopted Equality Plan, demonstrating its commitment to its legal and moral duties to promote equality and fairness, and includes specific equality objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation and Engagement Protocol • Consultation page on Council website • Customer Contact Centre and Complaints Procedure • Comments, Compliments and complaints page on Website. • Accessibility statement • Equality Plan
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Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we establish our vision, targets and long term plans • How we ensure best value • How we ensure fair access to services • How we take a strategic approach to commissioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Corporate Plan forms its agreed statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes, which provides the basis for the authority's overall strategy, planning and other decisions. The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's Vision and defines the key outcomes for the people of Harborough. Specific Council strategies and policies link to the outcomes defined in the Corporate Plan. • The Corporate Plan sets out how the Council will deliver defined outcomes on a sustainable basis, within the resources that will be available. It also specifies the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users, for the next five years. • An annual Delivery Plan is developed to demonstrate how the Council will deliver against the Corporate Plan during the year, with both key activities and key performance targets set. These are reported to cabinet on a quarterly basis alongside financial reporting to evaluate the Council's progress in achieving its objectives. • Annual service plans are developed, aligned to the corporate and delivery plan. Actions arising from the service plan are included and monitored through the Pentana system. • The Council uses the corporate reporting tool, Pentana to identify and manage risks to the achievement of outcomes. The Corporate Risk Register is reported to and reviewed by the Council's Corporate Management Team, and the Audit and Standards Committee for Performance on a regular basis. The Council considers and balances the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies and plans when taking decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan • Corporate Delivery Plan • Team Plans • Corporate Management Team • Risk and Opportunity Management Toolkit & framework • Corporate Risk Register • Statement of Accounts • Capital Strategy (in MTFP) Corporate Plan • Climate Emergency Action Plan • Corporate Plan Consultation • Annual Statement of Accounts • External Auditors reports • Engagement Protocol •

	<p>about service provision. The Council seeks to take a longer-term view with regard to decision-making, which takes account of risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consultation is undertaken for the key proposals included in the Council's Corporate Plan, which identify the impact of decisions on different groups within the communities affected by the proposals.• The Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and has adopted a Climate Emergency Action Plan (which has since evolved to Climate and Nature Action Plan). A sustainability wheel will accompany key decisions to ensure that the longer term sustainability considerations are taken into account.• The Council seeks to determine the wider public interest associated with balancing the conflicts between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs.• The Council identifies and monitors corporate performance indicators, which demonstrate performance against the Council's planned outcomes and how benefits are being delivered.• The Council maintains a prudential financial framework, balancing commitments with available resources and monitoring income and expenditure levels to ensure a sustainable balance is achieved.	
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Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arrangements for service planning and projects to deliver objectives • How budgets and resources align to delivering objectives • How continuous improvement is used • How performance management is used • Delivering social value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s Corporate Project Management process incorporates Business Cases for proposed projects and savings, ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options for achieving outcomes, indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and associated risks. Progress against Corporate Projects are monitored by senior officers, with outcomes feeding into corporate reporting. • The Council’s engagement protocol ensures that decision-makers consider 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. • The Council has an established annual Business Planning process which sets a strategic plan for the Council that informs the development of strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets. The Corporate Plan is reviewed annually meaning that mechanisms for delivering outcomes are regularly reviewed and can be adapted to changing circumstances. • The Corporate Plan incorporates medium term resource planning, including changes to revenue and capital expenditure. Budgets are prepared in accordance with the Council’s objectives, strategies and the Corporate Plan. • The Service Area Team Plans establish 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. The Council ensures that capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Delivery Plan • Corporate Plan • Risk and Opportunity Management Toolkit and Framework • Business and Operational Risk Registers (from Tens System) • Corporate Risk Register • Corporate Management Team • Business Continuity Plans • Emergency Planning • Peer Review Report (November 2024) • Project Management Guide & Toolkit • Business Cases • Engagement Protocol

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council ensures the Corporate Delivery Plan integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints.• The Council's Corporate Plan 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.• Achievement of Corporate Plan outcomes is monitored and reported to the Council's Corporate Management Team through Finance and Performance Reports and other reporting.• The Council maintains a robust system of risk management which identifies risks to the achievement of the Council's intended outcomes and puts in place mitigating actions to support achievement – risk management goes to SLT then to CMT to ratify• The Council maintains systems of business continuity and emergency planning to deal with failures in service delivery or emergencies which may threaten achievement of the Council's intended outcomes. <p>The Council participates in the Local Government Association's Peer Review Programme</p>	
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Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity over member officer roles, protocols and delegation schemes • Application of Statutory Officer guidance • Financial management aligns with CIPFA guidance • Arrangements for discharge of statutory officer functions • Induction and development plans for members and officers • Workforce planning and organisational development • Learning, development, health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council recognises the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved. • The Council maintains robust recruitment and selection processes to ensure that the Council is able to attract suitable candidates, ensuring a diverse workforce that will add value to the organisation. • The Council reviews its operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness, and seeks to improve resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options, in order to determine how resources are allocated so that defined outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently. • The Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegation set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council's Executive, the Full Council, its committees and officers. The Scheme of Delegation clarifies the type of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for collective decision making of the governing body. Committee Terms of References set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council's Committees. This ensures that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained • The Council maintains protocols to ensure effective communication between Council Members and officers in their respective roles. • The "golden triangle" – Chief Executive (as Head of Paid Service), s.151 Officer and Monitoring Officer have effective relationships and meet regularly to discuss potential risks and issues to the organization. They have the right to review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Constitution • Scheme of Delegation • Committee Terms of Reference • Members Code of Conduct • Officers Code of Conduct • Protocol on Members/Officer Relations • Induction Policy • Corporate Induction • Members Induction Programme • Ongoing Member Training • Performance Appraisal/PADP Scheme • Learning and development policy • Role of Internal Audit • Intranet updates for health and wellbeing activities taking place • Health & Wellbeing updates through Staff Intranet • Stress Policy • Stress guidance for Managers • Employee assistance Programme

	<p>documents held by the authority, access to the senior leadership team and make arrangements to ensure they are satisfied with decisions to be made by the authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council develops the capabilities of members, senior management, and officers to achieve effective leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks, by:• Ensuring Members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role, and that ongoing training 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;• Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs;• Ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external;• 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.	Personal Safety Advice for Members
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Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk management, policy, strategy and review • Alignment with financial management code • Internal control including cyber, AI, information security and governance, asset management, procurement and contract management • Assurance framework – management, risk and compliance, internal audit • Internal audit arrangements • Overview and scrutiny • Internal and external challenge • Partnerships and company arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council recognises that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making. Robust and integrated risk management arrangements are in place and regularly reviewed to ensure that they are working effectively. Risk management is embedded into the culture of the Council. • The Council ensures that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated, and the Corporate Risk register is reported to and reviewed by the Council’s Corporate Management Team and the Audit and Standards Committee for performance on a regular basis. • More challenging decisions are subject to the appropriate input from external specialist expertise • The Council’s constitution establishes decision making responsibilities with regards to shared service, joint venture and companies in which the Council holds shares. • The Council’s wholly owned subsidiary has established articles of association which define the rights of the directors and the Council as shareholder. • Members and senior management are provided with regular reports on performance and progress towards outcome achievement. Members have access to Pentana, enabling them to monitor performance on a point-in-time basis • The Council makes 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk and opportunities Management toolkit and framework • Business and operational Risk Registers • Corporate Risk Register • Scrutiny panel for performance • Risk Reports to Committees • Project Management toolkit • Council Constitution • SLT / CMT agendas • Pentana Reporting • Committee agendas, reports and minutes • Performance Improvement Board • Customer Feedback • Internal Audit Reports • Counter-Fraud and Corruption Policy • Counter Fraud Response Plan • Anti-Money Laundering Policy • Internal Audit Charter

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council encourages effective and constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives, to support balanced and effective decision making. <p>The Council has two scrutiny committees, who independently develop their own work programme. The constitution establishes the right of the committees to call-in cabinet decisions and scrutinise Council performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council ensures effective counter fraud, anti-corruption and anti-money laundering arrangements are in place. • Additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by Internal Audit. • The Internal Audit service is delivered through a shared service arrangement, which ensures the team is adequately resourced and provides additional insight and expertise. It has an adopted Internal Audit Charter, which outlines the role of internal audit and demonstrates its compliance with global internal audit standards • The Internal Audit service is subject to a periodic External Quality Assessment, which is considered by the Audit and Standards Committee. • The outcomes of internal audit reviews are considered and agreed by senior management. Internal Audit outcomes are reported to the Audit and Standards Committee with an Annual Opinion provided on the systems of internal control. • The Audit and Standards Committee is independent of the Executive and accountable to the Council, and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment; ➤ ensures that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon. ➤ Reports are provided to Council on the activity of the Committee in order that Council can be satisfied its role is being discharged effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit External Quality Assessment • Internal Audit Annual Report • Annual Governance Statement • Risk and Opportunities Management toolkit and framework • Business and operational risk registers (from Tens System) • Corporate Risk Register • Audit and Standards Committee • Data Protection Policy • Information Governance Policy • Information requests Procedure (FOI/EIR) • ICT Security Policy • Data loss Procedure and Data Protection Guidelines • Document retention policy including service schedules (information asset register) • Information Sharing protocol • Senior Information Risk Owner – Liz is SIRO • Financial Regulations • Corporate Plan • Business Planning Process • Budget Guidelines Document • Audit and Standards Committee • Annual Treasury Management Report and
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's information governance policies and procedures ensure that effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data. • The Council's Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) has lead responsibility to ensure that organizational information risks are properly identified and managed. • The Council ensures effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies. • e Council ensures that its financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance. • Ensures well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls. • The Council ensures that officers with a role in financial management are provided with documentation to ensure support for robust public financial management. • The Council has assessed its treasury management arrangements against the CIPFA Financial Management code of practice • The Council ensures it is compliant in reporting its Treasury Management Activity, with the Annual Report and Strategy being considered by Cabinet prior to adoption by Council • The Council's capital strategy and minimum revenue provision are reviewed annually as part of the budget-setting process The Council's External Auditor provides an opinion on the Council's Value for Money, which is considered by the Audit and Standards Committee. The Committee receive reports from External Audit on the Council's financial management and areas for development. 	<p>Treasury Management Strategy</p>
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Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely response to auditors and other inspectors • External challenge and implementing recommendations • Actioning learning and improvement • Transparency and accountability for arms length arrangements • Accountability to the public includes clear assurances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council seeks to write and communicate reports and other information for the public and other stakeholders in a fair, balanced, accessible and understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate. • The Council complies with the Local Government Transparency Code and publishes information required in a timely manner. • The Council provides appropriate information to the public to ensure transparency, striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny, while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand. • The Council's Annual Governance Statement ensures robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in this Framework have been applied, and the results of this assessment are published. • The Council ensures that the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other, similar organisations. The Council maintains open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based. • The Council maintains an effective Audit and Standards Committee and ensures that an effective internal audit function, with direct access to Members, is resourced and maintained. The Internal Audit service provides assurance with regard to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee agendas, papers and minutes • District Council website • Publication Scheme • Forward Plan (what will be on agenda for each meeting) • Peer Review • Statement of Accounts • Annual Governance Statement • Annual External Audit Report and Letter • Internal Audit Reports • Committee agendas, reports and minutes Audit and Standards Committee • Role of Internal Audit • Peer Reviews • Results of External Inspections • Annual Ombudsman letter • Council Meetings

	<p>governance arrangements and verifies that recommendations are acted upon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council ensures that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon.• Harborough District Council welcomes peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies, as a result of which action plans are identified to implement recommendations.• When working in partnership, the Council ensures that arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met.	
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MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Council will undertake an annual review of its governance arrangements to ensure continuing compliance with best practice to provide assurance that corporate governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively in practice. Where reviews of the corporate governance arrangements have revealed gaps, actions will be planned to enhance the governance arrangements accordingly.

The Council will prepare an Annual Governance Statement which will be submitted to the Audit and Standards Committee for consideration and will form part of the Council's annual Financial Statement.

The Governance Statement will include:

- an acknowledgement of responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of governance (incorporating the system of internal control) and reference to the authority's code of governance;
- a reference to and assessment of the effectiveness of key elements of the governance framework and the role of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;
- an opinion on the level of assurance that the governance arrangements can provide and that the arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework;
- a reference to how issues raised in the previous year's annual governance statement have been resolved; and
- a conclusion including a commitment to monitoring implementation as part of the next annual review.

The Annual Governance Statement will be signed by the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee and the Chief Executive on behalf of the Council.

In reviewing and approving the Annual Governance Statement, members will be provided with detailed information regarding the effectiveness of the governance arrangements and system of internal control and how these address the key risks faced by the Council. Those Assurances will be available from a wide range of sources, including internal and external audit, a range of external inspectorates and managers from across the Council.

The Council will continually strive to operate an assurance framework, embedded into its business processes, that maps corporate objectives to risks, controls and assurances. This framework and regular reports on its application and effectiveness will provide members with assurances to support the Annual Governance Statement and will help members to identify whether corporate objectives and significant business risks are being properly managed.