

Code of Corporate Governance

Introduction

Each local authority operates through a governance framework. The governance framework is an interrelated system that brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, standards of behaviour, and management processes.

Good governance means that the way a local authority operates is based on sound and transparent decision making with an effective process to support it.

This Code sets out Ealing Council's governance framework.

It follows the principles of the CIPFA / SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016 Edition

Core Principles

Ealing Council is committed to the principles of good governance and has adopted the six core principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework as follows

- 1. We are clear about our purpose, our vision for the local area and how we will implement our vision in order to achieve the desired outcomes**
 - We develop and promote the authority's vision and purpose
 - We review on a regular basis our vision for the local area and its implications on our governance arrangements
 - We ensure that partnerships are underpinned by a common vision of their work that is understood and agreed by all parties
 - We publish an annual report on a timely basis to communicate our activities and achievements our financial position and performance
 - We decide how the quality of service for users is to be measured and make sure that the information needed to review service effectively and regularly is available
 - We put in place effective arrangements to identify and deal with failures in service delivery
 - We decide how value for money is measured and make sure that the authority or partnership has the information needed to review value for money and performance effectively
 - We measure the environmental and community safety impact of policies, plans and decisions

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

- We set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the executive and of the executive's members individually and our approach towards putting this into practice
- We set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of authority members, members generally and of senior officers
- We determine a scheme of delegation and reserve powers within the constitution including a formal schedule of those matters reserved specifically for collective decision of the authority taking account of relevant legislation and ensure that it is monitored and updated when required
- We make the chief executive responsible and accountable to the authority for all aspects of operational management
- We make a senior officer (the S151 officer) responsible to the authority for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal financial control
- We make a senior officer (the monitoring officer) responsible to the authority for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes and regulations are complied with.
- We develop protocols to ensure effective communication between members and officers in their respective roles
- We set out the terms and conditions for remuneration of members and officers and an effective structure for managing the process.
- We ensure that the organisation's vision, strategic plans, priorities and targets are developed through robust mechanisms, and in consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders, and that they are clearly articulated and disseminated
- When working in partnership we ensure that members are clear about their roles and responsibilities both individually and collectively in relation to the partnership and to the authority
- When working in partnership we ensure that there is clarity about the legal status of the partnership and that representatives of organisations both understand and make clear to all other parties the extent of their authority to bind their organisation to partner decisions

3. We promote the values of the authority and demonstrate the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour

- We ensure that the authority's leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect
- We ensure that standards of conduct and personal behaviour expected of members and staff, of work between members and

staff and between the authority, its partners and the community are defined and communicated through codes of conduct and protocols

- We put in place arrangements to ensure that members and employees of the authority are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflict of interest in dealing with different stakeholders and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice
- We develop and maintain shared values, including leadership values both for the organisation and staff reflecting public expectations and communicate these with members, staff, the community and partners
- We put in place arrangements to ensure that procedures and operations are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards and monitor their continuing effectiveness in practice.
- We develop and maintain an effective standards committee
- We use the organisation's shared values to act as a guide for decision making and as a basis for developing positive and trusting relationships within the authority
- In pursuing the vision of a partnership, we agree a set of values against which decision making and actions can be judged. Such values must be demonstrated by partners' behaviour both individually and collectively.

4. We take informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and manage risk effectively

- We develop and maintain an effective scrutiny function which encourages constructive challenge and enhances the organisation's performance overall and of any organisation for which it is responsible.
- We develop and maintain open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based
- We put in place arrangements to safeguard members and employees against conflicts of interest and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice
- We develop and maintain an effective audit committee which is independent
- We put in place effective transparent and accessible arrangements for dealing with complaints
- We ensure that those making decisions whether for the authority or partnership are provided with information that is fit for the purpose – relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications.
- We ensure that professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making and used appropriately

- We ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the organisation, with members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their job
- We ensure that arrangements are in place for whistle blowing to which staff and all those contracting with the authority have access
- We actively recognise the limits of lawful activity placed on us by, for example the ultra vires doctrine but also strive to utilise powers to the full benefit of their communities
- We recognise the limits of lawful action and observe both the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on local authorities by public law
- We observe all specific legislative requirements placed upon us, as well as the requirements of general law, and in particular integrate the key principles of good administrative – rationality, legality and natural justice into our procedures and decision-making processes

5. We develop the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective

- We provide induction programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for members and officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis
- We ensure that the statutory officers have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and that these roles are properly understood throughout the organisation
- We assess the skills required by members and officers and make a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively
- We develop skills on a continuing basis to improve performance including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and to recognise when outside expert advice is needed
- We ensure that effective arrangements are in place for reviewing the performance of the authority as a whole and agreeing an action plan which might for example aim to address any training or development needs
- We ensure that effective arrangements are in place designed to encourage individuals from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the authority
- We ensure that career structures are in place for members and officers to encourage participation and development

6. We engage with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

- We make clear to ourselves, all staff and the community, to whom they are accountable and for what
- We consider those stakeholder bodies to whom the organisation is accountable and assess the effectiveness of the relationships and any changes required
- We produce an annual report on scrutiny function activity
- We ensure that clear channels of communication are in place with all sections of the community and other stakeholders including monitoring arrangements to ensure that they operate effectively
- We hold meetings in public unless there are good reasons for confidentiality
- We ensure arrangements are in place to enable the authority to engage with all sections of the community effectively. These arrangements recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish explicit processes for dealing with these competing demands
- We establish a clear policy on the types of issues they will meaningfully consult on or engage with the public and service users including a feedback mechanism for those consultees to demonstrate what has changed as a result
- On an annual basis we publish a performance plan giving information on the authority's vision, strategy, plans and financial statements as well as information about its outcomes, achievements and the satisfaction of service users in the previous period
- We ensure that the authority as a whole is open and accessible to the community, service users and its staff and ensure that it has made a commitment to openness and transparency in all its dealings, including partnerships subject only to the need to preserve confidentiality in those specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so
- We develop and maintain a clear policy on how staff and their representatives are consulted and involved in decision making

Corporate Governance Framework

Key Documents

Strategic	Responsible officer
Community strategy	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Council's Forward Plan	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Strategic Leadership Team Forward Plan	Chief Executive
Directorate Business Plans	Strategic Directors
Local Plan	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Council Plan	Chief Executive
Finance/Procurement	
Annual Statement of Accounts	Strategic Director of Corporate Resources
Budget Book	Strategic Director of Corporate Resources
Medium Term Financial Strategy	Strategic Director of Corporate Resources
Annual Budget Report	Strategic Director of Corporate Resources
Capital Strategy	Strategic Director of Corporate Resources
Review and Audit	
Annual Performance Plan	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Annual Governance Statement	Assistant Director of Audit and Investigation
Annual Audit Committee report	Assistant Director of Audit and Investigation
Annual Report on Scrutiny	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Annual Report on Standards Committee	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Key performance indicator risk scorecards	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Internal and external auditors reports on key performance indicators	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Corporate Risk Register	Assistant Director of Audit and Investigation
Service Specific Inspectorate Reports	Strategic Director of relevant Service
Audit Commission Inspection	Assistant Director of Audit and Investigation
Annual Letters of representation from service heads and above	Assistant Director of Audit and Investigation
Internal Audit Charter	Assistant Director of Audit and Investigation
Procedures	
Constitution including Standing Orders	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Scheme of Delegation	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Decision making toolkit	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Published agendas, reports and minutes of committees and portfolio holder decisions	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Financial Procedure Rules	Strategic Director of Corporate Resources
Procurement Code	Assistant Director - Commercial Hub
Contract Procedure Rules	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Customers	
Consultation and community engagement policy	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Customer Service Charter	Director of Customer Services
Freedom of Information Publication Scheme	Director of Business Services
Trust Charter	Director of Customer Services
Information Sharing Protocol	Director of Business Services
Around Ealing Magazine	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Equalities Impact Assessments	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Complaints procedures	Director of Customer Services

Residents Satisfaction Survey	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Officers and Members	
People Strategy	Director of Human Resources
Code of Conduct for employees	Director of Human Resources
Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy	Assistant Director of Audit and Investigations
Pay and Conditions of employment	Director of Human Resources
Job descriptions	Director of Human Resources
Performance Management Framework	Director of Human Resources
Disciplinary policies	Director of Human Resources
Whistle Blowing policy	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Officer induction and training and Development plans	Director of Human Resources
Staff survey	Strategic Director of Strategy and Change
Protocol on Member/officer relations	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Code of Conduct for members	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Members' Planning Code	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Members' Licensing Code	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Register of Interests	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Members' allowances scheme	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Members induction and training programme	Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Contributory appointments and bodies

Council
Cabinet
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Scrutiny Panels
Strategic Leadership Team
Standards Committee
Ward forums
Local Strategic Partnership
Employee Forum
Audit Committee
Appointment of Head of Paid Service
Appointment of Monitoring Officer
Appointment of S151 officer
Residents Panel

Review of the Corporate Governance Framework

The Council reviews its Corporate Governance Framework each year for the purpose the Annual Governance Statement. Any actions required to improve governance arrangements are identified in the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan.