Code of Corporate Governance

2023-24

Scope of Responsibility

Exeter City Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and 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.

In addition to meeting statutory obligations and organisational objectives, the Council's governance framework is required to meet the following <u>seven principles</u> of good governance:

1. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the law
2. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
3. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
4. Determining interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
5. Developing the Council's capacity. Including the capability of its leadership and individuals within it
6. Managing risk and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
7. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

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, including arrangements for the management of risk. The Council has approved and adopted this Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (CIPFA/Solace 2016) and which identifies the systems, processes and documents that contribute to the Council's governance arrangements

The Purpose of the Governance Framework

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

The Council's 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. There is an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise risks to the achievement of Council policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and impact of those risks being realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Corporate Governance Framework

Meeting Statutory Obligations	Behaving with integrity	Defining outcomes	Developing the Council's capacity	Delivering effective accountability

Meeting Organisational Objectives	Ensuring openness	Determining interventions	Managing risk and performance

The Council's commitment to good governance based on the requirement to meet statutory obligations, organisational objectives and is based on the seven principles of Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (CIPFA/Solace 2016)

Regulatory
Constitution
Terms of Reference
Members' Code of Conduct
Member/Officer Protocol
Scheme of Delegation
Financial Regulations
Standing Orders
Record of Decisions
Forward Plan
Register of pecuniary interests
Register of gifts & hospitality
Audit & Governance Committee
Regulatory Oversight
Scrutiny Framework
Other Council constituted
Boards, Groups and Committees
External Audit
Internal Audit
Head of Paid Service
Section 151 Officer
Monitoring Officer
Member Development
Framework
Member's Toolkit

Corporate
Corporate Work Programme
Corporate Plan
Risk Management Policy &
procedures
Business Continuity Policy & Plans
Corporate Risk Register
Performance Management
framework
Corporate Complaints Procedure
Exeter Community Strategy
Exeter Community Forum
Surveys/Focus Groups
Record of public consultations
Equalities and Diversity Policy
Access to Information Policy
FOI Publication Scheme
Website transparency pages
Information Governance
Framework
Information Security Policy
Partnership Guidance
Oversight & Performance
Monitoring in respect of Local
Authority Companies

Finance
Medium Term Financial
Strategy
Budget Monitoring Process
Treasury Management
Strategy
Statement of Accounts
Annual Governance
Statement
Prudential Code for Capital
Finance
Statement on the role of CFO
Statement on the role of HIA
Counter Fraud Strategy
Anti-Money Laundering
Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Fraud reporting on website
Compliance with Public
Sector Internal Audit
Standards
Capital Programme
Council tax
leaflet/information

HR Policies
Pay Policy
Officers' Code of
Conduct
Staff Induction
Staff Training &
Development
Programme
Staff Surveys
Growth & Development
Reviews
Job Evaluation
Process
Job Descriptions
Corporate Health &
Safety Policy
Employee Assistance
Programme
Disciplinary procedure

Review of effectiveness

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by managers within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the work of the internal auditors and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

The processes for maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance framework are:

* Executive is responsible for considering overall financial and performance management and receives comprehensive reports throughout the year;
* Strategic Scrutiny Committee monitors the overall strategic financial position of the Council;
* Audit & Governance Committee monitors the effectiveness of risk management, Internal Audit and the system of internal control. Budget monitoring reports are also presented quarterly to the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee;
* Annual reviews of the Council's key financial and non financial systems by Internal Audit against known and evolving risks and cyclical reviews by Internal Audit of internal controls in operation within each service area against known and evolving risks are reported on a quarterly basis to the Audit & Governance Committee;
* The Monitoring Officer provides assurance that the Council has complied with its statutory and regulatory obligations;
* Annual reviews of the Council's financial accounts and records by the External Auditors leading to their opinion as published in the year-end statements;
* Ongoing reviews of strategic and operational risks in each service area and the conduct of risk analysis and management in respect of major projects undertaken by the Council;
* Reviews and, where appropriate, updates of the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders

Date of next review

The Code of Corporate Governance will be reviewed annually by the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Executive Support Unit and presented to the meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee in March 2024.