

APPENDIX A



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

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Introduction

Corporate governance is a phrase used to describe how organisations direct and control what they do. For local authorities this also includes how a council relates to the communities that it serves. Good corporate governance requires local authorities to carry out their functions in a way that demonstrates accountability, transparency, effectiveness, integrity, and inclusivity. The *Code* will support the Council in its place-shaping role and in driving the citizen and community agendas.

This *Code* is a public statement that sets out the way in which the Council will meet this commitment. The *Code* is based upon the following six Principles:

1. Focusing on the Council's purpose and community needs;
2. Having clear responsibilities and arrangements for accountability;
3. Good conduct and behaviour;
4. Taking informed and transparent decisions that are subject to effective Scrutiny and risk management;
5. Developing the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective; and
6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

Each of these principles is an important part of Manchester City Council's corporate governance arrangements. This document describes how the Council will meet and demonstrate its commitment to good corporate governance.

Also described in this document is how and by whom the Council's corporate governance arrangements will be monitored and reviewed.

Underpinning all business of the Council is that it must be conducted in accordance with the Principles of Public Life. *The Nolan Committee Report* published in May 1995 set out seven principles of conduct which should underpin public life; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership

Our vision is that Manchester will be a world-class city with a larger population that is wealthier, living longer, healthier, happier lives in communities that are diverse and cohesive. We strongly believe that good governance will enable us to pursue this vision in the most effective way.

Signed

Sir Richard Leese
Leader
Manchester City Council

Signed

Sir Howard Bernstein
Chief Executive
Manchester City Council

THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

1. Focusing on the Council's Purpose and Community Needs

1.1 Exercising leadership by developing and clearly communicating the Council's purpose and vision and its intended outcome for citizens and service users.

1.1.1 The Council via its Members and Officers will develop and promote its purpose and vision through effective engagement with the residents of Manchester and in partnership with key stakeholders to create and implement a vision for Manchester which will achieve better outcomes for Manchester people. It will communicate this vision through the publication of the *Community Strategy* overseen by the City Council and its partners through the Manchester Partnership.

The delivery of the *Community Strategy* will be supported by the *Local Area Agreement (LAA - our three year Agreement with partners and Government)* by the Council's *Corporate Plan* together with detailed *Business Plans* for each of the services provided by or on behalf of the Council and by clear plans from each of the five thematic partnerships outlined through the *LAA*. These documents outline the key strategic outcomes and key improvement priorities over a three year period, to be delivered either by the Council on its own, or in partnership with others.

1.1.2 The Council will promote and regularly review the *Community Strategy* to ensure it remains relevant and focused on how our vision can be achieved.

1.1.3 The *Code* will focus on the Council's relationship with partnerships and governing bodies of schools as well as our direct role.

1.1.4 The Council will explain and report regularly on activities, performance and the Council's financial position. Timely, objective and understandable information about the Council's activities, achievements, performance and financial position will be provided. The Council will do this by publishing:

- (i) A *Corporate Plan* and associated *Business Plans* outlining key objectives;
- (ii) A *Local Area Agreement* setting out our priorities and targets for the next three years of the *Community Strategy* agreed with our partners and Government;
- (iii) An *Annual Report* outlining what the Council has achieved in the previous year;
- (iv) A *Medium Term Financial Strategy* outlining how finances will be used over the coming three years;

- (v) Annual “*State of the City*” and “*State of The Wards*” reports outlining key aspects of performance that are underpinned by independently verified performance information.

1.2 Ensuring that service users receive a high quality of service, whether directly, or in partnership, or by commissioning. Ensuring that the Council makes best use of resources and that taxpayers and service users receive value for money.

1.2.1 The Council will aim to ensure that it makes best use of resources and that taxpayers and service users receive excellent value for money. The Council will do this by:

- (i) Ensuring appropriate and effective business continuity arrangements are in place for all services;
- (ii) Seeking feedback from service users to continuously drive improvement;
- (iii) Commissioning services to meet the needs of the local community, and put in place processes to ensure that they operate effectively in practice;
- (iv) Ensuring that services are prioritised so that resources are directed to those activities that will have the greatest impact on the outcomes set out in the *Community Strategy*;
- (v) Developing effective relationships and partnerships with other public sector agencies and the private and voluntary sectors;
- (vi) Responding positively to the findings and recommendations of external auditors and statutory inspectors and putting in place arrangements for the implementation of agreed actions;
- (vii) Comparing outcomes for Manchester with comparable authorities and other relevant bodies and assessing our performance against our aspirations for Manchester set out in the *Community Strategy*;
- (viii) Comparing information about our functions and performance with those provided by similar organisations and assessing why levels of economy, efficiency and effectiveness are different elsewhere; and
- (ix) Considering the environmental impact of our policies, plans and decisions.

Key Policies and Documents

- (a) *Community Strategy*
(<http://www.manchesterpartnership.org.uk/includes/uploads/File/THE%20MANCHESTER%20WAY%20FINAL.pdf>)
- (b) *Local Area Agreement*
- (c) (<http://www.manchesterpartnership.org.uk/includes/uploads/File/Local%20Area%20Agreement/LAA%20final.pdf>)
- (d) *Manchester Local Public Service Agreement*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=50002&documentID=80)

- (e) *Manchester Children and Young Persons Plan*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/CYPP_2006-2009.pdf)
- (f) *Corporate Housing Strategy*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/housing_strategy_draft_april_09.pdf)
- (g) *Affordable Housing Strategy*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=500002&documentID=3417)
- (h) *Manchester Community Engagement Strategy*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=500006&documentID=164&pageNumber=1)
- (i) *Manchester City Council Corporate Plan*
(<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/CorporatePlan2007to2010colour2.pdf>)
- (j) *Parks for All Seasons – A Parks Strategy for Manchester*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=500002&documentID=2008)
- (j) *Manchester City Council's Departmental Business Plans*
(<http://www.mcc/perform/cprit/busplans0912/index.htm>)
- (k) *Partnership Governance Framework*
(<http://www.mcc/perform/govpart/index.htm>)
- (l) *Annual Report*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/Annual_Report_v11.pdf)
- (m) *Medium Term Financial Strategy*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=7492)
- (n) *External Audit Annual Governance Report*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/MCC_2007-08_Annual_Governance_Report_FINAL.pdf)
- (o) *Audit Commission Comprehensive Performance Assessment*
(http://cpa.audit_commission.gov.uk/STCCScorecard.aspx?TaxID=105379)
- (p) *Annual "State of the City" Report*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/StateoftheWards_2008_webv4_2_.pdf)
- (q) *Annual "State of the Wards" Reports*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/StateoftheWards_2008_webv4_2_.pdf)
- (r) *Manchester People free newspaper*

Key Procedures

- (a) Manchester Local Strategic Partnership
- (b) Manchester Improvement Programme
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=200009&documentID=82&pageNumber=1)
- (c) Ward Co-ordination
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=258)
- (d) Manchester Joint Health Unit Policies and Strategies

- (e) http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=10020&documentID=1456&pageNumber=1
Community Network for Manchester
http://www.cn4m.net/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1
- (f) Economic and Urban Policy Group
http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=50002&documentID=2684
- (g) Corporate Customer Care Standards
http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=50002&documentID=3909
- (h) Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme
<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/MCCnewmodelpublicationscheme09.pdf>
- (i) Standards Committee
http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=997&documentID=2846
- (j) Audit Committee
http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=997&documentID=2776
- (k) Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee
http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=997&documentID=2874

2. Having clear responsibilities and arrangements for accountability

2.1 Ensuring effective leadership throughout the Council and being clear about Executive and Non-Executive functions and the roles and responsibilities of the Scrutiny function. Ensuring that a constructive working relationship exists between Council Members and Officers and that the responsibilities of Council Members and Officers are carried out to a high standard. Ensuring relationships between the Council and the public are clear so that each knows what to expect of each other.

2.1.1 The Council will ensure that the necessary roles and responsibilities of those with responsibility for the governance of the Council are identified and allocated so that it is clear who is accountable for decisions that are made. The Council will do this by:

- (i) Appointing a Leader of the Council;
- (ii) Appointing an Executive with Members with defined portfolios;
- (iii) Agreeing a Scheme of Delegation to Officers whereby the legal powers granted to the Council in order for the Council to carry out its statutory functions are delegated to Strategic Directors and other appropriate Officers;
- (iv) Appointing Statutory Officers that have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and ensuring that these roles are properly understood throughout the authority;
- (v) Annually appointing Committees to discharge the Council's regulatory responsibilities;
- (vi) Annually appointing Committees to discharge the Council's Overview and Scrutiny responsibilities and maintaining systems to support Members in discharging an effective Scrutiny function;
- (vii) Supporting Members as Ward Representatives through, amongst other things, a formal process of Ward Co-ordination which focuses service improvement at a neighbourhood level;

2.1.2 Ensuring that appropriate Officers are responsible for:

- (i) Ensuring that there is a robust and embedded risk management framework in place;
- (ii) All aspects of operational management including monthly risk based monitoring of service delivery and performance improvement objectives;
- (iii) Ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal financial control; and
- (iv) Ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes, regulations, procedure rules and other relevant statements of good practice are complied with;

2.1.3 Publishing and reviewing, annually, a *Constitution* which includes:

- (i) Schemes of Delegation of both Council and Executive functions;
- (ii) A Members Allowances' Scheme, developed taking into account the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel
- (iii) Protocols governing Member / Officer relations and the roles of Members and Officers in decision making; and
- (iv) Procedures and Protocols regarding the role of Scrutiny;

2.1.4 Reviewing Executive arrangements in accordance with legislative requirements including engaging Manchester people in consultation;

2.1.5 Establishing and maintaining specific arrangements for schools having regard to the statutory requirements for delegating governance arrangements to Governing Bodies and ensuring systems are in place for sharing the Council's values and guaranteeing high standards of governance and probity;

2.1.6 Maintaining a *Partnership Governance Framework* that outlines the Council's partnership arrangements including roles and responsibilities of partners and their decision making procedures.

Key Policies and Documents

- (a) *Council Constitution*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=1182)
- (b) *Council's Partnership Governance Framework*
(<http://www.mcc/performance/nonhtml/BPguidance/PartnershipGovernanceFrameworkv3.pdf>)

Key Procedures

- (a) Council Committees
(<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents.php?categoryID=997>)
- (b) Council Overview and Scrutiny Committees
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=200033&documentID=2432)
- (c) Ward Co-ordination
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=100004&documentID=258)
- (d) School Governor Support
(<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/governors/site/>)

3. Good conduct and behaviour

3.1 Ensuring Council Members and Officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance

3.1.1 The Council will foster a culture of behaviour based on shared values, ethical principles and good conduct. Our Values are:

(i) **Pride in Our City**

We take pride in our City and the contribution we make to its success. We are committed to continuously improving the quality of life in Manchester.

(ii) **Community Focused**

We recognise that a successful city relies on the success of its neighbourhoods and communities. We want to meet the aspirations of all Manchester citizens by empowering communities and embracing their diverse identities.

(iii) **People Focused**

People are at the centre of what we do. We will achieve an excellent standard of customer service by acting with speed, efficiency and respect.

(iv) **Responsive and Accountable**

We value the contribution of residents, employees and partners. We will communicate clearly and openly about our decisions and actions and the reasons for them.

(v) **Valuing Our Employees**

We value our employees and we will support and encourage their development in working hard to deliver better services.

3.1.2 The Council will put in place arrangements to ensure that Members and employees of the authority are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders.

The Council will do this by:

- (i) Establishing and keeping under review:
 - (a) The Council's Values;
 - (b) A Member Code of Conduct;
 - (c) An Employee Code of Conduct;
 - (d) A Protocol governing Member/Officer relations;
 - (e) Systems for reporting and dealing with any incidents of wrongdoing including fraud and corruption;
- (ii) Maintaining a Standards Committee with responsibility for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct; assisting Members observe

- the Member Code of Conduct; overseeing the Council's whistle blowing policy and monitoring the Member/Officer Protocol;
- (iii) Maintaining a Personnel Committee to determine the Officer Code of Conduct;
 - (iv) Working with the Standards Board for England to develop with our partners a set of shared values and behaviours that will underpin our partnership work; and
 - (v) Developing and implementing a governance framework for significant partnerships that enables partnerships to improve standards of governance.

Key Policies and Documents

- (a) *Council Constitution*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=1182)
- (b) *Council's Partnership Governance Framework*
(<http://www.mcc/perform/nonhtml/BPguidance/PartnershipGovernanceFrameworkv3.pdf>)

Key Procedures

- (a) Standards Committee
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=997&documentID=2846)
- (b) Personnel Committee
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=997&documentID=2824)
- (c) Members Training Programme
- (d) Staff Induction Programme

4. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective Scrutiny and risk management

4.1 Being rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken, and listening and acting on the outcome of constructive Scrutiny. Having good-quality information, advice and support to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs.

4.1.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that its decision-making processes enable those making decisions to be provided with information that is relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications and that appropriate legal, financial and other professional advice is considered as part of the decision-making process.

4.1.2 The Council will be transparent about how decisions are taken and recorded. The Council will do this by:

- (i) Ensuring that, subject to limited exemptions, decisions of full Council, the Executive and Committees are made in public; are recorded and that information relating to those decisions is made available to the public;
- (ii) Ensuring that, subject to limited exemptions, key decisions taken by Council Officers under the Scheme of Delegation are recorded and that information relating to those decisions is made available to the public; and
- (iii) Having rules and procedures that govern how decisions are made including how appropriate financial, legal and professional advice is provided.

4.1.3 The Council has in place arrangements to ensure that decision makers can be held to account, including:

- (i) Establishing and maintaining an effective Scrutiny function which is able to constructively challenge decision-makers, including those who work in partnership with the Council;
- (ii) Establishing and maintaining an effective Audit Committee, to oversee the Council's corporate governance arrangements and ensure that they are operating effectively;
- (iii) Engaging the Community in decision making through the work of local Councillors and Ward Co-ordination;
- (iv) Establishing and maintaining an accessible system for dealing with customer complaints;
- (v) Establishing, reviewing and publicising a whistleblowing policy; and
- (vi) A system for dealing with local investigation and local determination of allegations of breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.

4.2 Ensuring that an effective risk management system is in place.

4.2.1 The Council will operate a risk management framework that aids the achievement of its strategic and business outcomes and priorities, protects the Council's reputation and other assets and is compliant with statutory and regulatory obligations. The Council will ensure that the risk management framework:

- (i) Enables Officers to formally identify, evaluate and manage risks;
- (ii) Maps risks to financial and other key internal controls;
- (iii) Involves elected Members in the risk management process;
- (iv) Is applied to the Council's key business processes, including strategic planning, financial planning, policy-making and review, performance management and project management;
- (v) Is applied to the Council's significant partnerships and governance arrangements with schools;
- (vi) Includes business continuity management.

4.2.2 The Council will review and, if necessary, update its risk management framework at least annually. It will also ensure that there is appropriate training and awareness-raising activity to ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the authority, with elected Members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their jobs.

4.3 Using their legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in their area.

4.3.1 The Council will use its legal powers to promote the Council's Values and the priorities set out in the Council's Key Policies and Procedures.

Key Policies and Procedures

- (a) *Constitution*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=1182)
- (b) *Council's Partnership Governance Framework*
(<http://www.mcc/perform/nonhtml/BPguidance/PartnershipGovernanceFrameworkv3.pdf>)
- (c) *Manchester City Council Corporate Plan*
(<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/CorporatePlan2007to2010colour2.pdf>)

Key Procedures

- (a) Training for Committee Members and Committee Chairs
- (b) Council's Complaints Procedure

<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents.php?categoryID=200025>

- (c) Member's training programme
- (d) Staff Induction programme
- (e) School Governor Support
(<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/governors/site/>)

5. Developing the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective

5.1 Making sure Members and Officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles.

Effective local government relies on public confidence in Members and in Officers. Good governance strengthens credibility and confidence in our public services. We need people with the right skills to direct and control the Council effectively. Governance is strengthened by the participation of people with many different types of knowledge and experience.

5.2 Developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance.

The Council will support all Members and Officers to develop the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform effectively in their roles. The Council will do this by:

- (i) Providing induction programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for Members and Officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis;
- (ii) Assessing the skills required by Members and Officers and making a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively; and
- (iii) Developing skills on a continuing basis to improve performance.

The Council will support these activities by:

- (a) Implementing a Member Development Strategy;
- (b) Achieving and maintaining the Investor in People Standard;
- (c) Developing workforce plans which assess how the workforce needs to develop and change over time to meet the needs of the Council in delivering services;
- (d) Developing leadership programmes for Members;
- (e) Developing leadership programmes to distribute the effective management of the Council across all services and at all levels and when working in partnership
- (f) Cascading regular information to Members and staff;
- (g) Developing a set of core competencies for managers, which include skills and knowledge relating to ethical governance;

5.3 Encouraging new talent for membership of the authority so that best use can be made of individuals' skills and resources in balancing continuity and renewal.

- 5.4 Ensuring that effective arrangements are in place to encourage individuals from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the Council

Key Policies and Documents

- (a) Manchester Improvement Programme
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=200009&documentID=82&pageNumber=1)

Key Procedures

- (a) Induction programme for Members and Officers
(b) Training and development plan for Officers
(c) Update courses/information for Members and Officers

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

6.1 Exercising leadership through a robust Scrutiny function that effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships, and develops constructive accountability relationships.

- 6.1.1 The Council will engage with local people and other stakeholders to inform, monitor and evaluate its service delivery and that of other public, private and third sector partners in the city. The Council will discharge this “place shaping” role by:
- (i) Communicating with residents of Manchester on issues of interest to them and maintaining effective channels for dialogue and debate;
 - (ii) Establishing and maintaining effective relationships with public, private and third sector organisations which contribute to the well being of Manchester residents;
 - (iii) Undertaking appropriate formal and informal consultation with residents and relevant partners on relevant issues;
 - (iv) Providing and supporting ways for citizens to present community concerns to the Council and its partners, both directly and via their elected representatives through Ward Co-ordination and the Councillor Call for Action;
 - (v) Ensuring that the *Community Engagement Strategy* reflects the need for the Council to engage with all sections of the city’s diverse communities and that this is supported by a *Community Engagement Toolkit* which provides managers and staff with comprehensive practical guidance and contacts;
 - (vi) Ensuring that the City Council and Manchester Partnership are accountable to local people, through their elected representatives, for the delivery of the *Community Strategy* through the Overview and Scrutiny process;
 - (vii) Building public awareness to promote electoral registration and participation and confidence in the integrity of the electoral process; and
 - (viii) Learning from complaints and other feedback on service delivery

Key Policies and Documents

- (a) *Community Strategy*
(<http://www.manchesterpartnership.org.uk/includes/uploads/File/THE%20MANCHESTER%20WAY%20FINAL.pdf>)
- (b) *Manchester Community Engagement Strategy*
(http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=500006&documentID=164&pageNumber=1)
- (c) *Manchester Community Engagement Toolkit*
(<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/ManchesterCommunityEngagementToolkit.pdf>)

Key Procedures

- (a) Council Overview and Scrutiny Committees

http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=200033&documentID=2432

(b) Ward Co-ordination

http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=100004&documentID=258

Monitoring and Review

The Council has three Committees that are jointly responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Council's Corporate Governance arrangements.

1. The Audit Committee

In summary, the Audit Committee is responsible for:

- (i) Approving the Council's Accounts;
- (ii) Reviewing and considering the work of Internal and External Audit; and
- (iii) Reviewing the Council's arrangements for risk management.

2. The Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for exercising overview and Scrutiny functions in relation to resources and governance including:

- (i) Corporate Finance;
- (ii) Human Resources;
- (iii) Governance;
- (iv) Manchester Improvement Programme;
- (v) Corporate Audit and Inspection Reports;
- (vi) Revenue and Benefit;
- (vii) IT; and
- (viii) Capital Programme.

3. The Standards Committee

The Standards Committee is responsible for:-

- (i) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Members and assisting them in observing the Code of Conduct for Members ("the Members Code");
- (ii) Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members Code and monitoring its operation;
- (iii) Advising and training Members on matters relating to the Members Code;
- (iv) Granting dispensations to Members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members Code;
- (v) Initial assessment of written allegations of breaches of the Members Code and reviewing decisions that no action should be taken;
- (vi) Dealing with any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal, and any report from the Monitoring Officer on any matter which is referred to it for determination by the Monitoring Officer, Ethical Standards Officer or the Standards Board for England;
- (vii) Dealing with reports of the Monitoring Officer regarding breaches of the protocols/guidance to Members accompanying the Members Code which do not in themselves constitute a breach of the Members Code;
- (viii) Over viewing the Council's Whistle Blowing policy; and

- (ix) Considering and determining applications for exemptions from political restriction and giving directions to the Council requiring it to include a post on its list of politically restricted posts.

The Council will ensure that these arrangements are kept under continual review by updating, as appropriate, these Committees on:

- (a) The work of Internal and External Audit;
- (b) The opinion of other review agencies and inspectorates;
- (c) Opinions from the Council's Statutory Officers;
- (d) Monitoring Reports regarding the Code of Conduct for Members and returns to the Standards Board for England;
- (e) General matters relating to the implementation of this *Code of Corporate Governance*; and
- (f) Reports prepared by managers with responsibility for aspects of this *Code of Corporate Governance*.

All Members of the Council are provided with an overall view of the work of these Committees through, for example, annual reports of the Standards Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The *Annual Governance Statement*

Each year the Council will publish an *Annual Governance Statement*. This will provide an overall assessment of the Council's corporate governance arrangements and an appraisal of the key controls in place to manage the Council's principal governance risks. The Statement will also provide details of where improvements need to be made.

The *Annual Governance Statement* will be published as part of the Council's *Annual Statement of Accounts* and will be audited by our external auditors.