



Local Code of Corporate Governance

June 2022

LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Introduction

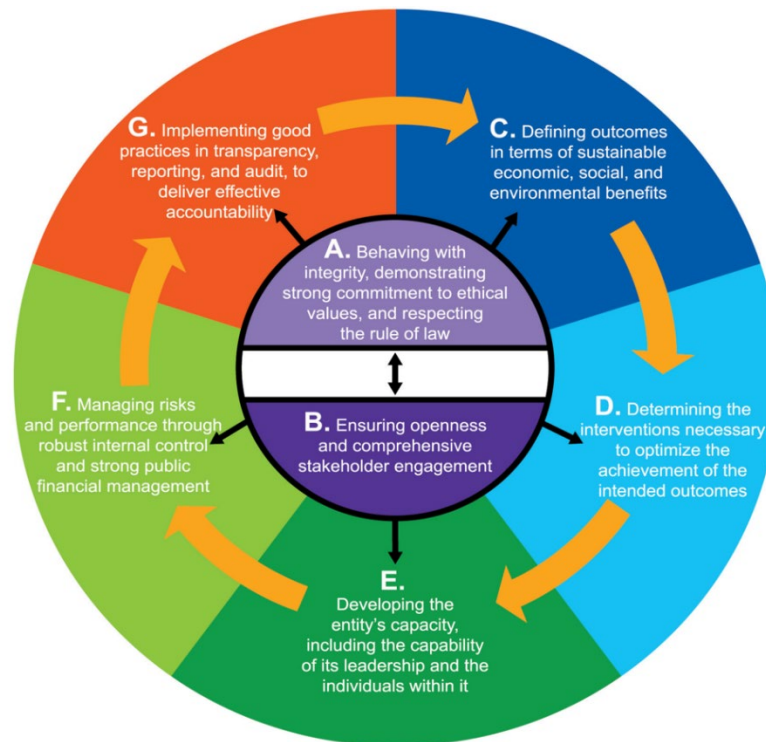
Angus Council is committed to achieving good standards of corporate governance. The Local Code of Corporate Governance describes how we intend to achieve this.

The Local Code was first adopted in 2002 and has been regularly reviewed and updated. In developing the current Local Code, we have considered best practice and guidance, in particular the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* published in April 2016 and the accompanying Scottish guidance notes published in November 2016. The overall aim of the Framework is to ensure that:

- resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities
- there is sound and inclusive decision making
- there is clear accountability for the use of those resources in order to achieve desired outcomes for service users and communities.

Delivering Good Governance

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



Delivering Good Governance sets out seven core principles for good governance:

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

The following pages set out the key policies, procedures and structures which demonstrate Angus Council's compliance with these core principles. A table is also included at the end which summarises the evidence supporting the Council compliance with the requirements of the framework, providing a link where this is available.

Annual Review

Compliance with the seven core principles for good governance will be assessed on an annual basis by the Corporate Governance Officers Group (CGOG) on behalf of the Chief Executive. CGOG members are Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation & Public Sector Reform (Chair), Director of Finance, Director of Legal & Democratic Services, Service Leader Governance & Change, Manager Support Services Education and Lifelong Learning and Performance Analyst, Governance & Change.

The Service Leader Internal Audit attends in an advisory capacity.

The results of the CGOG assessment will be reported to the Council's Corporate Leadership Team and the Scrutiny & Audit Committee. The report will incorporate recommendations for additions and/or improvements to the Council's governance arrangements, to reflect any changes in the way in which the council does business or new legislation.

CGOG's assessment of compliance will be reflected in an Annual Governance Statement which will be submitted to the June meeting of the Scrutiny & Audit Committee. The statement will be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive for inclusion in the Council's annual accounts.

The Annual Governance Statement will also be informed by the Service Leader Internal Audit's independent review of the Council's risk management processes, systems of internal control and corporate governance processes.

Core Principle A

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

- Employee Code of Conduct, [Councillor Code of Conduct](#), [Code of Conduct for Members of Angus Integration Joint Board](#). These codes include registers of interest of which the Councillors register is published on the [Council's website](#) and Gifts and Hospitality.
- Job Specific Professional Codes of Conduct – There are jobs in the Council that require the officers to operate in accordance with a professional code of conduct as well as the Council's.
- [Standing Orders of the Council](#), including Order of Reference of Committees and Scheme of Delegation to Officers. A member/ Officer Working Group (MOWG) has been established to review and update the Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, delivering the democratic process and other operational functions of the Council through the appropriate use of technology, including 'virtual' Council and Committee meetings.
- Statutory Officer roles, Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance (Section 95) Officer, Monitoring Officer, Chief Social Work Officer to ensure compliance with regulations and law.
- [Counter Fraud Framework](#) – A self-assessment against CIPFA Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption was undertaken and reported to the Scrutiny and Audit Committee in June 2021 ([Report 181/21](#)).
- The [Whistleblowing Policy](#) was updated in March 2022, including the Whistleblowing process ([Report 86/22](#), [Appendix 1](#) and [Appendix 2](#)).
- [Financial Regulations were updated in September 2021 \(Report 284/21\)](#)
- An Updated Council Plan was approved by Council in March 2022. The [Council Plan 2022-2025](#) sets out the council's vision and values.
- [Complaints Handling Procedure](#). Scrutiny & Audit committee receive regular reports on complaints received and lessons learned. A new complaints handling system and process has been implemented during 2020/21.
- [Freedom of Information \(FOI\) procedure](#). A new FOI system has been implemented during 2020/21.
- A corporate safety, health and wellbeing policy statement is in place and has been brought to the attention of all staff. Further health & wellbeing information has been added to the council's intranet as part of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Elected Member induction and training.
- Staff induction and training – All staff are required to undergo mandatory Data Protection e-learning annually and this is monitored and reported to the Director or Legal & Democratic Services. The course is updated annually to reflect areas requiring greater focus.
- Annual staff Governance Reminder – All staff are required to review the content of the Governance Reminder which is now available on the digital 'Always Learning' platform.
- Annual Performance & Development Reviews (previously known as Appraisals) are undertaken for all staff.

Core Principle B

Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

- A refresh of the [Community Plan 2017–2030](#) is planned to take place in 2022.
- Fairer Scotland Duty assessments considering socio-economic matters are undertaken in relation to the implementation of proposed new or updated policies and strategies to support Council decision-making.
- The Council's Strategic Plans, including the [Council Plan 2022-2025](#), [Finance & Change Plan](#) and [Workforce Plan Action Plan 2022-2025](#), were agreed by the Council in March 2022 as part of the budget setting process.
- ['Have Your Say'](#) section of the website includes details of current and completed consultations and has information on the Citizens Panel and 'other ways to get involved'.
- Council and Committee meetings are held in public or, as required in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, using 'virtual' technology which is also recorded to provide the public with access to the content of the meetings. [Agendas, reports and minutes](#) are available on the website. A small number of matters are considered in private for legal or confidentiality reasons in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- [Angus Community Planning Partnership](#) information can be accessed from the Council website.
- [Angus Health & Social Care Partnership](#) information can be accessed from the Council website, including Integration Joint Board agendas, reports and minutes.
- Information in relation to [AngusAlive](#) and [Tayside Contracts](#), who are also key strategic partners delivering services in our communities, can be accessed from their websites. Information in relation to the [Tayside Valuation Joint Board](#), who are also part of the Council's group accounts, can also be accessed from their website.
- [Customer Care Standards](#) are publicised on the Council website. The development of the revised strategy has been delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 and the target for completion is now 31 July 2023.
- The Council has adopted the Scottish Information Commissioner's model publication scheme. [Information is available on the Council website](#). Guidance on [Freedom of Information](#) is also available.
- Individual services consult with stakeholders on service changes or significant new projects at the time when these are being considered.
- The vision for the council's digital services is that they become so good that people will prefer to use them rather than alternative channels. Recent developments have expanded our online offering and improved the efficiency of our back-office processes (R96/21 App1, [Overview of Strategic Digital Activity](#)).

Core Principle C

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

- A refreshed [Community Plan 2017–2030](#) was approved by the Community Planning board in May 2019. This is reviewed annually and is a statutory responsibility. A refresh is planned to take place in 2022.
- The [Council Plan 2022-2025](#) was agreed by the Council in March 2021. This now includes the Council's Strategy on a Page as our key purpose statement to help to guide our thinking and what we do over the medium to long term.
- [Procurement strategy and policies](#) including Sustainable Procurement Policy.
- The Change Programme is directly aligned with the Community Plan, Locality Plans and Council Plan. The most recent Change Programme was agreed by the Council in March 2023 as part of the Finance & Change Plan ([Report 55/22 Appendix 2](#)).
- The Fairer Scotland Duty is a crucial policy instrument to make decision making more accountable. An integrated assessment, combining Equality Impact and Fairer Scotland requirements is now in place and training is being delivered across the organisation.
- Equalities Mainstreaming report update in 2021. (Report Update Report, Appendix 1, Appendix 2, Appendix 3, Appendix 4).
- The Council has agreed a [Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan \(SECAP\)](#) for Angus and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and has established a SECAP Steering Group as well as a Community Climate Forum to work in partnership with local communities ([Report 337/21](#)).

Core Principle D

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

- Angus has four Locality Implementation Partnerships and [Locality Plans](#) which cover the whole county. These give everyone the opportunity to get involved in shaping their own community.
- Medium term budget/ financial strategy subject to annual review ([Report 339/21](#) and [Appendix A](#)) and long term financial strategy under development.
- [Council Plan 2022-2025, Finance & Change Plan](#) and [Workforce Plan](#)
- The Council Plan [Annual Performance Report 2019-20](#), Community Plan 2017-30 [Annual Performance Report 2020/2021](#), and [IJB Performance Data](#).
- [AngusAlive's Annual Report](#) for 2020/21 was submitted to the March 2022 meeting of the Scrutiny & Audit Committee.
- Briefing and development sessions for elected members.
- The Council's Change Programme has a defined project 'life-cycle', together with a suite of template documents and associated guidance to ensure that a consistent approach to project management is applied, including the use of business case and options appraisal where required. Specific guidance on options appraisal has been developed for officers and elected members to support decision making.
- Change programme and governance arrangements, including Change Programme update reports to the Council's budget strategy groups, Policy & Resources and Scrutiny & Audit Committees on a regular basis.
- [Digital Strategy](#)
- Self-evaluation is being implemented across the Council, using the 'How Good Is Our Council' framework. This forms part of our broader Performance Led (PLED) Programme which all services are involved in to make better use of our performance data to support improvement activity and related outcomes. This programme was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 and was re-launched in February 2021.
- The Council Plan includes performance measures related to achieving strategic outcomes. The latest targets have been included in the 2022 update. Progress is monitored by the Corporate Leadership Team and reported annually via the Public Performance Reporting process.
- The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) Report which sets out the performance of Council services is used to inform improvements to service delivery. The most recent version was reported to the Scrutiny & Audit Committee in June 2022 (Report 164/22).
- Performance data from service areas is being regularly updated and aligned to identify how it contributes to achieving the strategic outcomes.

- The Pentana performance management system is being utilised to ensure that performance information is recorded in a purposeful and consistent manner across the organisation.
- [Performance information](#) is published on Council website.
- Budget setting process and final budget volumes (revenue and capital).
- Regular revenue and capital monitoring reports to the Policy & Resources Committee and to Communities Committee for HRA.
- The [Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2020-2023](#) published in April 2017 focuses on reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for all of Tayside's children.
- The [Angus Joint Child Poverty Local Action Plan](#) website.
- Parent Forums in each of the Angus localities.

Core Principle E

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

- Benchmarking: [Performance pages on the Council website](#) include links to the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) [mylocalcouncil](#) website.
- The [Workforce Plan Action Plan 2022-2025](#) was updated and approved in March 2022.
- Elected Members Learning & Development Programme.
- Annual Performance & Development Reviews (PDRs) for all staff. PDRs include individual staff development plans and actions are monitored on Pentana. The approach to these is currently being reviewed to link more closely with our values.
- Induction programmes for elected members and staff.
- Corporate Leadership Team and Leaders/ Cabinet meetings.
- Change forum to support the development of organisational capability to deliver improvement and change.
- Leadership Forum, Senior Leaders Forum, Middle Leaders Forum and First level Leaders Forum.
- Leadership development programme.
- Staff training programme.
- E-learning modules to support staff development.
- Mentor Me Scheme.
- Modern Apprenticeship, Graduate Apprenticeship and Angus Works programmes.
- Corporate training policy and budget to support staff development aligned with business needs.

Core Principle F

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

- Risk Management Strategy Bi-Annual Review commenced in March 2021. This was put on hold due to COVID and will be completed in 2022. This will be reviewed by the Scrutiny & Audit Committee during 2022 and approval will thereafter be requested at the next available Policy & Resources Committee.
- The Risk, Resilience & Safety team keep under regular review the Councils approach to Risk Management. Training was held with Directors and Service Leaders in January 2021.
- The Council's [Corporate Risk Register 2022](#), was considered by the Scrutiny & Audit Committee in January 2022 ([Report 16/22](#)).
- Risk Management Short user guide and Full guidance was updated in March 2020.
- Separate dashboards and risk registers are in place for the Council's ongoing response to COVID-19. Risks are included as standing agenda items and identified by the Gold and Silver Incident Management Teams. Risks are reviewed at each meeting.
- Specific presentations relating to the risks identified on the Council's Corporate Risk Register are made to the Council's Scrutiny & Audit Committee at each meeting, on a rotational basis.
- All services are involved in the Council's Performance Led (PLED) programme starting with Performance indicators review and Self Evaluation. Performance & Development Reviews (PDRs) and Risk are also involved by reviewing the current practices.
- [Performance information](#) published on the council website, including links to the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF).
- Financial Implications and Risks included in committee reports.
- [Financial Regulations](#).
- [Counter-fraud framework](#). The Counter-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, Fraud Response Plan and Whistleblowing Policy were revised during 2021/22 with no proposed changes required. Reports on counter-fraud activity are submitted to the Scrutiny & Audit committee. The Whistleblowing Policy was updated in March 2022, including the Whistleblowing process ([Report 86/22](#), [Appendix 1](#) and [Appendix 2](#)).
- An Annual Governance Statement is included in the Council's Annual Report and Accounts.
- The Information Governance Steering Group is responsible for overseeing the development of and compliance with the council's information governance policies and procedures. These are available to staff on the Council intranet. The Steering Group also oversees implementation of the Information Governance Improvement Plan.
- The [Council's Records Management Plan](#) which is regularly reviewed and updated.

- Medium Term Budget Strategy for 2022/23 to 2023/24 and development of longer-term financial strategy published in November 2021 ([Report 339/21, Appendix A, Annex 1](#)).
- [Finance & Change Plan](#) agreed by the Council in March 2022.
- Data Protection and FOI compliance.
- Internal Audit and External Audit reports are considered by the Scrutiny & Audit Committee.

Core Principle G

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

- Council and Committee [agendas, reports and minutes](#) are published on the website except where reports are restricted for legal or confidentiality reasons.
- [Annual Accounts](#) for the Council and the Integration Joint Board are published on the Council website. Annual accounts for AngusAlive, Tayside Contracts and Tayside Valuation Joint Board can be accessed from their websites.
- [Council Plan 2022-2025](#)
- Community Plan – [Annual Report 2020-2021](#)
- Scrutiny & Audit is a standing committee of the Council. Its remit and membership are defined in [Standing Orders](#). The Leader and Depute Leader of the Council are not permitted to be members of the Scrutiny & Audit Committee.
- The Council's Internal Audit service operates in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. An external quality assessment is required every 5 years, with the outcome reported to the Scrutiny & Audit Committee.
- The Scrutiny & Audit Committee approves the annual internal audit plan and receives regular update reports.
- External Audit's annual audit plan is submitted to the Scrutiny & Audit Committee for review and comment.
- External Auditor's Annual Report submitted to elected members and Controller of Audit covering Council's governance, finances and performance.
- The Accounts Commission previous [Best Value Audit report was published in October 2016](#). The latest Best Value Audit of the Council took place during end of 2021/ start of 2022. The final report is due to be published in June 2022.
- Budget monitoring reports to management and to Policy & Resources Committee.
- The latest Scrutiny & Audit Committee Self-Assessment was carried out in March 2022 and a report with the Action Plan is reported to the committee thereafter.

Principle	A			B			C		D			E			F				G		
	A. 1	A. 2	A. 3	B. 1	B. 2	B. 3	C. 1	C. 2	D. 1	D. 2	D. 3	E. 1	E. 2	E. 3	F. 1	F. 2	F. 3	F. 4	G. 1	G. 2	G. 3
Open Data Website				✓	✓	✓															
Performance Led Programme									✓	✓	✓										
Performance Website									✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Procurement Strategy and Policies							✓	✓													
Project Consultation				✓	✓	✓															
Records Management Plan															✓	✓	✓	✓			
Reducing Child Poverty									✓	✓	✓										
Risk Management Strategy															✓	✓	✓	✓			
Scheme of Delegation	✓	✓	✓																		
Scrutiny & Audit Committee	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff Induction and Training	✓	✓	✓									✓	✓	✓							
Standing Orders	✓	✓	✓																		
Statutory Officers Roles	✓	✓	✓																		
Tayside Contracts				✓	✓	✓															
Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families									✓	✓	✓										
Whistleblowing Policy	✓	✓	✓												✓	✓	✓	✓			
Workforce Plan				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							