

Code of Corporate Governance

The Lancashire Combined Fire Authority is committed to upholding the highest standards of governance in the delivery of its services to the public. This Local Code of Corporate Governance describes the principles, values and arrangements through which the Authority directs and controls its business and demonstrates accountability to the communities it serves. It brings together the systems, processes, culture and behaviours that support effective decision-making, proper stewardship of public resources, lawful action, transparency, organisational performance and continuous improvement.

The Code reflects the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) Framework: Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016) and should be read alongside the Authority's Constitution, Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations, Contract Standing Orders, Codes of Conduct and other key governance documents. The Authority recognises that good governance is not static. The Code therefore provides the basis for annual review, self-assessment and continual strengthening of governance arrangements in light of organisational learning, assurance findings, inspection outcomes and good practice developments.

Good governance depends not only on formal rules and structures, but also on effective leadership, constructive challenge, robust assurance, sound financial management, ethical conduct and clear accountability. The Authority is committed to maintaining and continuously improving these arrangements so that governance remains proportionate, transparent, resilient and fit for purpose.

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

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
Behaving with integrity	Ensuring 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	Code of Ethics Codes of conduct Induction for new members and staff on standard of behaviour expected Financial Regulations, Procedures and Standing Orders Performance appraisals Protocol on Member-Officer relations HR policies and procedures Established governance through the Equality, diversity, inclusion and culture board (EDIC)
	Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)	Authority STRIVE (Service, trust, respect, integrity, valued and empowered) values underpinned by Leadership Framework Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Annual Service Plan
	Leading by example and using these values as a framework for decision making and other actions	Declarations of interests Protocol on Member-Officer relations Procedural Standing Orders Committee terms of reference Member complaints Annual Governance Statement Annual Assurance Statement

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
	Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively	Whistleblowing policy Complaints policy Disciplinary Procedure Bullying and Harassment Policy Members and officers code of conduct refers to a requirement to declare interests Minutes show declarations of interest were sought and appropriate declarations made Register of interests (members and staff) Register of gifts and hospitality Annual Governance Statement Annual Assurance Statement
Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values	Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance	Code of Ethics Bullying and Harassment Policy Codes of conduct Authority STRIVE values Annual appraisals
	Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation	Codes of conduct Authority STRIVE values Annual appraisal
	Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values	Annual appraisal Procurement strategy
	Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with	Partnership framework Procurement strategy

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
	integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation	
Respecting the rule of law	Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations	Standing orders Financial regulations Statutory officers
	Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements	Job description/specifications Compliance with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (CIPFA, 2015) Scheme of delegation
	Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively	Clerk to the Authority Contract standing orders
	Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively	Financial regulations Contract standing orders Anti-fraud policies and procedures

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement		
Openness	Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness	Annual Service Report Freedom of Information Act publication scheme Annual Governance Statement Annual Assurance Statement Compliance with Transparency code Authority website
	Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided	Publication of Committee agendas and minutes Public meetings
	Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear	Authority and Committee timetable Authority Agenda and Minutes
	Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action	Consultation strategy

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	Effectively engaging with stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably	Consultation strategy
	Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively	Partnership framework Blue Light Collaboration Board
	Ensuring that partnerships are based on: • trust • a shared commitment to change • a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners • and that the added value of partnership working is explicit	Partnership framework
Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users	Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.	Consultation strategy
	Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement	Consultation strategy

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
	Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs	Consultation strategy
	Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account	Consultation strategy
Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits		
	Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions	CRMP Annual Service plan
	Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users.	CRMP Annual Service plan Emergency Cover Review (ECR)
	Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available	'Measuring Progress' Performance reports
	Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes	Risk management policy Corporate Risk Register

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision	Medium term Financial Strategy Capital programme
	Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints	CRMP Medium Term Financial Strategy Corporate Risk register Member briefings
	Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs	Consultation strategy
	Ensuring fair access to services	Equality Impact Assessments

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		
Determining interventions	Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided	Committee report template Member briefings
	Considering 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	Consultation strategy CRMP Annual Service Plan Budget/Financial strategy
Planning interventions	Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets	Authority and Committee timetable Calendar of dates for developing and submitting plans and reports that are adhered to Four Programme Boards overseen by a Corporate Programme Board to provide a

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
		structured governance framework for major projects, change activity and improvement work. Authority and Committee timetable Calendar of dates for plans and reports Annual Service Plan Productivity and Efficiency Plan
	Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered	Consultation strategy Representation body consultation
	Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks	Partnership framework Blue Light Collaboration Board
	Establishing 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	Performance reporting Planning Committee submissions Corporate programme Board Annual Service Report

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
	Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly	Performance reporting Corporate Programme Board projects Utilising benchmarking information where appropriate
	Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan	Budget and Medium Term Financial plan Productivity and Efficiency Plan
	Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy	Budget and Medium term financial plan Productivity and Efficiency Plan
Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints	CRMP Annual Service Plan Budget and Financial strategy
	Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term	Budget and Medium term financial plan Productivity and Efficiency Plan

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
	Ensuring the medium term financial strategy 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	Budget and Medium term financial plan Productivity and Efficiency Plan
	Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 states that this is "the additional benefit to the community...over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes"	Procurement Strategy, this operationalises the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, committing to: Encouraging suppliers to offer employment, training, and work experience opportunities within local communities Maximising local spend within Lancashire and the North West region Promoting fair employment practices, including working towards the Voluntary Living Wage and supporting diversity and inclusion

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
		Reducing environmental impact through circular procurement and carbon footprint reduction
Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it		
Developing the entity's capacity	Reviewing operations, performance use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness	Performance reports
	Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the authority's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently	Service reviews
	Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved	Partnership framework
	Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources	People Strategy Organisational Development plan

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals	Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained	Job descriptions Member-officer protocol Member briefings Management Development Programme Team Brief Training and Organisational Development Plan
	Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body	Scheme of delegation Standing orders Financial regulations Terms of reference
	Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads the authority in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority	Scheme of delegation Standing orders Financial regulations Terms of reference
	Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared 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 and development matching	Strategy Group Member Training and Development Working Group Organisational Development Plan Induction programme Appraisals Personal development plans Recruitment and Selection Procedures Organisational Assurance Team Modern Ways of Working programme

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
	individual and organisational requirements 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 - ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external	Lessons learned from inspection, audit and self-assessment
	Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation	Consultation strategy
	Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections	Member Training and Development Working Group Training and Organisational Development Plan Induction programme Appraisals 360 degree feedback Personal development plans Coaching and Mentoring
	Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs	Member Training and Development Working Group Training and Organisational Development Plan Induction programme Appraisals Personal development plans

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
		Debrief process Quarterly performance reviews across Service Delivery
	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	Occupational Health Unit Fitness advisor MIND blue light programme Events and Campaigns Wellbeing Support Dogs Employee Voice Groups Employee Assistance Programme
Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management		
Managing risk	Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making	Risk management policy Corporate risk register
	Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively	Risk management policy Corporate Risk Register
	Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated	Risk management policy Corporate Risk Register

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Managing performance	Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review	Performance Reporting Corporate Programme Board Organisational Assurance Team Preparedness visits Annual Service Report Productivity and Efficiency Plan
	Making 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	Committee timetable Committee report template Member briefings
	Encouraging effective and constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives to support balanced and effective decision making	Committee terms of reference Audit and governance arrangements Member training and development Statutory officer advice Committee reporting and assurance processes
	Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement	Committee timetable Committee report template Member briefings Performance Reporting Corporate Programme Board

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Robust internal control	Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the objectives	Risk management strategy Internal Audit plan External Audit Plan Audit reports
	Evaluating and monitoring the authority's risk management and internal control on a regular basis	Risk management policy Annual Governance Statement Annual Assurance Statement
	Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place	Anti-fraud policy National Fraud Initiative
	Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor	Annual governance statement Annual Assurance Statement Internal audit Audit Committee
	Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body: provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment and that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon	Audit Committee Terms of reference Internal and external audit reporting Training Review of audit and governance arrangements Assurance follow-up reporting Constitutional review activity

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Managing data	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data	Designated data protection officer Data protection policies and procedures
	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies	Data sharing agreements Data sharing register
	Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	Data validation procedures
Strong public financial management	Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance	Budget or Medium term financial plan Productivity and Efficiency Plan Financial Management Code
	Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls	Budget monitoring reports

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability		
Implementing good practice in transparency	Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate 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	Annual report Compliance with Data Transparency requirements Pay Policy Accessibility Service Order
Implementing good practices in reporting	Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources	Annual report Annual financial statements Annual Governance Statement Annual Assurance Statement
	Ensuring members and senior management own the results	Appropriate approvals by officers and members
	Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (annual governance statement)	Annual Governance Statement Annual Assurance Statement Governance improvement actions Internal and external audit findings Self-assessment and follow-up reporting

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
	Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate	Annual governance statement Annual Assurance Statement
	Ensuring 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	Annual report Budget and Medium term financial plan Productivity and Efficiency Plan
Assurance and effective accountability	Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon	Annual Audit Report Annual Internal Audit Report Internal Audit Monitoring Reports Compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards Audit Committee reporting Governance improvement programme Action tracking and follow-up arrangements
	Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations	Latest His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection outcome Organisational Assurance Team Annual Assurance Statement Fire Standards activity Internal and external audit Peer review and constitutional review activity National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) engagement

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Supporting Principles	To meet the requirement of this principle the Authority will	This will be evidenced by
	Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement	Annual Governance statement Annual Assurance Statement
	Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met	Partnership framework