

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Accounts and Audit Committee
Date: 28 June 2016
Report for: Approval
Report of: Audit and Assurance Manager

Report Title

Corporate Governance Code (Updated June 2016)

Summary

Trafford Council maintains a local code of corporate governance which sets out the key systems, policies and procedures that comprise the Authority's governance framework. This document is reviewed and updated regularly as required, and approved by the Corporate Management Team and Accounts and Audit Committee, to reflect any changes in governance arrangements.

The Council's Annual Governance Statement is prepared each year (in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015) and reflects an annual review against the commitments set out in the Council's Corporate Governance Code.

Trafford Council's Code of Corporate Governance is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. A copy of the existing Code is on the Council's website alongside the Council's Annual Governance Statement. <http://www.trafford.gov.uk/about-your-council/budgets-and-accounts/docs/annual-governance-statement-2014-15.pdf>

This report sets out updates to the Corporate Governance Code. In compiling the Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16, a number of updates have been made to the Code which CMT has reviewed. The updates either reflect recent developments or are included to reflect detail that has previously been included in the Annual Governance Statement but is considered more appropriate to include in the Code, reflecting existing governance arrangements expected to be in place. Where sections of the Code have been updated, the text is highlighted (See Section 4 and 7 of the Code).

The updated Corporate Governance Code will be included on the Council's website.

Recommendation

There are no fundamental changes to the Code and the Accounts and Audit Committee is asked to review the updated information in Section 7 highlighting how the Council meets key governance principles.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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Background Papers: Trafford Council Corporate Governance Code (updated June 2015).



TRAFFORD COUNCIL

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CODE

June 2016

Trafford Council Corporate Governance Code

1. What do we mean by governance?

Governance is about how local government bodies ensure that they are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

It comprises the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which local government bodies are directed and controlled and through which they account to, engage with, and where appropriate, lead their communities.

2. Trafford's commitment

Trafford Council, as a public organisation, is committed to ensuring the highest possible standards of governance in order to fulfil its responsibilities:

1. To engage in effective partnerships and provide leadership for and with the community.
2. To ensure the delivery of high quality local services whether directly or in partnership or by commissioning.
3. To perform a stewardship role which protects the interests of local people and makes the best use of resources.
4. To develop citizenship and local democracy.

Openness, inclusion, integrity and accountability are fundamental principles by which the Council operates.

3. The Governance Framework

In order to ensure the fulfilment of its commitment, the Council operates a governance framework which provides a structure to support the Council's approach to governance.

Trafford Council has based its governance framework on the guidance produced in the publication 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives & Senior Managers (SOLACE). In addition, further related guidance documents issued by CIPFA such as "the Role of the Chief Financial Officer" and the "Role of the Head of Internal Audit" are also applied.

The CIPFA / SOLACE framework sets out 6 core principles for good governance.

- Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on the outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
- Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.
- Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

- Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.
- Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.
- Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

Section 7 of the Code sets out in detail how the Authority is committed to meet the requirements of this framework.

4. How we will ensure that we deliver on these principles of good governance

Maintain a local code of corporate governance

In accordance with best practice requirements Trafford Council maintains a local code of corporate governance which sets out the key systems, policies and procedures that comprise the Authority's governance framework. This document will be reviewed and updated regularly as required, and approved by the Corporate Management Team and Accounts and Audit Committee, to reflect any changes in governance arrangements.

Undertake an annual review of governance arrangements

The Audit and Assurance Service is responsible for undertaking an annual review to evaluate the position against the commitments set out in the Council's Corporate Governance Code, the effectiveness of governance arrangements and to ensure continuing compliance with best practice.

Where appropriate, action plans will be produced to ensure any significant weaknesses identified are addressed and there is continuous improvement in the system of corporate governance.

Findings and recommendations from this exercise will be reported via the Corporate Management Team. This will be used to inform the production of the Annual Governance Statement, with significant issues reported publicly through this process.

Report publicly on compliance with governance arrangements in the Annual Governance Statement

The Authority will produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) **in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015**. This will be published and will accompany the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts. It will state what arrangements the Council has in place to ensure the effectiveness of its governance framework and how the Council has followed its stated governance principles. It will also highlight any areas the Council considers to require significant improvement; and outline the actions planned to address them.

The Accounts and Audit Committee (through an appointed working group) will review the robustness of the AGS. The Chief Executive and the Leader are required to sign off the AGS.

5. Responsibilities

Every Council officer and member has a responsibility to ensure their personal conduct and the organisation's governance arrangements are always of the highest standard possible.

Senior managers have a responsibility for reviewing governance standards in their areas of responsibility and for identifying and implementing any necessary improvement actions. Improvement actions should be reflected in the appropriate business plans.

The Chief Executive and Leader will ensure that an annual review is completed of corporate governance arrangements and give assurances on their adequacy in the published Annual Governance Statement, accompanying the Statement of Accounts.

The Corporate Management Team will ensure that the Corporate Governance Code is reviewed regularly to reflect ongoing developments and planned improvements to the framework; and authorise any amendments. Significant changes will be referred to the Council's Executive for approval.

6. Communication

The Corporate Governance Code and Annual Governance Statement will be reported publicly with a copy available on the Authority's website.

7. Trafford Council's Governance Framework

Principle 1 Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on the outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.	
Supporting Principle	How the Council meets the requirements
<p><i>1.1 Exercising strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating the authority's purpose and vision and its intended outcome for citizens and service users</i></p>	<p>The Council, as the lead partner in the Trafford Partnership, has supported the development of the long term vision for Trafford as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy "Vision 2021: a blueprint". This document describes the key objectives which underpin the work of the partnership.</p> <p>Reshaping Trafford 2014-17: a Blueprint sets out the Council's vision and aims to have a new operating model by 2017 to enable the delivery of minimum statutory requirements, ensure directly funded services are monitored for quality and performance whilst continuing to provide a place shaping role for the borough.</p> <p>The Council's corporate priorities are reviewed annually and incorporated within the Annual Delivery Plan.</p> <p>The Council publishes details of its strategy, financial position and performance on its website trafford.gov.uk. Information in relation to partnership activity and performance is reported through the Trafford Partnership website traffordpartnership.org.uk</p>

<p><i>1.2 Ensuring that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, in partnership, or by commissioning.</i></p>	<p>The Authority has put arrangements in place to measure and review the quality of service for users including mechanisms to identify and deal with failure in service delivery. Robust management information is available to enable monitoring of service quality effectively and regularly.</p> <p>The Council operates a defined Performance Management Framework. The Annual Delivery Plan sets out the key deliverables for the coming year supported by individual Directorate and Service business plans, which connect service objectives and associated actions to the community vision and corporate priorities.</p> <p>The Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Executive receive regular monitoring and exception reports on the achievement of corporate objectives. In addition, a monthly performance report is issued to Corporate Directors and Executive Portfolio holders containing performance data specific to their remit.</p> <p>The Transformation Programme is monitored by the Transformation Board on a monthly basis; this board also receives regular monitoring and exception reports relating to the achievement of project deliverables and benefits.</p> <p>The Council has implemented a Customer Strategy 2013-17 which describes its approach to delivering customer services, sets out the reasons and basis for change and proposes how current and future needs will be managed. The Council has an approved Corporate Complaints Policy and guidance.</p> <p>The Council's Contract Procedure Rules set out the agreed protocols for procurement and tendering for contracts including post contract arrangements. The Contract Procedure Rules are harmonised across the three Councils participating in STAR Procurement, the shared procurement service for Stockport, Trafford and Rochdale Councils.</p>
<p><i>1.3 Ensuring that the authority makes best use of resources</i></p>	<p>Low Council Tax and Value For Money is one of the Council's Corporate priorities.</p>

and that tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money.

The Authority consults annually on its budget proposals and these are subject to scrutiny review. The budget setting process takes into consideration the assessment by the Chief Finance Officer of the robustness of the budget estimates and adequacy of the general reserve, Executive responses to the scrutiny review, outcome of staff and Trade Union consultation and Equality Impact Assessment in relation to each proposal.

The Council has implemented a **Transformation Programme** which is supporting the organisation to review and re-design existing functions and service areas to improve service delivery, achieve savings and establish the infrastructure required to manage the future financial challenges. The Transformation Board and the Executive have monitored the development of the Reshaping Trafford Council Programme business cases and will continue to do so as implementation of these progresses.

There are defined governance arrangements in place. Significant projects for the Council have a Corporate Management Team lead, and all have a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), Project Manager (PM) and steering group/project board. Benefits realisation tracking and a summary of project delivery is reported monthly to the Transformation Board.

The Council hosts the Association of Greater Manchester (AGMA) **Procurement Hub** and has established a collaborative Procurement shared service organisation with Stockport and Rochdale Councils (STAR Procurement), with the aim to reduce overheads, increase economies of scale and provide collective expertise and resilience.

The Authority has agreed a **Procurement Strategy** which is harmonised across the three councils that participate in STAR Procurement. It establishes how the councils can use procurement to focus activity on delivery of outcomes and realise corporate priorities during a period of local government reform. It highlights the importance of the procurement function throughout the lifecycle of service delivery, from initial inception through to contract management.

The Authority has defined **Budgetary Control Procedures** in place. **Revenue Budget**

	<p>Monitoring reports are reported to the Corporate Management Team and the Executive on a monthly basis to enable monitoring of income and expenditure levels, to ensure that commitments are within available resource levels and corrective action is taken when necessary. The Accounts and Audit Committee also receives the budget monitoring reports at its meetings through the year.</p> <p>The Council's financial framework keeps its commitments in balance with available resources. There are arrangements in place to ensure compliance with CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and CIPFA's Treasury Management Code. The Council has a clearly defined Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy. The capital budget is monitored and reported to the CMT and Executive each quarter.</p>
<p>Principle 2 Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.</p>	
<p>Supporting Principle</p>	<p>How the Council meets the requirements</p>
<p><i>2.1 Ensuring effective leadership throughout the authority and being clear about the executive and non-executive functions and the roles and responsibilities of the scrutiny function.</i></p>	<p>The Council has adopted a Constitution which provides a clear statement of how it operates, defining the respective roles and responsibilities of the Executive and non-Executive members.</p> <p>Article 15 of this document sets out the protocols and the role of the Monitoring Officer to monitor and review the operation of the constitution. The Council reviews elements of the Constitution each year at its annual meeting.</p>
<p><i>2.2 Ensuring a constructive working relationship exists between elected members and officers and that the responsibilities of authority</i></p>	<p>Part 3 of the Constitution sets out responsibility for carrying out the Council's functions, at committee level and delegation to individual executive members. Part 4 sets out the Scheme of Delegation to Officers. The sections on delegated authority are reviewed and approved annually.</p>

<p><i>members and officers are carried out to a high standard.</i></p>	<p>The Council has appointed a Chief Executive responsible and accountable to the Authority for all aspects of operational management. The functions of the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer are set out in the Constitution.</p> <p>The Council has designated a Chief Finance Officer, in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, who is a member of the Corporate Management Team. Periodic assessment is undertaken to ensure compliance with the governance standards as set out in the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010).</p> <p>The Council’s Director of Legal & Democratic Services is designated as “Monitoring Officer”. It is the function of the Monitoring Officer to oversee and monitor compliance with legislation and the Council’s established policies and procedures.</p>
<p><i>2.3 Ensuring relationships between the authority and its partners and the public are clear so that each know what to expect of each other.</i></p>	<p>The Authority has adopted Member Officer Relations Protocols which provide guidance to help build good working relations between members and officers.</p> <p>The Officer Employment Procedure Rules set out the terms and conditions for remuneration of employees. A Pay Policy Statement has been published which provides transparency regarding the Council’s approach to setting pay for its employees.</p> <p>The Council has agreed a Members Allowance Scheme setting out the level of financial allowance that members may receive.</p> <p>When working in partnership, members are clear about their roles and responsibilities individually and collectively in relation to the partnership and the authority. The Council Leader is the Chair of the Trafford Partnership Board which following a comprehensive review of the Partnership refreshed its Terms of Reference in January 2016.</p> <p>Our four Locality Partnerships have opened up to become wider engagement networks for all stakeholders including residents and community groups. Each Locality has co-produced a</p>

	<p>set of locality priorities. We have established four smaller Enabling Groups with a core membership of Councillors, Service Providers and Community Ambassadors to oversee engagement events and locality projects and to ensure the work of the Locality Partnerships are aligned to the strategic priorities of the borough. Each has its own Terms of Reference and The Locality Partnership Chairs sit on the Trafford Partnership Strong Communities Board. In accordance with the requirements of the Health & Social Care Act 2012, a Health & Wellbeing Board has been established. Supporting this, the Council has in place a number of strategic partnership arrangements governed through Section 75 Partnership Agreements.</p>
<p>Principle 3 Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.</p>	
<p>Supporting Principle</p>	<p>How the Council meets the requirements</p>
<p><i>3.1 Ensuring authority members and officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance.</i></p>	<p>In accordance with requirements of the Localism Act 2011, the Council has reviewed and adopted its Members Code of Conduct incorporating procedures for notification of disclosable pecuniary interests and hearing procedures. Protocols set out the arrangements for dealing with complaints about the code of conduct for members.</p> <p>All staff are required to abide by an Employee Code of Conduct. It is a requirement for all new employees to read and sign up to this as part of the staff induction procedure.</p> <p>Responsibility for the regulation of employee conduct is set out in the Council's Disciplinary Policy. A range of Human Resource policies in place are designed to help ensure the proper conduct of staff and to ensure the workforce is appropriately skilled to deliver the Council's aims and objectives.</p> <p>Arrangements are in place requiring members and employees of the Authority to not be influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders.</p> <p>The authority has an Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy and procedures for the reporting of</p>

	<p>suspected fraudulent activities.</p> <p>To ensure the Authority meets best practice and legislative requirements, an Information Security Governance Board has been established. A Senior Risk Information Officer is assigned to oversee and review information governance issues and risk.</p> <p>Users of the Trafford ICT network are required to sign up to the authority’s Acceptable Use Policy to confirm acceptance of agreed responsibilities and standards to prevent misuse of equipment or networks.</p> <p>To ensure compliance with Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Council has adopted a policy, procedures and a dedicated Information Governance team to provide support and guidance to employees.</p>
<p><i>3.2 Ensuring that organisational values are put into practice and are effective.</i></p>	<p>The Council has adopted a set of Corporate Values embedded within its policies, procedures and strategies. The Council’s competency framework outlines the organisation’s values and the behaviours expected of employees when fulfilling their roles.</p> <p>The Supporting Change to Happen Strategy 2014-17 sets out the additional set of values to support the Reshaping Trafford programme underpinned by a set of competencies to enable change to be delivered, and to complement and strengthen the Council’s Core values</p> <p>The organisation’s shared values act as a guide for decision making and as a basis for developing positive and trusting relationships within the Authority.</p> <p>The Authority has implemented arrangements to ensure that systems and processes are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards, and for monitoring their continuing effectiveness in practice.</p> <p>The Council has adopted a “Local Code of Corporate Governance” in accordance with the CIPFA/SOLACE framework for Corporate Governance. The Council undertakes an annual</p>

	<p>review of the Code of Corporate Governance and associated arrangements.</p> <p>The Standards Committee has within its role, the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct of Members and the responsibility to oversee the effective operation of the Code of Conduct for Members.</p> <p>The financial management of the Council is conducted in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules incorporated within Part 4 of the Constitution.</p> <p>Systems and processes for financial administration, financial control and protection of the Authority’s resources and assets are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards and monitor their continuing effectiveness in practice.</p>
<p>Principle 4 Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.</p>	
<p>Supporting Principle</p>	<p>How the Council meets the requirements</p>
<p><i>4.1 Being rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and acting on the outcome of constructive scrutiny.</i></p>	<p>The Council has developed detailed procedures for political decision making. There are clear processes for recording and monitoring executive decisions in order to ensure compliance with legislation, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful. The Executive has to make decisions in line with the Council’s overall policies and budget. Any decisions to be made outside this framework must be referred to full Council.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committees provide the scrutiny of decisions made, policy development and implementation and can “call in” decisions made by the Executive, or on their behalf with delegated authority, to challenge whether the decision has been made appropriately and ask the Executive to reconsider it if necessary.</p> <p>The Council has an Internal Audit function which is required to operate in conformance with</p>

	<p>the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. The Internal Audit function is responsible for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of systems of internal control. The Internal Audit Plan is approved each year by the Corporate Management Team and Accounts & Audit Committee and there is regular reporting through the year, including the Annual Internal Audit Report.</p> <p>The Council has an Accounts and Audit Committee whose terms of reference require it to monitor and evaluate the Council’s corporate governance and internal control arrangements. The Committee operates in accordance with CIPFA guidance for Audit Committees.</p> <p>The Council is subject to external audit. The External Auditor’s Annual Governance Report and Annual Audit Letter report on the annual audit of the Council’s accounts and also provide a value for money conclusion.</p>
<p><i>4.2 Having good quality information, advice and support to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants / needs.</i></p>	<p>Part 4 of the Constitution sets out the Access to Information Procedure Rules including the rights to attend meetings and access summons, agenda and reports. Where major ‘key’ decisions are to be discussed or made, these are set out in a notice published at least 28 days before a decision is made.</p> <p>Those making decisions, whether for the Authority or in partnership, are provided with information that is fit for purpose – clear, timely, relevant, accurate and complete and gives clear explanations of issues and implications on both a financial and non-financial basis.</p> <p>The Authority seeks timely professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications, which is recorded in advance of decision making and used appropriately.</p>
<p><i>4.3 Ensuring that an effective risk management system is in place.</i></p>	<p>Risk management is embedded into the culture of the organisation. The Council has a Risk Management Policy Statement, Strategy and protocol for monitoring and reporting risk. These explain the methodology which provides a comprehensive framework for the</p>

	<p>management of risk throughout the Council.</p> <p>The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the key risks the Council is likely to face in achieving its high level corporate objectives. In accordance with the Council's Risk Management Policy Statement, Corporate Directors and the Accounts and Audit Committee review the associated arrangements in place for improving control and mitigating risks faced by the Council. Quarterly strategic risks monitoring is reported to the Transformation, Performance and Resources Group, Corporate Management Team and the Accounts & Audit Committee.</p> <p>The Council has adopted a Confidential Reporting Code and supporting guidance, which sets out the whistle blowing protocols for reporting, responding to and monitoring of issues of concern.</p> <p>The Council's Health and Safety Unit provide regular updates to the Corporate Management Team and produce six monthly updates for the Executive.</p>
<p><i>4.4 Using their legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in their area.</i></p>	<p>The Constitution sets out how the Council will operate to deliver services and perform its functions within the wider legal framework. Part 3 sets out Responsibility for Functions at committee and executive portfolio level. It also sets out the proper officer arrangements for delivering specific legislative requirements.</p> <p>The Authority actively recognises the limits of lawful activity placed on it but also strives to utilise powers to the full benefit of communities. It recognises the limits of lawful action and observes both the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on authorities by public law.</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer will, after consulting with the Head of Paid Service and the Chief Finance Officer, report to the full Council or to the Executive, in relation to an Executive function, if she considers that any proposal, decision or omission would give rise to</p>

	<p>unlawfulness or has given rise to maladministration. Such a report will have the effect of stopping the proposal or decision being implemented until the report has been considered.</p> <p>The Council's Chief Finance Officer, has responsibility for the legality of the Council's financial transactions.</p> <p>Directors and Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that they establish and maintain effective standards of governance, complying with legislation, the Council's Constitution, Standing Orders and Financial Procedure Rules.</p>
<p>Principle 5 Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.</p>	
<p>Supporting Principle</p>	<p>How the Council meets the requirements</p>
<p><i>5.1 Making sure that members and officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their role.</i></p>	<p>The Authority provides induction programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for members and officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis.</p> <p>Member Induction Training is undertaken each year. Member training needs are regularly reviewed and a Training & Development Plan for Members is in place. The Council continues to demonstrate compliance with Level 1 of the North West Employers Organisation Members Charter for Elected Member Development.</p> <p>All new employees are required to complete a Corporate Induction Module which includes a number of mandatory elements such as the employees' code of conduct, fraud awareness and the Acceptable Use Policy.</p> <p>The Supporting Change to Happen Strategy 2014-17 sets out the additional set of values to support the Reshaping Trafford programme underpinned by a set of competencies to enable change to be delivered, and to complement and strengthen the Council's Core values. It is supported by a programme of learning & development interventions for Members and staff so</p>

	<p>that they can adapt successfully to new ways of working and changed delivery models.</p> <p>Trafford Council is the lead authority on the AGMA training procurement framework and a partner in the AGMA e-learning framework. The Council has developed Directorate and cross-council Training & Development Plans, which are refreshed and updated annually, supported by a suite of e-learning solutions available to meet the organisational skills development needs.</p> <p>The Authority puts arrangements in place to ensure that 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.</p> <p>The ongoing Transformation Programme is also taking into account consideration of training and development needs across the Council and individual service areas for change management and adopts a skills transfer approach to support colleagues to develop project management and business analysis skills.</p>
<p><i>5.2 Developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance as individuals and as a group.</i></p>	<p>The Authority assesses the skills required by members and officers and makes the commitment to develop these skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively. Skills are developed on a continuing basis to improve performance, including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and to recognise when outside expert advice is needed.</p> <p>There is a behavioural based competency framework and staff appraisal process in place which supports the cascade of corporate objectives and values through to individual employee targets. All staff are required to complete a Personal Development Review annually.</p> <p>Members are requested to complete a Personal Development Review which is used to inform the development of their training plan.</p> <p>The Council has taken a strategic approach to Absence Management. Ongoing performance is monitored as part of the Authority's Annual Delivery Plan.</p>

<p><i>5.3 Encouraging new talent for membership of the authority so that best use can be made of the individual's skills and resources in balancing continuity and renewal.</i></p>	<p>The Council operates an Internal Apprenticeship Scheme providing training and mentoring opportunities for Trafford residents.</p> <p>There are effective arrangements 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 through the Locality Partnership networks and involvement in co-produced locality projects which provide innovative solutions to local issues.</p>
<p>Principle 6 Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.</p>	
<p>Supporting Principle</p>	<p>How the Council meets the requirements</p>
<p><i>6.1 Exercising leadership through a robust scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships and developing constructive accountability relationships.</i></p>	<p>The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. The public have a number of rights in their dealings with the Council. These are set out in more detail in Article 3.</p> <p>The Council has implemented detailed guidance and procedures for staff to ensure that an Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken in relation to all proposed changes in policy, strategy, functions and internal structures.</p> <p>Scrutiny Function – See supporting principle 4.1</p>
<p><i>6.2 Taking an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery whether directly by the authority, in partnership or by commissioning.</i></p>	<p>The Authority as a whole is open and accessible to the community, service users and its staff and has made a commitment to openness and transparency in all its dealings, subject only to those specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so.</p> <p>Council decisions are based on public consultation including annual review of the budget proposals. Meetings where key decisions are made and scrutinised are open to the public, except where exempt information is disclosed.</p>

There are clear channels of communication in place with all sections of the community and other stakeholders e.g. through the **Council website, social media channels** and press releases. The Council has a corporate **Marketing & Communications function** in place to oversee internal and external communication and ensure these arrangements are operating effectively.

The Council is the lead organisation of the **Trafford Partnership**, which provides a key role engaging with residents and the community to ensure that priorities and actions at strategic level reflect the needs of local people.

The Council has led a new **Locality Working** model on behalf of the **Trafford Partnership** which brings together everyone who lives and works in an area, as equal partners, to develop and deliver innovative ideas. Our four **Locality Partnerships** provide innovative spaces and events which encourage effective engagement of local communities in decision making, empower residents to take action and help co-produce and deliver locality projects, increasing community ownership of issues and developing innovative solutions.

The **Strategy for Building Strong Communities** provides a strategic 'home' for the **Locality Working** programme, clearly demonstrating how **Locality Working** is intrinsically linked with other key strategic agendas, providing a practical way of delivering **Early Help and Prevention, Public Service Reform, Shaping Demand, Community Action and Third Sector Infrastructure Support**.

The Council has policies and procedures in place to support compliance with the **Freedom of Information Act 2000** requirements and has a **Publication Scheme** in place. In accordance with the government's **Open Data** requirements, details of all invoice payments to suppliers, senior officer salaries and details of members' expense claims are published online.

Since its launch in October 2014 the **Trafford Partnership Data Innovation and Intelligence Lab** has developed as a multi-agency, multi-discipline, co-located service which currently has seconded staff time from **Trafford Council, Trafford Housing Trust and Public Health**. The lab

	<p>is well established and has access to data from the Police, Leisure Trust, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, the CCG and Trafford College as well as Trafford Council services. The overarching objectives of the Lab are to support the (re)design of services, reduction and reshaping of demand on services, informing people and organisations in Trafford and attracting investment into the Borough.</p> <p>The InfoTrafford website provides free public access to view statistical data about the borough with the aim to provide a tool for community empowerment, decision making, and service redesign and policy development.</p>
<p><i>6.3 Making best use of human resources by taking an active and planned approach to meet responsibilities to staff.</i></p>	<p>The Council has in place Joint Consultative Committee arrangements to establish a regular method of consultation between the Council and the Trade Unions enabling input into human resource issues including proposed organisational and policy changes.</p> <p>The Council operates an Employment Committee responsible for determining collective and corporate terms and conditions of employment and approving any changes in human resources policies.</p> <p>As part of the Reshaping Programme, the Supporting Change to Happen Strategy 2014-17 sets out how the Council will support employees to understand, adapt and successfully move to the new operating arrangements. The Authority has produced a toolkit for employees and managers in Managing Organisational Change, which provides guidance for restructuring and review in accordance with statutory requirements and current best practice.</p> <p>There are a range of consultation mechanism in place for Council employees including an online forum, network events, focus group and surveys.</p>

