Causeway Coast and Glens

Code of Governance

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Introduction

Governance at Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is about ensuring that we act in the public interest by doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people — in a manner that is timely, inclusive, transparent, honest, and accountable. It encompasses the systems, processes, cultures, and values that guide how the Council is directed and controlled, and how it engages with, reports to, and, where appropriate, leads the communities it serves.

In May 2025, CIPFA and SOLACE issued an updated version of the *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework*, building on the International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector (CIPFA/IFAC, 2014). This revised guidance reinforces the importance of achieving sustainable economic, social, and environmental outcomes, and highlights the need to integrate governance with effective public financial management. It also provides updated expectations for Annual Governance Statements from 2025/26 onwards.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is committed to the principles of good governance. This commitment is reflected in our Code of Governance, which aligns with the core and supporting principles set out in the updated Local Government Framework. Through this, we aim to ensure that our governance arrangements are robust, future-focused, and responsive to the needs of our citizens and communities.

Principles of Good Governance

Governance at Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council ensures we act in the public interest by making decisions that are timely, inclusive, transparent, and accountable. It reflects the systems, values, and processes that guide how we operate, engage with, and support our communities.

In May 2025, CIPFA and SOLACE updated the *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework*, reinforcing the importance of sustainable outcomes and the integration of governance with sound financial management. The addendum also encourages councils to reconnect with core governance principles and provides updated guidance for Annual Governance Statements from 2025/26 onwards.
Our Code of Governance reflects our commitment to these principles, ensuring our structures remain robust, forward-looking, and responsive to the needs of our citizens.

Compliance With Code of Governance

This Code of Governance is underpinned by a range of policies, procedures, and systems that guide how the Council manages its affairs effectively and transparently. To demonstrate compliance with this Code, the Council has adopted the core principles, sub-principles, and associated behaviours outlined in the *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework* (updated May 2025). The accompanying Code of Governance Schedule sets out the Council's own systems, processes, and documentation that evidence good governance in practice.

Compliance with this Code will be reviewed annually, and the findings will inform the preparation of the Council's Annual Governance Statement, ensuring ongoing accountability and continuous improvement.

Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (CIPFA and Solace, 2016)
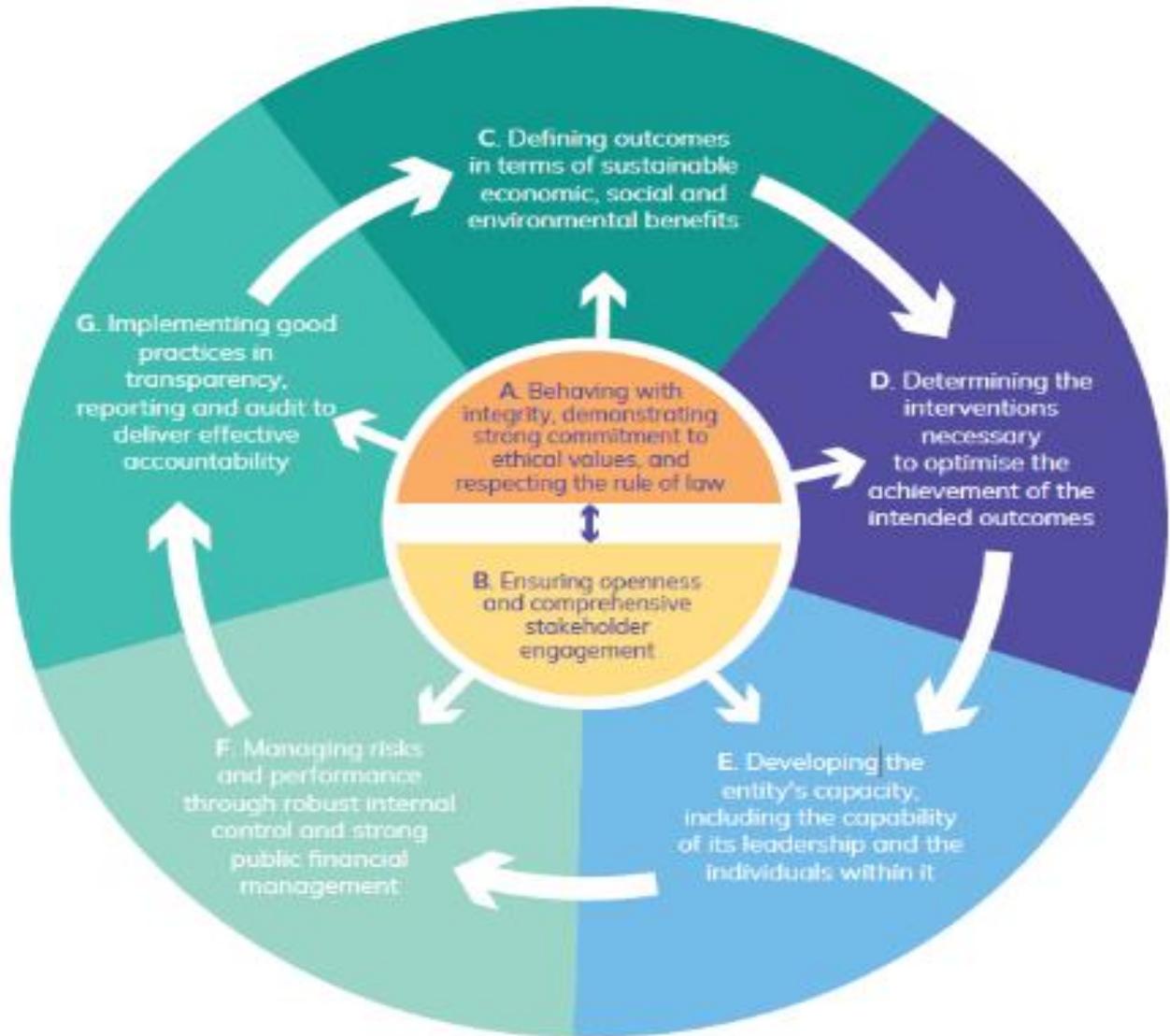
This Code of Governance takes account of Council's need to fulfil its statutory responsibilities in relation to best value under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

Code of Governance Schedule

1. Behaving with integrity		
Principle	**How We Demonstrate This**	**Governance Arrangements**
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 were acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated. • Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff. • Leading by example and using the above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions. • Demonstrating, communicating, and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed regularly. *Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values* • Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance. • Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they	• The Constitution of Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council. The Constitution is used as a basis for Corporate and Service planning and performance. It sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and procedures followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to ratepayers. • Corporate Plan • Local Government Employee Councillor Working Relationship Protocol • Code of Conduct for Councillors and Employees • Standing Orders • Raising Concerns Policy formerly whistleblowing policy • Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy incorporating Fraud Response Plan • Councillor's Declaration of Interest are completed annually • Conflicts of Interest Policy • Procurement Policy

	permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation. • Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values. • Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with 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. • 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. • Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders. • Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively. • Ensuring corruption and misuse are dealt with effectively.	• Contract Management Policy and Procedure • Scheme of Delegation • Annual Audit Letter • Equality Scheme • Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures • Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure • Safeguarding Policy • Social Media Policy • Committee Terms of Reference • Gifts and Hospitality Policy

2. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement		
Principle	**How We Demonstrate This**	**Governance Arrangements**
Ensuring openness in activities and engaging effectively with all groups of stakeholders.	*Openness* • Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting, and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness. • Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs, and outcomes. • Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders. • Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions. *Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders* • Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably. • Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively.	• Community Plan Framework • Corporate Plan • Annual Corporate Improvement Plan • Schedule of Council Meetings • Minutes of Council and Committee Meetings • Agenda and Reports online, with reports in a standard template, alignment to Corporate Plan, costs etc • Audio recordings of Council and Committee Meetings • Employee Engagement Plans • Communication and Consultation Strategy • Memorandums of Understanding • Third Party Data Sharing Agreements • Publication Scheme • Freedom of Information Policy • Local Development Plan • Citizens Newsletter and Citizens Survey

	• Ensuring that partnerships are based on trust, a shared commitment to change, culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit. *Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively* • Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve communities, individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes. • Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement. • Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs. • Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how views have been taken into account. • Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other	

	stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity. • Taking account of the impact of decisions on future generations of taxpayers and service users. • Effective engagement requires good communication, trust and respect. Further that there is clarity about whom the County Council is engaging with and to what ends. Ensuring that views are listened to, thought about and acted upon. Communicating what the Council is going to do as a result – as part of a 'You Said, We Did' way of working. • To give local people and communities more influence and control over local services and to help develop a culture that supports equal opportunities for everyone to have their say and to be engaged.	

3. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits		
Principle	**How We Demonstrate This**	**Governance Arrangements**
Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.	*Defining outcomes* • Having a clear vision, which is an agreed formal statement of the Council's purpose and intended outcomes. • Specifying the intended impact on stakeholders including citizens and service users. • Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources available. • Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes. • Managing service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of resources available. *Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits* • Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies and plans when taking decisions about service provision. • 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	• Performance Improvement Plan • Community Plan Framework • Corporate Plan • Proforma report template used for all Council/Committee reports • Annual Corporate Improvement Plan • Directorate Business Plans • Quarterly Reviews of Business Plans • Annual Corporate Workshop • Current Development Plans • Risk Management Strategy, Corporate Risk Register • Environmental Policy • Draft Climate Change Action Strategy • Equality Scheme • Disability Action Plan • Grant Aid Provision • Citizen Survey, Citizen News, APSE indicators

	and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints. • 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. • Ensuring fair access to services.	

4. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		
Principle	**How We Demonstrate This**	**Governance Arrangements**
Providing a mixture of legal, regulatory, and practical interventions to achieve intended outcomes.	*Determining interventions* • Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and associated risks. • Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or competing demands. *Planning Interventions* • Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles. • Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered.	• Corporate Plan • Annual Corporate Improvement Plan • Corporate workshop • Performance Management Framework • Directorate Business Plans • Review of Business Plans • Report to NIAO and Council on Council Performance in relation to statutory indicators • Finance Policy Manual • Economic Appraisals • Business Cases • Grant Aid Provision • Economic Development business programmes

	- Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively. - Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering goods and services can be adapted to changing circumstances. - Establishing appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process. - Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly. - Preparing budgets in accordance with objectives, strategies, and the medium-term financial 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. - Optimising achievement of intended outcomes. - Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints. - Ensuring the budgeting process is all inclusive, taking into account the full	- Risk Management Strategy - Estimates Process - Financial Regulations - Committee Terms of Reference - Quarterly Review of KPIs - Annual Council Performance Report - Capital Investment Programme - Monthly Financial Reports - Year End Financial Statements - Medium Term Financial Plan - Treasury Management Policies and Strategy - Annual Report of the Chief Financial Officer - Estates Strategy/Land & Property Policy - Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure - Social value clause within Procurement Policy

| | cost of operations over the medium and longer term.
• 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.
• Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service commissioning. | |

5. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it		
Principle	**How We Demonstrate This**	**Governance Arrangements**
Ensuring appropriate structures and leadership, as well as people with the right skills, to operate efficiently and effectively.	*Developing the entity's capacity* • Reviewing operations, performance, and use of assets regularly. • Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking. • Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working. • Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan. *Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals* • Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders	• Council's Constitution • Business Planning and Performance Management Training • Performance Management Framework (APSE) • Quarterly Reviews (KPIs) • Standing Orders • Job Descriptions • Organisational Structure • Monthly Budget Control Meetings • SMT Meetings • Member Development Working Group • Elected Member Development Policy

	- negotiate their respective roles early on. - Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body. - Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles. - Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective leadership. - Ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction and ongoing training and development. - Ensuring personal, organisational, and system-wide development through shared learning. - Encouraging public participation. - Taking steps to consider the leaderships own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer reviews and inspections. - Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews. - Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce.	- Member Learning and Development Policy Statement - Training Programme for Members - Annual General Meeting - Council Committee Structure - Scheme of Delegation - Members Induction - Chair and Vice Chair Training - Statutory and Mandatory Training Policy - Transformation Plan and Organisation Review - People Strategy - There are a number of Health & Wellbeing policies within Council including the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy. These include: - Employee Leisure Membership Scheme - Cycle to Work Scheme - Special Leave Policy - Family Rights at Work Policy - Flexible Working Hours Scheme - Assistance to Study - Dignity and Respect at Work Policy - Annual Personal Review and Development Plan - Equal Opportunities Policy - Managing Attendance Policies

6. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management		
Principle	**How We Demonstrate This**	**Governance Arrangements**
Implementing and sustaining an effective performance management system.	*Managing risk* • Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities. • Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements. • Ensuring responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated. *Managing performance* • Monitoring service delivery effectively. • Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice. • Encouraging effective and constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives. • Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans. • Ensuring consistency between specification stages and post-implementation reporting. *Robust internal control* • Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives. • Evaluating and monitoring risk management and internal control regularly.	• Performance Improvement Plan • Directorate Business Plans • Quarterly Review of Business Plans • Quarterly Review (KPIs) • Annual Council Performance Report • Estimates Process • Finance Policy Manual • Financial Regulations • Monthly Financial Reports • Year End Financial Statements • Quarterly Prompt Payment Performance Reports • Committee Terms of Reference • SMT Standing Item on weekly agenda • Risk Management Strategy • Risk Management Policy and Procedures • Service and Corporate Risk Registers Reviews • Quarterly Corporate Risk Register report • Annual Governance Statement • Director and Head of Service Annual Assurance Statements • Council and Committee Minutes – Audit Committee with Independent Member

	- Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place. - Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management, and control is provided by the internal auditor. - Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group/function is in place. *Managing data* - Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data. - Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies. - Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring. *Strong public financial management* - Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance. - Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including	- Internal Audit and Internal Audit Charter - Internal Audit Strategy and Plan - NI Audit Office External Audit - Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy - Fraud Response Plan - Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the system of internal control - Third Party Data Sharing Agreements - Freedom of Information Policy - Data Protection Policy - Data Breach Notification Procedure - Service Information Asset Registers - Retention and Disposal Policy - Information Security Policy - Records Management Policy - Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation - Estates Strategy, L&P Policy and Procedures - Medium Term Financial Plan 2026 - 2029Budget Setting Process and Timetable

	management of financial risks and controls.	

7. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability		
Principle	**How We Demonstrate This**	**Governance Arrangements**
Ensuring those making decisions and delivering services are answerable for them.	*Implementing good practice in transparency* • Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style. • Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny. *Implementing good practices in reporting* • Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money, and stewardship of resources. • Ensuring members and senior management own the results reported. • Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in this Framework have been applied. • Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis. *Assurance and effective accountability*	• Council meetings and Committees are open to the public and members of the media • Minutes of Council and Committee Meetings published on website • Audio Recordings of Council and Committee Meetings published on website • Publication Scheme • Freedom of Information Database/Log • Residents magazine – Citizens Newsletter • Corporate Website • Annual Governance Statement • Statement of Accounts • Annual Performance Improvement Report • Monthly Financial Reports • Year End Financial Statements • Equality Scheme • Audit Committee • Prior Year Internal Audit Recommendations (PYR) • Internal Audit Strategy and Plan

	- 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. - Welcoming peer challenge, reviews, and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations. Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties. - Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear.	- Internal Audit Annual Report - Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the system of internal control - NI Audit Office Annual Report Improvement Audit and Assessment Report