

Draft

Appendix One

SECTION G

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Introduction

The Code of Corporate Governance sets out the Council's governance standards. These standards ensure the Council is doing the right things, in the right way in a timely, inclusive, open, effective, honest and accountable manner. The Code is based upon the following six core principles¹:

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

The Code and the Council's governance arrangements have been summarised in the Council's ten commitments to good governance:

1. **We will** clearly set out our objectives and what we're trying to achieve
2. **We will** measure how effective our services are and take action to improve them. We will publish information showing how we are progressing towards our objectives
3. **We will** work with other public services, such as the Police and NHS, to improve services for Manchester residents
4. **We will** ensure we make the best use of taxpayers' money by taking prudent financial decisions and measuring the level of value for money we achieve
5. **We will** set out in our Constitution who can take which decisions
6. **We will** behave in ways that reflect our values and high standards of conduct
7. **We will** ensure people in the Council making decisions have access to accurate information to help them take decisions in the best interests of Manchester people
8. **We will** record and publish the decisions we take and the reasons for them. Wherever possible, we'll take the most important decisions in public
9. **We will** carry out scrutiny of our services to make sure they meet our residents' needs
10. **We will** be sensitive about how we collect and record information about citizens of Manchester and safeguard it from misuse.

¹ The six core principles are based on the Principles of Public Life set out in *The Nolan Committee Report* published in May 1995. The Seven Principles of Public Life which should underpin good governance for public bodies are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Corporate Governance is defined as “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” (CIPFA/SOLACE²).

The challenges posed by diminishing resources and the challenges and opportunities presented by changing public policies, highlight the growing importance of good governance. A range of significant decisions will be taken to respond to these developments and it is important they are taken legally, based on consideration of relevant evidence and in accordance with the principles of this Code.

The Code also describes how the Council’s corporate governance arrangements will be monitored and reviewed to ensure they remain fit for purpose and support the Council to achieve its vision and objectives in an effective way.

² CIPFA is the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. SOLACE is the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives.

THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

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

The Council will exercise strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating its purpose and vision and its intended outcome for citizens and service users.

The Council via its Members and Officers and in partnership with key stakeholders, will develop, implement and promote its purpose and vision through effective engagement with the residents of Manchester, to deliver better outcomes for Manchester people.

The Council and its partners have set out the vision for the City in Manchester's Community Strategy 2006-2015 – "[The Manchester Way](#)". The actions to deliver the strategy are overseen by five Thematic Partnerships:

- [Children's Board](#)
- [Crime and Disorder Reduction Performance Board](#)
- [The Health and Wellbeing Board](#)
- [The Neighbourhoods Board](#)
- [Work and Skills Board](#).

The Strategy comes to an end this year. The Council is working with partners, and in consultation with the public, to develop a new vision for the city. The new strategy will continue to support progress towards the objectives of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority³ ([GMCA](#)), set out in "[Stronger Together – The Greater Manchester Strategy 2013-2020](#)". This Strategy outlines the following key priorities:

- Creating the conditions for growth
- Delivering an integrated approach to employment and skills, an employee led skills programme, and measures to prevent and reduce youth employment
- Supporting business growth and
- Building independence and raising expectations.

The emerging strategy will play an important role in delivering the [Devolution Agreement](#) between GMCA and central government in November 2014. The Agreement represents a significant transfer of powers and responsibilities from central government to GMCA. It also includes transition to a directly elected mayor as the 11th Member of the GMCA in 2017 with a cabinet of leaders. This transfer will necessitate changes to governance arrangements mainly in terms of the policy, legislative and fiscal framework and the relationship between the City Council, GMCA and the Office of the Mayor. These changes will take effect over the next year or two and where necessary, will be included in this Code.

³ GMCA was created on the 1st April 2011. It has new powers to work more effectively on significant issues including transport, regeneration and economic development.

A new '[Strategic Narrative](#)' has been developed in preparation for the development of a Strategy to succeed 'The Manchester Way'. It describes the importance of aligning budget decisions with the overall vision for the City through supporting growth and investing in people in ways that reduce demand on high cost public services. Investing in the future of the City will continue to be critical despite the continued reductions in public spending.

The Council's strategic and financial approach to delivering the vision for the city is set out in the [Strategic Response to the Settlement](#) and the Medium Term Financial Plan. Directorate Business Plans set out how the three Council directorates support this approach. Directorate Business Plans are communicated to staff across the Council to ensure they understand how their directorate's objectives contribute to the Council's overall objectives and the vision for the city.

Through the business planning and budget setting framework the Council allocates resources to achieve its objectives. The allocation of resources is set out in the [budget reports](#) submitted to Council in March when it sets the budget for the organisation.

The business plans are an important component of the Council's Performance Management Framework, under which the organisation reports regularly on strategic and operational performance, risk and financial position. Under this framework, the Council will publish:

- An [Annual Report](#) outlining the Council's performance in the previous year and a summary of its [Financial Accounts](#)
- Independently verified statistical information about the prosperity of the city and the wellbeing of Manchester people through the [Intelligence Hub](#) and the suite of 'State of the City' reports including the annual "[State of the City](#)" and "[Communities of Interest](#)" reports.

The Council will ensure that service users receive a high quality of service, whether directly, in partnership or by commissioning.

To do this the Council will:

- In response to the [Care Act 2014](#), change its financial systems and implement new supporting financial policies to establish a new national system for paying for care
- Manage data and intelligence and regularly monitor, review and reassess its performance and the impact this has on achieving objectives
- Report on performance at both an operational and strategic level, to help services address barriers to achieving good performance
- Effectively [consult, inform and involve residents](#) to ensure that it provides quality services that meet the needs of residents and communities
- Seek feedback from service users and their elected representatives and maintain effective arrangements to continuously drive improvement in service delivery

- Ensure that [complaints handling and monitoring procedures](#) are robust so that they can identify where improvements in performance are required
- Commission services to meet the needs of the local community, and put in place processes to ensure that they operate effectively in practice
- Respond positively to the findings and recommendations of external auditors and statutory inspectors and put in place arrangements for the implementation of agreed actions.

The Council will make best use of resources and ensure that taxpayers and service users receive value for money.

The Council has in place a Value for Money Policy Statement which describes the organisation's approach to Value for Money. The Council will:

- Ensure that services are prioritised so that resources are directed to those activities that will make the greatest contribution to the city's vision
- Compare outcomes for Manchester with comparable authorities and other relevant bodies and assess performance against the aspirations for Manchester
- Compare information about functions, expenditure and performance with those of similar organisations and assess why levels of economy, efficiency and effectiveness are different elsewhere to ensure the Council provides high levels of value for money
- Procure goods and services in compliance with EU, UK and Council regulations and ensure that value for money is obtained through a balanced consideration of social, economic and environmental impacts that can be derived from procurement spend
- Ensure that the Council maintains a prudential financial framework; keeps its commitments in balance with available resources; monitors income and expenditure levels to ensure that this balance is maintained and takes corrective action if necessary and
- Consider the environmental impact of its policies, plans and decisions.

2. Having clear responsibilities and arrangements for accountability

The Council's governance processes will be structured to:

- **Clearly define the division of Executive and Non-Executive functions and the roles and responsibilities of the Scrutiny function**
- **Ensure that a constructive working relationship exists between elected Members and Officers and that their responsibilities are carried out to a high standard and**
- **Enable the Council to provide visible, accountable and effective leadership to the community in partnership with citizens, businesses and other organisations.**

The Council will do this by:

- Appointing a Leader of the Council.

Since the 9 May 2010 the Council has operated the Leader and Cabinet form of Executive provided for by section 9C(3) of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended). Under these governance arrangements, at its Annual Meeting in May each year the Council elects one of its Members to be the Leader, who in turn appoints a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 9 other councillors to [the Executive](#) (the Executive Members), one of whom must be appointed by the Leader to act as Deputy Leader. The Leader of the Council is also responsible for determining the portfolios and the detailed remits of the Executive Members.

Under the Leader and Cabinet governance arrangements the Leader may determine to exercise any of the Council's executive functions personally, or may arrange for the exercise of any of the Council's executive functions by the Executive; by another member of the Executive; by a committee of the Executive; by an officer of the Council or by an area committee.

The Executive Procedure Rules in the Council's [Constitution](#) set out how the Leader may change the delegation of the Council's executive functions:

- (a) the Leader must provide the Council's Monitoring Officer with written notice of any changes to the delegation of the Council's executive functions; and
 - (b) The Council's Monitoring Officer will maintain a Register of the Delegation of Executive Functions which will record delegations by the Leader of the Council's executive functions.
- Appointing a Chief Executive accountable to the authority for all aspects of operational management. The Chief Executive will have a shared understanding of roles and objectives with the Leader of the Council.
 - Agreeing a [Scheme of Delegation to Committees and Officers](#) in respect of the Council's non-executive functions (i.e. those functions of the Council which are the responsibility of the Council and not the Executive), whereby the Council's non-executive functions are delegated to Committees, Strategic Directors and other appropriate Officers
 - Appointing Statutory Officers that have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and ensuring that these roles are properly understood throughout the authority.

The Senior Management Team will include the Section 151 Officer⁴ (the City Treasurer) and the Monitoring Officer (the City Solicitor). The role of the Section 151 Officer is in accordance with the [CIPFA Statement on the role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government](#) and regular monitoring will take place to ensure that the role continues to comply with this statement. The Section 151

⁴ This refers to the officer responsible for making arrangements for the proper administration of the authorities financial affairs under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972

Officer will ensure that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, proper financial records and accounts are kept, and will oversee an effective system of internal financial control.

The Monitoring Officer will ensure that decisions are taken in a lawful and fair way, agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes, regulations and procedure rules are complied with.

- Annually appointing [Committees](#) to discharge the Council's regulatory responsibilities (e.g. the Council's Planning and Highways Committee)
- Annually appointing Committees to discharge the Council's [Overview and Scrutiny](#) responsibilities and maintaining systems to support Members in discharging an effective Scrutiny function
- Annually appointing a Health and Wellbeing Board. In accordance with the [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#). The Council has established a Health and Wellbeing Board whose primary function is to encourage those who arrange the provision of any health or social care services in Manchester to work in an integrated manner for the purpose of advancing the health and wellbeing of Manchester residents.
- Strengthening partnership governance arrangements by operating a number of boards to provide leadership of programmes across partners including:
 - The Citywide Leadership Group (CWLG) to direct and drive forward the Living Longer, Living Better Programme
 - The Complex Dependency Partnership Board to manage risks and issues in the deliver of the Complex Dependency Approach
 - A Strategic Partnership Board to take forward new proposals for mental health services
- Allowing for the Youth Council for Manchester to make representations and have matters referred to the Council's Scrutiny Committees. The Youth Council provides a voice to young people to enable them to influence decision makers in the city and a platform to help the Council and others shape future services in the area.
- Reviewing and updating the procedures which implemented the Community Right to Challenge and the Community Right to Bid, introduced by the [Localism Act 2011](#). Procedures will be reviewed in 2015 to ensure that they remain fit for purpose⁵.
- Supporting neighbourhood planning, as required by the Localism Act 2011, by enabling a qualifying body such as Parish/Town Councils, Neighbourhood Forums

⁵ Community Right to Challenge enables a body such as a voluntary or community group, a charity, a parish council or two or more Council employees to submit an expression of interest in providing a service that is currently provided by, or on behalf of, the City Council. The Community Right to Bid enables community interest groups with a local connection (such as parish councils, a designated neighbourhood forum or certain voluntary or community bodies) to nominate land of community value for inclusion in the City Council's list of assets of community value.

and Community Organisations to submit a proposal for Neighbourhood Development Plans.⁶

The Council will ensure relationships between the authority, its partners and the public are clear so that each understand the role of the others

The Council will do this by:

- Publishing and reviewing, annually, (or more frequently if necessary), a [Constitution](#) which includes, amongst other elements:
 - a) A [Members Allowances' Scheme](#), developed taking into account the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel who advice on a fair level of remuneration for elected Members
 - b) Schemes of Delegation of both non-executive (Council) and executive functions as described above
 - c) [Procedures and Protocols](#) regarding the role of Scrutiny and
 - d) Protocols governing Member / Officer relations and the roles of Members and Officers in decision making.
- Maintaining a [Partnership Governance Framework](#) that defines and standardises the Council's approach to managing its partnerships, in order to help strengthen accountability, manage risk and rationalise working arrangements. In support of its application of the framework, the Council maintains a Register of Significant Partnerships listing all the Council's key partnership arrangements and assessing the strength of their governance arrangements. The Council will ensure Members and Officers are clear about their roles and responsibilities, both individually and collectively, in relation to the partnerships they are involved in and to the authority.
- Monitoring and taking action to improve performance with members of the Manchester Partnership through performance measures including those in the current Community Strategy and the emerging strategy for the city
- [Inform, consult and involve local residents](#) or representatives of local residents in all significant decisions
- Maintaining specific arrangements for all schools to support them to play a full role in their communities, contribute to the objectives for the city and guarantee high standards of governance and probity. A Strategic Education Partnership (SEP) has been developed to bring together schools, the Council and city partners to connect key educational, skills and employment priorities for Manchester. The Manchester Schools Alliance has also been formed to support the SEP.

3. Good conduct and behaviour

The Council will ensure its values are put into effective practice.

⁶ Neighbourhood Development Plans set out policies for the future development of the neighbourhood they relate to and form part of the Local Development Framework for their area. Neighbourhood Development Orders can grant planning permission for certain kinds of development within a specified area. A Community Right to Build is a special kind of Development Order that grants planning permission for development schemes such as a housing scheme.

The Council will foster a culture of behaviour based on shared values, ethical principles and good conduct. The Council's values are **People, Pride, Place**. These values underpin everything the Council does, including how it works with partners and serves its local communities.

People. *Every day Council employees will go further to make a difference to the lives of Manchester people. Council employees will treat colleagues, partners and customers with the respect they deserve and believe only their best is good enough.*

Pride. *Council employees are proud of the role they play in making Manchester a success. Council employees accept the responsibility invested in them and rise to meet the challenges they need to overcome.*

Place. *Council employees celebrate all things Manchester and strive to make Manchester's streets, neighbourhoods and city an even greater place to live, work and visit.*

As a responsible employer, the Council believes that its long-term future and that of the city is best served by respecting the interests of all its stakeholders. This includes employees, the residents of Manchester and their elected representatives, its businesses and visitors and the many partners who all work together to support Manchester to become a world class city.

The Council will ensure Members and Officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance.

The leadership of the Council will create a climate of openness, support and respect that covers the whole organisation. It will put in place robust arrangements to ensure that Members and employees are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders and that arising issues and challenges are identified and addressed. The Council will do this by establishing and keeping under review:

- Its values
- A [Member Code of Conduct](#) and arrangements for determining allegations that a Member has acted in breach of the Council's Member Code of Conduct as required by the [Localism Act 2011](#) (such Arrangements to include the appointment by the Council of at least two "Independent Persons" to assist the Council's Monitoring Officer)
- Maintaining and publishing on its website a [Register of Member's Interests](#)
- [Registers of Gifts and Hospitality](#)
- [An Employee Code of Conduct](#)
- [A Protocol governing Member/Officer relations](#)
- Systems for reporting and dealing with any incidents of wrongdoing including fraud, corruption, bribery and money laundering
- A voluntary [Standards Committee](#) composed of elected Members and independent co-opted members, with responsibility for promoting and maintaining

high standards of conduct; assisting Members to observe the Member Code of Conduct; overseeing the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and monitoring the Member/Officer Protocol

- A [Personnel Committee](#) to determine the Employee Code of Conduct.

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

The Council will be rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken, and have effective measures to hold decision makers to account. The Council will listen and act on the outcome of constructive scrutiny.

To do this, the Council will:

- Establish and maintain an effective [Scrutiny function](#) which is able to constructively challenge decision-makers, including those who work in partnership with the Council
- Establish and maintain an effective [Audit Committee](#) to oversee the Council's governance, risk management and internal control arrangements and ensure that they are operating effectively
- Establish and maintain an accessible system for dealing with [customer complaints](#)
- Put in place and operate arrangements to safeguard Members and employees against [conflicts of interest](#) and record interests declared in meeting minutes.

Decision makers will have good-quality information, advice and support to ensure that the Council delivers services effectively to meet community needs.

The Council will do this by:

- Providing accurate, relevant and timely information through performance reports and dashboards, to assist senior officers, Council and Committees to make decisions that are supported by data-led evidence and intelligence
- Maintaining an Intelligence Hub, an online interactive tool for accessing ward-level statistics about the city
- Using data to evaluate the effectiveness of pilots to inform decisions to roll out new ways of working across the city.

The Council will be transparent about how decisions are taken and recorded.

The Council will do this by:

- Ensuring that, subject to limited exemptions, decisions of [Council, the Executive and Committees](#) are made in public, recorded (alongside the reasons and the evidence considered) and that information relating to those decisions is made available to the public. This includes access through live webcasts of Council meetings. The Council's archive stores webcasts for six months after a meeting takes place

- Ensuring that [residents or representatives of residents are informed, consulted and involved in significant decisions](#), and their views are made available to those making decisions for their consideration
- Ensuring that, subject to limited exemptions, [key decisions](#) (as defined at Article 13.3 (b) of the Constitution) and other decisions taken by Council Officers under the Scheme of Delegation are recorded and that information relating to such decisions is made available to the public
- Ensuring that the Council complies with its statutory obligations in relation to the [Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#). These regulations stipulate that meetings must be held in public with the agenda and public reports available on the council website. However, certain exclusions apply where there is a need to comply with confidentiality laws and to prevent misbehaviour at meetings. The regulations also stipulate that facilities need to be provided to record the meeting and allow for people to make comments live through social media.
- Publishing notification of the intention to take key decisions, including through [The Register of Key Decisions](#).

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

The Council will review and, if necessary, update the framework at least annually. Amendments to the risk management framework, as described in the [Risk and Resilience Strategy 2014](#), are submitted to Audit Committee for consideration. The Council ensures that there is appropriate training and awareness-raising activity to ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the authority with elected Members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their jobs. The risk management framework:

- Enables officers to formally identify, evaluate and manage risks
- Links risks to financial and other key internal controls
- [Involves elected Members in the risk management process](#)
- Is applied to the Council's key business processes, including strategic planning, financial planning, policy-making and review, performance management and project management
- Includes a risk management policy statement summarising clearly how the risk management framework will be implemented
- Is applied to the Council's significant partnerships and governance arrangements with schools
- Includes robust business continuity management practices
- Includes effective arrangements for whistle-blowing.

The Council will ensure that it collects, uses, shares and stores information and data appropriately.

It will do this by:

- Safeguarding the personal data it holds and sharing this data only in circumstances permitted by law
- Establishing and regularly reviewing records management, data quality, [data protection](#) and information security policies
- Providing data protection training and raising awareness of essential practices amongst staff
- Complying with the [Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency 2014](#) by providing accurate data for all mandatory data sets, and publishing these in the appropriate time frames, in the Council's [Open Data Catalogue](#). Published datasets include finance and procurement, environmental and neighbourhoods' information such as the waste contract, local authority land and data about parking as well as governance issues such as the organisational chart, the constitution and information about time spent with trade unions.
- Where there is a demand for specific data sets, outside of the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities, the Council will strive to publish these provided the requests do not contain personal data and where it is in the public interest to do so.

The Council will use its legal powers to promote its values and priorities to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in Manchester.

- The Council will use its full powers, including the '[general power of competence](#)', to the benefit of people in Manchester. The Council will have full regard to the extent of its powers and not act beyond them, and will observe specific requirements in legislation as well as general responsibilities of public law.
- The Council's decision making process will adhere to the principles of good administrative law, respect human rights and demonstrate rationality, legality and natural justice.

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

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

Effective local government relies on public confidence in Members and in Officers. Good governance strengthens credibility and confidence in public services. Governance is strengthened by the participation of people with many different types of knowledge and experience. The Council is committed to ensuring Officers and

Members are equipped to address the challenges facing the Council, including the need to transform public services to support the objectives for the City with fewer resources. The Council will support this by:

- Where external recruitment takes place, encouraging individuals from a range of backgrounds and communities to join the Council, for example through the Apprenticeship Scheme.
- Providing induction and training programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for Members and Officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis.
- Ensuring that statutory officers have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and ensure that these roles are properly understood throughout the authority.
- Encouraging flexibility and continuous development aligned to the principles of [m.people](#), as agreed in November 2010.

The Council will develop the capability of people with governance responsibilities, evaluate their performance and ensure that all staff understand the importance of governance within their role.

The Council will do this by:

- Providing effective training and guidance for Members and Officers to understand their governance responsibilities
- Assessing the skills required by Members and Officers and making a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively
- Developing skills on a continuing basis to improve performance including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and recognise when an external perspective is required.
- Implementing revised use of council resources guidance for members. The revised guidance incorporates advice that was provided to the Council by Standards for England. It aims to clarify for members how Council resources should be used and how to avoid the inappropriate use of resources.
- Providing a Members' Update on Ethical Governance helping to promote high standards of conduct. This newsletter contains details regarding the Department for Communities and Local Government's guide for members on openness and transparency on personal interests, information protection guidance and advice regarding members' use of social media and Council owned electronic communications.

In support of measures to develop the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective, the Council will continue to:

- Support elected Members in their roles as community leaders and representatives through ward co-ordination and casework support as well as their role as decision makers by administering the decision making process and providing appropriate advice, training and guidance

- Provide bespoke administrative support for Executive Members and support the overview and scrutiny process by appointing a dedicated senior officer to support each scrutiny committee
- Maintain a Member Development Working Group comprising of the deputy leaders and co-opted elected members to oversee the development and implementation of the Member Development Strategy
- Cascade regular information to Members and officers
- Deliver the Council's [People Strategy](#)
- Continue to use the Investment In People (IIP) framework to ensure the Council monitors its investment in staff
- Develop the workforce in accordance with the **m.people** principles, supporting development and flexibility to align skills and resources to organisational need now and in the future aligned to clear and flexible career pathways
- Develop and deliver workforce plans which assess how the workforce needs to develop and change over time to meet the needs of the Council in delivering services
- Develop leadership programmes to support the workforce to meet the leadership challenges of the future
- Promote a set of core competencies for managers, which include skills and knowledge relating to ethical governance.

The Council will ensure there are accessible opportunities for people to engage with the work of the authority and to seek election to the authority.

To do this the Council will:

- Ensure that effective arrangements are 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
- Communicate the work of the authority and ways to get involved through a wide variety of accessible channels
- Administer and support a Youth Council to ensure young people can become involved with the work of the Council.

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

The Council will exercise leadership through a robust scrutiny function that effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships, and develops constructive accountability relationships.

To do this the Council will:

- Make it clear to whom the Council is accountable and for what

- Assess the effectiveness of its relationships with external stakeholders to whom it is accountable and make any changes as required
- Operate an effective overview and scrutiny function and communicate its outcomes to stakeholders, including through [news reports on the Council website](#)
- Harness elected Members' understanding of community needs through the scrutiny function to focus on how Council services and services delivered by local partners meet people's needs
- Maintain an effective internal audit function operating in accordance with the 'Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government' issued by CIPFA and the IIA's Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Self-assessments against these requirements are carried out as part of the annual review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit.

The Council will take 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.

The Council will discharge this role by:

- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with leaders of other organisations contributing to the vision for the city, including the Manchester Leaders' Forum. Members of the Forum apply their experience and expertise in key partnerships at either Manchester or Greater Manchester level to benefit the city and actively drive forward the city's priorities of growth, people and place.
- Providing and supporting ways for citizens to present community concerns to the Council and its partners, both directly and via their elected representatives through processes such as [Ward Co-ordination](#). This process helps ensure services are tailored to meet the different needs of local neighbourhoods and helps improve Council and other public services for the benefit of local people, and the Councillor Call for Action.
- Informing, consulting and involving residents of Manchester on issues of interest to them, including through the [Council's online consultation portal](#), and maintaining effective channels for dialogue and debate, including live streaming of council and committee meetings and a wide mix of social media. This includes Facebook, Twitter, Vimeo, Youtube, Flickr and LinkedIn. The Social Media Policy and Code of Practice provides the Council with a coherent approach for the management and maintenance of social media. It ensures that the Council remains secure both through its networks and systems and reduce the risks of any breaches of legislation or reputational damage.
- Establishing and maintaining effective and clear relationships with public, private and voluntary and community sector organisations which contribute to the well-being of Manchester residents
- Working with partners to continuously strive to improve the [equality](#) of access to public services to all Manchester communities and adhering to the Public Sector Equality Duty

- Ensuring that the Council and Manchester Partnership are accountable to local people, through their elected representatives, for the delivery of the Community Strategy and its successor through the Overview and Scrutiny process
- Building public awareness to promote [electoral registration](#) and participation and confidence in the integrity of the electoral process
- Learning from [complaints](#) and other feedback on service delivery

The Council will take a planned approach to meeting its responsibilities to staff in terms of consultation and engagement with a focus on agreeing and enacting policies and protocols which make best use of human resources.

To do this the Council will:

- Maintain a clear and consistent policy on consulting staff and their representatives on decisions concerning the terms and conditions of their employment and policies which they are subject to
- Take into account best practice standards in areas including recruitment and staff terms and conditions
- Provide open and transparent access to information for staff and their representatives
- Communicate clearly the challenges facing the organisation and the changes it is going through to meet those challenges and
- Ensure access to appropriate staff policies and practices by maintaining and updating a Council Handbook

Monitoring and Review

This Code will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it is kept up to date. Where the review identifies that changes to the Code are necessary, the revised Code will be submitted to Standards and Audit Committee for comments before being incorporated within the Council's Constitution.

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

- [Audit Committee](#) - responsible for approving the Council's annual accounts and responding to the District Auditor's annual management letter. It also oversees the effectiveness of the Council's governance and risk management arrangements, the internal control environment and associated anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements
- [Finance Scrutiny Committee](#) – considers the implications of financial decisions and changes to corporate, partnership and city region governance arrangements
- [Standards Committee](#) – responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct amongst Members, for advising the Council on the adoption and revision of the Code of Conduct for Members, and for monitoring the operation of the Code.

Full terms of reference for each of these Committees are included in the Council's [Constitution](#). All Members of the Council are informed of the work of these Committees through minutes submitted to Council.

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

- The work of Internal and External Audit
- The opinion of other review agencies and inspectorates
- Opinions from the Council's Statutory Officers
- General matters relating to the implementation of the Code
- The production of the Annual Governance Statement and actions planned to address arising governance issues.

The Annual Governance Statement

Each year the Council will publish an [Annual Governance Statement](#) to accompany the [Annual Accounts](#). The Statement provides an overall assessment of the Council's corporate governance arrangements and how it adheres to the governance standards set out in this Code. Evidence relating to the six principles of this Code is reviewed and analysed to assess the robustness of the Council's governance arrangements.

The Statement includes an appraisal of the key controls in place to manage the Council's principal governance risks and the effectiveness of systems and processes governing decision making and financial control. The Statement also provides details of where improvements need to be made. Actions to address significant governance issues are identified and recorded in an action plan. The Annual Governance Statement is audited by the Council's external auditors as part of the audit of the annual accounts.