

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Standards Committee – 11 March 2013
Subject: Refresh of the Code of Corporate Governance
Report of: Assistant Chief Executive (Finance and Performance)

Purpose of Report:

This report informs the Standards Committee of the proposed revisions to the Council's Code of Corporate Governance and asks members for their comments. The draft Code is included as appendix one.

Recommendations:

The Committee is invited to consider the revised Code of Corporate Governance and provide comments, particularly in relation to the committee's work programme and the ethical governance framework.

Wards Affected:

All

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Background Documents:

None

1. Role of the Code of Corporate Governance

- 1.1 The Code of Corporate Governance is a public statement setting out the governance standards the Council will meet to ensure it is doing the right things, in the right way and operating in an inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. It provides the organisation and internal and external auditors with assurance that the Council's governance standards are fit for purpose and up to date.
- 1.2 The Code lists the Council's values and sets out the organisation's partnership governance standards. It sets out how the Council will ensure Members and Officers behave in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance and the role of the Standards Committee in providing leadership in this area.
- 1.3 Local authorities are required under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 to prepare an Annual Governance Statement. CIPFA, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, have produced a local framework entitled '*Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*' which recommends both that local authorities produce and maintain a local code of governance and that their annual governance statement reports on the extent to which the code has been complied with. The Council's Code of Corporate Governance is based on the six core principles of the framework, these being:
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.
- 1.4 The Code forms part of Manchester City Council's Constitution and is included in part 6, 'Codes and Protocols'.

2. Reviewing the Code of Corporate Governance

- 2.1 CIPFA urges local authorities to ensure their Code of Corporate Governance remains up to date. Since the last refresh of the Code the local government landscape has shifted considerably leading to many new governance issues, for which it is important that the organisation sets out its standards. These include the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, the government's data transparency agenda, growing awareness of the importance of protecting information, the transfer of responsibility for public health to local authorities and the introduction of Health and Wellbeing Boards.
- 2.2 In December 2012 CIPFA published a new guidance note for Local Authorities on delivering good governance. The note draws attention to new governance issues, describes how their governance framework should be adhered to

following the changes to local government and includes examples of good governance practices amongst local authorities in responding to these issues. The draft Code of Corporate Governance attached at appendix one has been reviewed taking these developments into account.

2.3 The format of the Code of Corporate Governance has been reviewed. Rather than listing supporting documents for each of the six principles, the Code now includes hyperlinks taking the reader to relevant sources of further information. This has enabled the size of the document to be reduced despite the growing range of governance issues covered.

2.4 The document refers to the Council's standards in a number of governance areas which have arisen since the publication of the last Code, these include:

- Developments to the Council's strategic planning framework, including the development and review of the Greater Manchester Strategy and the development of a new Strategic Narrative for the Manchester Partnership
- Reference to compliance with the CIPFA Statement of the Role of the Chief Finance Officer (the City Treasurer)
- Establishment of a Health and Wellbeing Board and the post of Director of Public Health
- Developing ways to implement the Community Right to Challenge, the Community Right to Bid and provisions in relation to Neighbourhood Planning under the Localism Act 2011
- Changes to the Standards regime, including the adoption of a Standards Committee on a voluntary basis
- Standards regarding data protection and protecting information
- Commitments to publish data including supplier transactions over £500, pay policy statement and organisational structure
- Establishment of a Youth Council

3.0 Adopting the Revised Code

3.1 The draft Code of Corporate Governance, revised to take into account comments from this committee, will be considered by Audit Committee on 21 March 2013 prior to its submission as part of the Constitution to the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2013 for adoption.

3.2 Standards Committee is invited to consider the revised Code of Corporate Governance and provide comments, particularly in relation to the committee's work programme and the ethical governance framework.

SECTION G

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Introduction

Corporate Governance is “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/SOLACE¹). Good corporate governance requires local authorities to carry out their functions in a way that demonstrates accountability, transparency, effectiveness, integrity and inclusivity. This Code is a public statement setting out the governance standards the Council will meet to ensure it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. The Code is based upon the following six core principles:

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

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.

The challenges posed by diminishing resources and the challenges and opportunities presented by changing public policies, including the introduction of city regions and the prevalence of local authorities sharing services, serve to 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 objectives in an effective way. The Council's vision is that Manchester will be a world-class city with a larger population that is wealthier, living longer, healthier, happier lives in communities that are diverse and cohesive. Good governance will enable the Council to pursue this vision in the most effective way.

¹ 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 will develop and promote its purpose and vision through effective engagement with the residents of Manchester and in partnership with key stakeholders to create and implement a vision for Manchester which will lead to better outcomes for Manchester people. The City Council and the other members of the Manchester Partnership have agreed a single shared vision that is set out in Manchester's Community Strategy – "[The Manchester Way](#)". The actions necessary to deliver the objectives in the Community Strategy are set out in the [Community Strategy Delivery Plan 2012](#). These actions 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](#).

Manchester's Community Strategy supports progress towards the objectives in the [Greater Manchester Strategy](#) which was adopted by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities ([AGMA](#)) in July 2009, and is currently being reviewed. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority ([GMCA](#)), created on the 1st April 2011, has new powers to work more effectively on significant issues including transport, regeneration and economic development. In light of this, and changes in national policy and funding, the Community Strategy will be refreshed to set out how progress towards the vision for the city will be achieved. A new 'Strategic Narrative' defining the Manchester Partnership's approach to achieving its objectives has been developed as part of this.

The Council defines its own objectives in bringing about the vision for the city in the [Corporate Plan](#) and the [business plans](#) for each of its directorates. These documents outline objectives and how they will be achieved, resourced and assured. The objectives are communicated to staff across the Council to ensure they understand their directorate's objectives and how these objectives contribute to the Council's overall objectives and the vision for the city. The Council reviews directorate business plans on an annual basis and makes any necessary amendments to its governance arrangements. Through the business planning and budget setting framework the Council allocates resources to achieve its objectives, as described in the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy. 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 will explain and report regularly on activities, performance and the Council's 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](#)
- A [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) outlining how finances will be used over the coming three years
- Independently verified statistical information about the prosperity of the city and the wellbeing of Manchester people through the [Intelligence Hub](#) and 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:

- Set quality measures for its services and regularly review performance towards these
- 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 to continuously drive improvement and maintain effective arrangements to identify and deal with failure in service delivery
- Ensure that [complaints handling and monitoring procedures](#) are robust so that it can monitor where services are failing to deliver and respond appropriately
- Commission services to meet the needs of the local community, and put in place processes to ensure that they operate effectively in practice and
- 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.

To do this the Council will:

- Ensure that services are prioritised so that resources are directed to those activities that will have the greatest impact on the outcomes set out in the Community Strategy;
- Compare outcomes for Manchester with comparable authorities and other relevant bodies and assess performance against the aspirations for Manchester set out in the Community Strategy;
- Compare information about functions, expenditure and performance with those of similar organisations and assessing 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 at a competitive price which secure values for money for taxpayers
- 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 our policies, plans and decisions.

The Council will set out in its [Value for Money Strategy](#) how these principles will be implemented and monitored.

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:

- (i) Appointing a Leader of the Council.

Since the 9 May 2010 the Council has operated the “new-style” 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.

Rule 1.4 of the Executive Procedure Rules in the 2012 Constitution sets out the procedure by which the Leader may make changes to the delegation of the Council's executive functions. Rule 1.4 includes provision whereby:

- (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.

As a result of legislation introduced by the Localism Act 2011, on the 3rd May 2012 the Council held a Referendum asking the citizens of Manchester whether they wished to change the Council's Executive arrangements to the elected Mayor and Cabinet form of Executive. The result of this Referendum

was that the citizens of Manchester voted in favour of retaining the Leader and Cabinet form of Executive.

(ii) 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.

(iii) 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.

(iv) 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 Officer² (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 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.

(vi) Annually appointing [Committees](#) to discharge the Council's regulatory responsibilities (e.g. the Council's Planning and Highways Committee).

(vii) Annually appointing Committees to discharge the Council's [Overview and Scrutiny](#) responsibilities and maintaining systems to support Members in discharging an effective Scrutiny function.

(viii) Annually appointing a Health and Wellbeing Board.

In accordance with section 194 of 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. As required by the Health and Social Care Act, the Health and Wellbeing Board includes the Council's Strategic Director, Families, Health and Wellbeing (the

• ² 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

statutory Director of Adults Social Services), Strategic Director of Children and Commissioning (the statutory Director of Children's Services) and Director of Public Health, at least one elected Member of the Council, a representative of the Council's Local Healthwatch organisation, a representative of each of the three Clinical Commissioning Groups for Manchester and such other persons as the Council deems appropriate.

(ix) Developing effective ways to implement the Community Right to Challenge, the Community Right to Bid and provisions in relation to Neighbourhood Planning.

The Council is developing a new procedure setting out how it will address any Community Right to Challenge which it receives. A list of "assets of community value" will be open to 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. The Council will develop a procedure which sets out how it will deal with any Community Right to Bid and is developing new procedures setting out how it will deal with applications in respect of neighbourhood development plans and neighbourhood development orders that are submitted by a neighbourhood forum.

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:

- (i) Publishing and reviewing, annually, (or more frequently if necessary), a [Constitution](#) which includes:
- (a) Schemes of Delegation of both non-executive (Council) and executive functions as described above.
 - (b) A [Members Allowances' Scheme](#), developed taking into account the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel who advise on a fair level of remuneration for elected Members;
 - (c) Protocols governing [Member / Officer relations](#) and the roles of Members and Officers in decision making; and
 - (d) [Procedures and Protocols](#) regarding the role of Scrutiny.
- (ii) 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.

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.

- (iii) Monitoring performance with members of the Manchester Partnership through performance measures including those in the [Community Strategy Delivery Plan](#).
- (iv) [Inform, consult and involve local residents](#) or representatives of local residents in all significant decisions.
- (v) Maintaining specific arrangements for all schools to support them to play a full role in their communities, contribute to the objectives in the Community Strategy and guarantee high standards of governance and probity.

3. Good conduct and behaviour

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

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 the long-term future of the Council and the city is best served by respecting the interests of all the Council's 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 dealing with allegations that a Member has acted in breach of the Council's Member Code of Conduct as required by Part 1, Chapter 7 of 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](#) in accordance with the requirements of Part 1, Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and Manchester City Council's Member Code of Conduct
- 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;
- A set of shared values and behaviours to underpin partnership work

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:

- (i) Establish and maintain an effective [Scrutiny function](#) which is able to constructively challenge decision-makers, including those who work in partnership with the Council
- (ii) Establish and maintaining an effective [Audit Committee](#) to oversee the Council's governance, risk management and internal control arrangements and ensure that they are operating effectively
- (iii) [Engage the community in decision making](#)
- (iv) Establish and maintain an accessible system for dealing with [customer complaints](#) and
- (v) 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 is committed to ensuring that its decision-making processes enable those making decisions to be provided with information that is accurate, relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications and that appropriate legal, financial and other professional advice is considered as part of the decision-making process.

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

The Council will do this by:

- (i) Ensuring that, subject to limited exemptions, decisions of [full 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
- (ii) Ensuring that [residents or representatives of residents are informed, consulted and involved in significant decisions](#), and feedback is made available to those making decisions for their consideration
- (iii) Ensuring that, subject to limited exemptions, [key decisions](#) (as defined at Article 13.3 (b) of the Constitution) and other executive 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
- (iv) Ensuring that the Council complies with its statutory obligations in relation to access to information, including the Local Authorities (Executive

Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; and

(v) Publishing notification of the intention to take key decisions, including through the [Forward Plan of Key Decisions](#).

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

The Council will ensure that the [risk management framework](#):

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

The Council will review and, if necessary, update its risk management framework at least annually. It will also ensure 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 Council will ensure that it collects, uses, shares and stores information and data appropriately.

The Council will safeguard the personal data it holds and share this data only in circumstances permitted by law. It will do this by establishing and keeping under review policies relating to records management, data quality and information security and by carrying out training and awareness raising on data protection and essential practices in protecting information.

The Council will adhere to the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency. The Council will publish data on its performance in a timely manner and clear format and will comply with requests to publish data whenever this is in the public interest. The Council publishes a [statement of its policies on pay and remuneration of officers](#) in accordance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 as well as [information on the organisational structure and senior posts and post holders](#) in line with the Data Transparency Code. The Council also publishes details of [supplier transactions over £500](#).

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:

- (i) Where external recruitment takes place, encouraging individuals from a range of backgrounds and communities to join the Council, for example through the Apprenticeship scheme
- (ii) Providing induction and training programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for Members and Officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis
- (iii) 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 and
- (iv) Support flexibility and continuous development aligned to the principles of *m.people*.

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:

- (i) Providing effective training and guidance for staff to understand their governance responsibilities
- (ii) Assessing the skills required by Members and Officers and making a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively and
- (iii) Developing skills on a continuing basis to improve performance including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and recognise when an external perspective is required.

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 elected members which oversees the implementation of the Member Development Strategy
- Develop leadership programmes for Members
- Cascade regular information to Members and officers
- Implement the Council's People Strategy, the organisation's vision for its workforce for 2015 aligned to the objectives in the Community Strategy
- Achieve and maintain the Investor in People Standard
- 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
- Develop 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 and
- 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 and
- Hold briefings prior to each election for people interested in standing for election to the authority.

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](#) and
- 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 and
- 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 that can contribute to the vision for the city
- Providing and supporting ways for citizens to present community concerns to the Council and its partners, both directly and via their elected representatives through [Ward Co-ordination](#), a process focusing service improvement at a neighbourhood level, 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
- Establishing and maintaining effective and clear relationships with public, private and voluntary and community sector organisations (including through the [Manchester Compact](#)) 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 [Community Engagement Strategy](#) reflects the need for the Council to engage with all sections of the city's diverse communities and that

this is supported by a [Community Engagement Toolkit](#) which provides managers and staff with comprehensive practical guidance and contacts

- Ensuring that the City Council and Manchester Partnership are accountable to local people, through their elected representatives, for the delivery of the Community Strategy through the Overview and Scrutiny process
- Building public awareness to promote [electoral registration](#) and participation and confidence in the integrity of the electoral process; and
- 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 to staff the challenges facing the organisation and the changes it is going through to meet those challenges and
- Ensure all staff have access to appropriate staff policies and practices.

Monitoring and Review

This Code will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it is kept up to date. The review will be submitted to Standards and Audit Committee and the amended Code will be included in 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 overseeing 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](#) – which oversees the Council's financial management and how it works with partners to deliver the shared ambitions in the Community Strategy
- [Standards Committee](#) – 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.

Full terms of reference for each of these Committees are included in the Council's [Constitution](#).

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

- (a) The work of Internal and External Audit
- (b) The opinion of other review agencies and inspectorates
- (c) Opinions from the Council's Statutory Officers
- (d) General matters relating to the implementation of this Code of Corporate Governance
- (e) Reports prepared by managers with responsibility for aspects of this Code of Corporate Governance and
- (f) The production of the Annual Governance Statement and actions planned to address arising governance issues.

All Members of the Council are provided with an overall view of the work of these Committees through minutes submitted to Council.

The Annual Governance Statement

Each year the Council will publish an [Annual Governance Statement](#) to accompany [the Annual Accounts](#) providing an overall assessment of the Council's corporate governance arrangements and how it is adhering to the governance standards set out in this Code. The Statement will include 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 will also provide details of where improvements need to be made.

Evidence relating to the six principles of this Code is reviewed and analysed to assess the robustness of the Council's governance arrangements. Actions to identify 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.