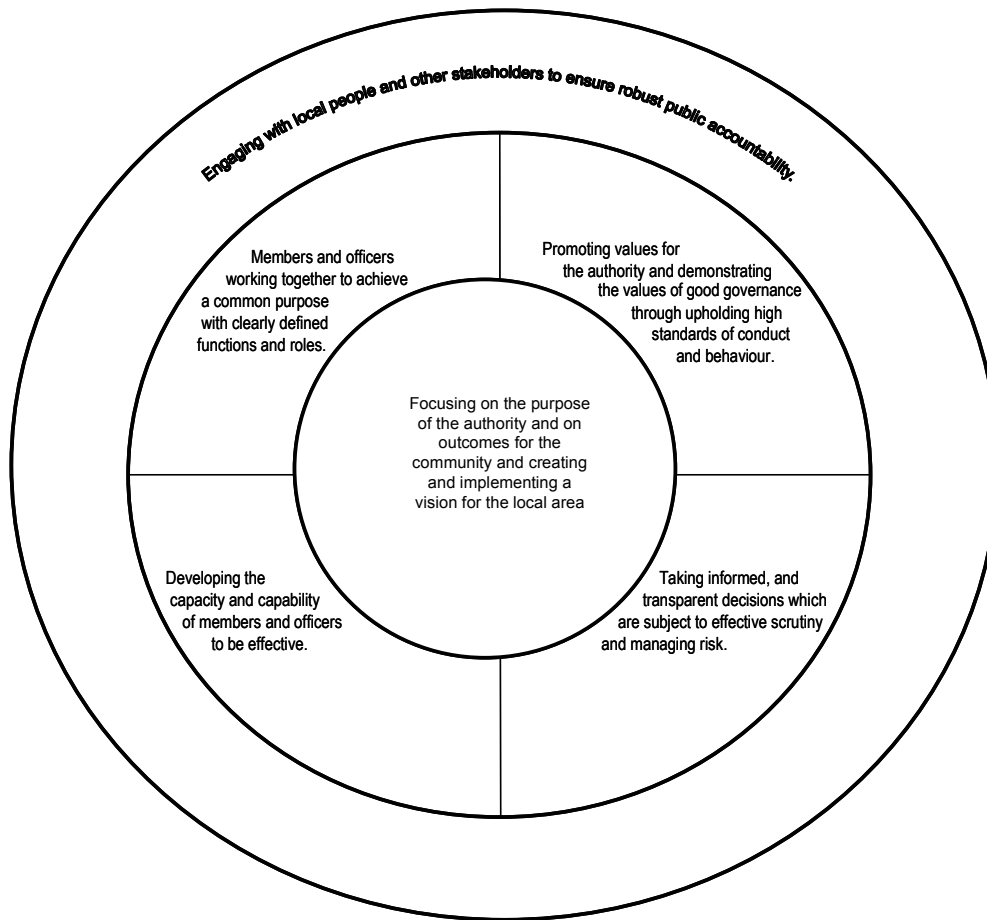


GWYNEDD COUNCIL

LOCAL CODE OF GOVERNANCE

Gwynedd Council is committed to providing services and making decisions in the best way possible. In order to achieve this, the Council has adopted the six core principles of "Achieving Good Governance in Local Government". (Cipfa/Solace 2007)



Each of the six core principle has a number of supporting principles.

The meaning of “good governance” is to ensure that the policy, systems, procedures and structures framework, which together, manage the way in which the Council administers its business, comply with these six core principles.

Good governance means that the Council’s values and culture accord with these principles.

Good governance means doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

The Council acknowledges that good governance leads to good management, good performance, good public engagement and, ultimately good outcomes for citizens and service users.

During 2010, the Council held a self-assessment of its governance arrangements by assessing them against five themes:

- achievements and results
- leadership and governance
- engagement with customers, communities and partners
- managing resources and performance
- procedure and people

The results of the self-assessment identified areas of strength along with issues to be addressed in an action plan. The evidence gathered in the self-assessment forms the basis of the Local Code of Governance.

The purpose of this Local Code of Governance is to summarise, in one document, the principles that the Council adheres to when governing, along with a description of the policies, strategies and procedures that show how the Council intends to achieve them. It will be a live document and will be added to as other policies and strategies are developed following the self-assessment.

This Code will be reviewed annually as the Annual Governance Statement is produced.

Core principle 1: Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community, creating and implementing a vision for the local area (including citizens and service users)

Supporting principles:

- Exercising strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating the authority's purpose and vision and its intended outcomes for citizens and service users.
- Ensuring that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, or in partnership, or by commissioning.
- Ensuring that the authority makes best use of resources and that tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money.

The supporting policies, strategies, procedures and processes are:

- The Council Values
- The Council's Three Year Plan
- The Community Strategy
- Statement of the Accounts
- The Financial Strategy
- The complaints procedure
- The 'Achievement' system
- The Local Code of Governance
- The Auditor's Annual Letter

Core principle 2: Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

Supporting principles:

- Ensuring effective leadership throughout the authority and being clear about executive and non-executive functions and of the roles and responsibilities of the scrutiny function.
- Ensuring that a constructive working relationship exists between authority members and officers and that the responsibilities of authority members and officers are carried out to a high standard.
- Ensuring relationships between the authority and the public are clear so that each knows what to expect of the other.

The supporting policies, strategies, procedures and processes are:

- Scheme for delegation to committees
- Scheme for delegation to the portfolio leaders
- Scheme for delegation to officers
- Decision Notices
- Description of members' roles and responsibilities
- Protocols for implementing statutory officer functions
- The Protocol for Member-Officer Relations
- Members' Allowance Scheme

Core principle 3: Promoting the authority's values and demonstrating the values of good governance by upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

Supporting principles:

- Ensuring authority members and officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance.
- Ensuring that organisational values are put into practice and are effective.

The supporting policies, strategies, procedures and processes are:

- Members' Code of Conduct
- Officers' Code of Conduct
- The Gwynedd Standard
- Standards Committee Procedural Rules
- Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy
- The Council's Procedural Rules
- Financial Procedural Rules
- Contracts Procedural Rules
- The appraisal procedure
- Internal Audit Plan
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy - officers
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy - members
- Officer's Interests Policy
- The Standards Committee Annual Report

Core principle 4: Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risks.

Supporting principles:

- Being rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and listening and acting on the outcome of constructive scrutiny.
- Having good quality information, advice and support to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs
- Ensuring that an effective risk management system is in place.
- Using their legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in their area.

The supporting policies, strategies, procedures and processes are:

- The Risk Management Strategy
- Overview and Scrutiny Procedural Rules
- Access to Committee Information Procedural Rules
- Overview and Scrutiny Strategy
- Members' Training Programme (Scrutiny).
- Officers' Training Programme (Constitutional Arrangements).
- Remit of the Audit Committee
- The Complaints Procedure
- Decision Notices
- Committee minutes
- Whistle Blowing Code of Practice
- Guidance for Chairpersons' Booklet
- The Scrutiny Strategy
- Corporate Risks Register

Core principle 5: Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.

Supporting principles:

- Making sure that members and officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles.
- Developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance, as individuals and as a group.
- Encouraging new talent for membership of the authority so that best use can be made of individuals' skills and resources in balancing continuity and renewal.

The supporting policies, strategies, procedures and processes are:

- New Members Induction Programme.
- Member Training Strategy
- Members' Personal Development Plan
- Officer Training and Development Plan
- The appraisal procedure
- The Succession Plan.
- The recruitment procedure
- Member Support and Development Charter
- Management Competency Framework.

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

Supporting principles:

- Exercising leadership through a robust scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships, and develops constructive accountability relationships.
- Taking an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery whether directly by authority, in partnership or by commissioning.
- Making best use of human resources by taking an active and planned approach to meet responsibility to staff.

The supporting policies, strategies, procedures and processes are:

- Scrutiny Annual Report
- Access to Committee Information Procedural Rules
- Planning Code of Practice
- The Annual Report on the Council's Achievement
- Gwynedd Together, the Community Strategy