



Keighley Town Council

Code of Corporate Governance

APPENDICES

Corporate Action Plan 2021/22

1. Introduction

1.1

Keighley Town Council is committed to the principles of good corporate governance and wishes to confirm its ongoing commitment and intentions through the development, adoption and continued maintenance of a Code of Corporate Governance.

1.2

This document sets out and describes the Council's commitment to corporate governance. It identifies the arrangements that have been made, and indeed will continue to be made, to ensure its effective implementation and application in all aspects of the Council's work.

2. Corporate Governance

2.1

For the purpose of this Code, Keighley has accepted the definition of Corporate

Governance as follows:-

“Corporate governance is the system by which local authorities direct and control their functions and relate to their communities”.

The Council recognises that effective local government relies upon establishing and maintaining the confidence of the public in both the elected Members and Officers of the Council. It further recognises that the setting of high standards of self-governance provides a clear and demonstrable lead to both our existing and potential partners, and therefore provides the basis for effective community governance

3. The Principles

3.1

The Council positively recognises and accepts the following underlying principles of good governance:-

- Openness and Inclusivity
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Transparency

3.2

In order to comply with these principles, it must undertake to ensure that systems and processes are continually monitored and reviewed and are kept up to date.

3.3

The need for effective leadership is acknowledged as providing the keystone to corporate governance, and as such the principles can only be achieved if effective leadership is demonstrated through;

- Providing a vision for the community and leading by example in decision making and other processes and actions.
- Members and Officers conducting themselves in accordance with high standards of conduct.

4. The Vision

4.1

The Council is determined to continuously improve the services it delivers and to meet the wider needs and aspirations of the community. It has a duty to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the town and will be responsive to the priorities of the community.

4.2

The core values in relation to the Council in pursuing its vision are;

Services

It will deliver services:

- (i) Of the highest quality
- (ii) With the legitimacy of the knowledge through consultation of customers' and residents' needs
- (iii) Targeted wherever possible to meet individual or specific requirements
- (iv) In a fair and consistent and non-discriminatory manner, against a backdrop of equal opportunity
- (v) In a timely and responsive way

(vi) From an open caring, customer and resident focused environment committed to a regime of continuous improvement

(vii) Within managed capacity and resources

(viii) To the highest quality at the most affordable prices possible

Test of Competency

The Council will measure competency by:

(i) Timely and regular reviews of services

(ii) Carrying out regular customer consultation and satisfaction surveys

(iii) Regularly reviewing performance and management of progress against targets and achievements

(iv) Regularly monitoring complaints as a measure of user satisfaction.

Functions and Activities

The Council recognises:

(i) The legitimacy and integrity of the Council's function and activities is derived from understanding the needs of the Town, socially, economically and environmentally as well as the needs, requirements and aspirations of its residents, customers and service users

(ii) That consultation, participation and engagement in partnership is at the heart of understanding area and community needs and forms the foundation for the direction and focus of the Council's functions and activities

(iii) That knowing what to do, and having systems in place to deliver, is the key to public service delivery success

(iv) The importance of having defined roles and responsibilities of Members and Officers and appropriate structures which make effective use of resources, allows challenge and change and promotes a strong and sustainable partnership between Members and Officers

(v) That the principles of strong and effective governance and community leadership will deliver the measurable benefits for the areas and its residents.

5. Monitoring

5.1

The Council recognises the following dimensions to its corporate activities, accepting that these are not mutually exclusive;

- Community Focus
- Service Delivery Arrangements
- Structures and Processes
- Risk Management and Internal Control
- Standards of Conduct

5.2

Every year, the Council is required to publicly report on its financial position and publish an Annual Return.

5.3

An external opinion as to the accuracy and integrity of the financial statements and the effectiveness of the Council's internal control systems will be made by the External Auditor.

5.4

The Council will maintain continuous internal control processes to ensure that they are effectively reviewed and tested on a systematic basis.

6. Commitment

6.1

The principles of Corporate Governance will be applied to all dimensions of the Council's corporate activities, and in particular;

Community Focus

The Council will continue to;

- Work for and with the community of Keighley
- Exercise leadership in the community, where appropriate
- Undertake an ambassadorial role to promote the wellbeing of the town where appropriate
- Establish clear channels of communication with all sections of the community
- Publicise its performance through its website, newsletter and Annual Report

Service Delivery Arrangements

The Council will continue to:

- Ensure that continuous improvement is sought
- Ensure that agreed policies are implemented
- Monitor and report performance against established standards and targets
- Foster effective relationships and partnerships with the public and private sectors

Structures and Processes

The Council will continue to:

- Maintain effective and legitimate managerial structures and processes to govern decision making and exercise authority within the organisation
- Maintain clearly documented protocols and policies governing relationships between Members and Officers

Risk Management and Internal Control

The Council will continue to:

- Establish and maintain a systematic strategy and process for managing risk
- Ensure that internal control processes are effectively tested
- Ensure internal control processes are reviewed annually
- Ensure that changes are accommodated, and systems are up to date

Standards of Conduct

The Council's Members and Senior Officers will continue to:

- Exercise leadership by conducting themselves as role models for others within the authority to follow.
- Define the standards of personal behaviour expected from Members and staff and all those involved in service delivery
- Put in place and maintain arrangements to monitor and ensure compliance

Openness and Reporting

The Council will:

- a) Ensure that the Code of Corporate Governance is made available to all Members and Officers and is made publicly available through the website
- b) Designate the Town Clerk as the Officer responsible for overseeing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the operation of the Code in practice
- c) Report annually on compliance with the Code and any changes that may be necessary to maintain it and ensure its effectiveness in practice. This will include any recommendations made by recognised external bodies such as the Internal Auditor
- d) Develop an Action Plan to identify and review areas of the Code where further work is required and make the necessary arrangements to ensure it is undertaken
- e) Provide an Annual Statement on how the Council is complying with the Code, including how it has maintained the effectiveness of its Corporate Governance arrangements during the year, and any planned changes for the forthcoming year

7. Conclusion

Keighley Town Council is fully committed to the principles of Corporate Governance, and through the measures outlined within this Code will ensure that adequate arrangements are made with regard to its continued implementation, monitoring and review.

Code of Corporate Governance Action Plan 2021/2

1. Community Focus			
The Council will continue to work for and with the people of Keighley, exercising leadership when it is right to do so and do its best to promote the well-being of the town.			
	What	How	Where
a)	The Council will publish information in an objective and understandable form of its: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities & achievements • Financial position and performance 	<p>The Council will produce e-newsletters at least twice a year containing articles on services and activities, feedback from any community survey. One town magazine will also be published and delivered to all residential properties in Keighley. We will also publish a Town Plan with performance measures for the year.</p> <p>The Council will produce and publish its statement of accounts annually and make it available in both electronic and paper format.</p>	<p>Hard copies of Town Magazine delivered to residents. E-newsletter via email to mailing list.</p> <p>Annual Accounts will be published on Keighley.gov.uk</p>
b)	The Council will publish an annual update to the Town Plan presenting an objective, balanced and understandable account and assessment of its: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current performance in service delivery Plans to maintain and improve service quality	<p>The Council will produce and publish an update on the Town Plan by 30 June each year. This will contain the aims of objectives for the next 12 months.</p> <p>The council will also publish its Key Performance Indicators to measure its performance</p>	<p>Town Plan</p> <p>Quarterly report to P&G Committee</p>
c)	The Council has put in place proper arrangements for independent review of its financial and operational reporting processes.	Reports from the Internal and External Auditor are submitted to the Finance & Audit Committee for information; all members of the Council receive copies of the External Auditors final opinion electronically.	Information will be published on Keighley.gov.uk
d)	The Council has put in place proper arrangements designed to encourage individuals and groups from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the Council and put in place appropriate monitoring processes to ensure they continue to work in practice.	<p>The Town Plan sets out the Council's aim to increase interaction and consultation with residents, partners and community groups.</p> <p>The Council will continue to engage the public, its partners and its stakeholders with reference to specific schemes and projects.</p>	<p>Town Plan</p> <p>Annual appointments to Outside Bodies</p>

		<p>The Council publicises calendars of meetings and circulates agenda papers to the press and the public via its website.</p> <p>The council will invite all Keighley District Councillors to Full Council meetings.</p>	<p>Local press and via Keighley.gov.uk</p> <p>Meeting minutes</p>
e)	The Council is committed to openness in all its dealings, subject only to the need to preserve confidentiality in those specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so, and by its actions and communications deliver an account against that commitment.	The Council has published a Recording at Meetings Policy to aid anyone wishing to film a meeting. Only items relating to personal details or commercially sensitive details are discussed with the exclusion of press and public.	All meeting agendas include info on public participation. Full policy on Keighley.gov.uk
f)	The Council will establish clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders and put in place proper monitoring arrangements to ensure that they operate effectively.	The Council's main channels of external communication are through Town Council magazine, e-newsletter, Council Website, social media platforms, press releases and/or responses.	Town magazine, local newspapers, Social Media and Keighley.gov.uk
g)	The Council will engender a high level of civic pride.	<p>The Council provides a wide range of facilities and activities which all help to build a sense of community.</p> <p>It is committed to maintaining the traditions associated with Keighley's historic role as a Market Town and to organising civic events which celebrate this in response to both local and national issues.</p> <p>It will continue to organise a free programme of annual events which have proved to be effective in enhancing community life.</p> <p>It will also continue to develop new and improve existing facilities for active and passive recreation where possible and to maintain its various facilities to a high standard.</p>	<p>Annual programme of Civic Events</p> <p>Annual Events programme</p> <p>Town Plan</p>

2. Service Delivery Arrangements

The Council is committed to seeking continuous improvement in all its services.

	What	How	Where
a)	The Council sets standards and targets for performance in the delivery of services on a sustainable basis and with reference to equality policies.	Standards and targets for performance are set annually by the Council and contained within the Town Plan. Performance Indicators are set each year	Town Plan Equal Opportunities Policy Equal Opportunities monitoring Key Performance Indicators quarterly reports
b)	The Council will put in place sound systems for providing management information for performance measurement purposes.	Performance information is reported retrospectively in the Town Plan and in a half year monitoring report. Progress against the Key Performance Indicators are reported quarterly (April, July, October, January)	Town Plan Quarterly report to P&G Committee
c)	The Council monitors and reports performance against agreed standards and targets and has developed comprehensive and understandable performance plans	The Town Plan reports performance against targets and standards for the year. The half year monitoring report provides ongoing performance information. Progress against the Key Performance Indicators are reported quarterly (April, July, October, January)	Town Plan Quarterly report to P&G Committee
d)	The Council has put in place arrangements to allocate resources according to priorities.	Full Council is responsible for allocating resources for the Council's functions considering the objectives approved by the Council. Annual budget setting process is set out in the Finance & Audit Terms of Reference	Annual Budget setting process F&A minutes

		The Town Plan details priority tasks for the year. Progress on these tasks is reported in the half year monitoring report.	Town Plan
e)	The Council will foster effective relationships and partnerships with other public sector agencies and the private and voluntary sectors.	The Council has a positive and pragmatic attitude to partnership working and is both receptive to and proactively working towards building and maintaining relationships with other bodies.	Committee and Council minutes.
f)	The Council responds positively to the findings and recommendations of external and internal auditors and put in place arrangements for the effective implementation of agreed actions.	Internal Auditor agreed recommendations are absorbed into workload of both the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. Follow-up of Audit recommendations is monitored by the Finance & Audit Committee, the Responsible Financial Officer and the Town Clerk.	Internal and External Audit reports

3. Structures and Processes

The Council has established effective political and managerial structures and processes to govern decision making and the exercise of Council within its organisation.

	What	How	Where
a)	The Council has put in place clearly documented protocols governing relationships between members and officers.	The Council has approved a Member Code of Conduct and an Employees Code of Conduct both of which covers relationships between Councillors and Officers – which is monitored by the Town Clerk	Members Code of Conduct & Employees Code of Conduct
b)	The Council has ensured that the relative roles and responsibilities of members and senior officers are clearly defined.	Terms of Reference of Committees and the Scheme of Delegation set out the roles and responsibilities of the Council and its various committees and senior officers.	Terms of Reference Scheme of Delegation
c)	Members of the Council meet on a regular basis to set the strategic direction of the Council, to determine policy and to monitor service delivery.	A schedule of regular meetings of all Committees and Council is agreed annually in advance.	Annual Meetings Calendar
d)	The Council has developed and maintains a scheme of delegation which includes a formal	The Scheme of Delegation contains a schedule of delegated and reserved powers.	Scheme of Delegation

	schedule of those matters specifically reserved for the collective decision of the Council.		
e)	The Council has put in place clearly documented and understood management processes for policy development, implementation and review and for decision making, monitoring and control, and reporting; and formal procedural and financial regulations to govern the conduct of the Council's business.	Processes are set out in the Council's Terms of Reference for Committees, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. These also set out in the Standing Orders for full council, committees, officer employment rules, and the financial regulations.	Terms of Reference Standing Orders Financial Regulations
f)	The Council has put in place arrangements to ensure that members are properly trained for their roles and have access to all relevant information, advice and resource as necessary to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.	A member's induction pack is maintained by the Council. This pack contains information on key contacts, forthcoming events, members code of conduct, the Council's Terms of Reference for Committees, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations etc.	Members Induction Pack and members briefing Code of conduct for Councillors and Employees
g)	The Town Clerk is responsible to the Council for all aspects of operational management.	The Town Clerk's responsibilities as overall operational manager is set out in the job description for the post.	Town Clerk's Job Description
h)	The Council has adopted clear protocols and codes of conduct to ensure that the implications for supporting community political leadership for the whole council are acknowledged and resolved.	The Council has adopted an employee's Code of Conduct which specifically sets out guidelines for officer support to members.	Employees Code of Conduct

4. Risk Management & Internal Control

The Council is in the process of establishing a systematic strategy, framework and processes for managing risk.

	What	How	Where
a)	<p>The Council will develop a robust system for identifying and evaluating all significant risks which involve the proactive participation of all those associated with planning and delivering services.</p> <p>The Council will maintain a risk management system.</p>	<p>A high-level risk management policy has been developed, and strategic and business risks have been identified by officers.</p> <p>An ongoing risk management system is in place and monitored by the Policies & Governance Committee and Finance & Audit Committee.</p>	Corporate Risk Assessment
b)	<p>A high-level risk management policy (Corporate Risk Assessment) has been developed, and strategic and business risks have been identified by officers.</p> <p>An ongoing risk management system is in place and monitored by the Policies & Governance Committee.</p>	<p>The council has several risk minimisation/control procedures in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal audit - Health & safety policy and practices - Insurance policy & practices - Performance appraisal - Financial regulations - Corporate Risk Assessment <p>An ongoing risk management system is in place, which draws these various elements together.</p>	<p>Internal Audit plan</p> <p>Insurance Policy</p> <p>Appraisal Policy</p> <p>Financial Regulations</p> <p>Corporate Risk Assessment</p>
c)	Services are delivered by trained and experienced people.	The Council has introduced a full programme of staff appraisal, mandatory for all officers, which ensures officers are aware of their personal objectives, and identifies and addresses all training needs in a specific manner.	Staff Appraisal Scheme
d)	The Council has put in place effective arrangements for an objective review of risk management and internal control, including internal audit.	The Internal Auditor review's the Council's risk management arrangements and this report annually to members.	Internal Audit Report

	The Council's internal auditor reviews risk management and internal control annually.	
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5. Standards of Conduct

The Council is committed to the highest standards of conduct in all its dealings. Members and Senior Officers are expected to exercise leadership by conducting themselves as role models for others within the Council to emulate, and by defining standards of personal behaviour applicable to all members and staff.

	What	How	Where
a)	The Council has developed and adopted formal codes of conduct defining the standards of personal behaviour to which individual members, employees and volunteers of the Council are required to subscribe and put in place appropriate systems and processes to ensure that they are complied with.	<p>The Council has adopted a code of conduct for members and employees.</p> <p>The Council has approved a whistle blowing policy which has been communicated to members and staff as applicable.</p> <p>There is a formal complaints procedure in place.</p>	<p>Members Code of Conduct & Employees Code of Conduct</p> <p>Staff Handbook</p> <p>Complaints Policy</p>
b)	The Council has put in place arrangements to ensure that members and employees of the Council are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice.	<p>There are a number of arrangements in place to ensure freedom from prejudice, bias and conflicts of interests for members and officers.</p> <p>The primary document for members is the code of conduct, and the annual declaration of interests made by Councillors.</p> <p>Officers will be bound by the employee's code of conduct and must also declare any interests. In addition, the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations provide guidance for employees.</p>	<p>Members Code of Conduct & Employees Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Standing Orders</p> <p>Financial Regulations</p>
c)	Put in place arrangements for whistle blowing to which staff and all those contracting with the Council have access to.	The whistleblowing policy is included in the staff handbook and a copy has provided to all staff members.	Whistleblowing Policy