

# DERBYSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

*Providing Assurance by ensuring.....*

***“The right things are being done in the right way, for the right people in a timely inclusive open honest and accountable manner”***



## Introduction to our Local Code of Governance

Our Local Code of Governance has been created to provide assurances to our communities of our obligation to deliver good governance in all that we do. Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 regulation 4(3), all authorities are required to undertake a review of their governance arrangements each year.

Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Authority (the Authority) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

## What are the Core Principles and Sub Principles of good governance?

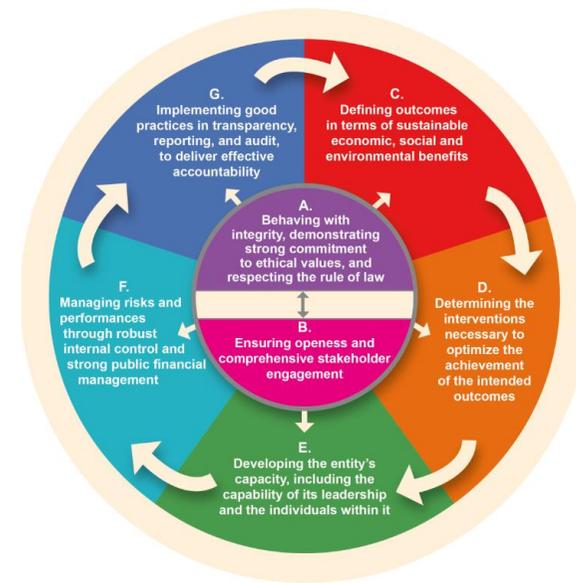
The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture and values by which the Authority is directed and controlled, along with its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads its communities. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic priorities and to consider whether those outcomes have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and outcomes and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Authority's policies, aims and outcomes, to evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risks being

realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The main body of the code is divided into seven core principles. These have been adopted from the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework document 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016'.

The principles and standards are aimed at helping Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Authority (DFRA / the Authority) to develop and maintain their own code of governance and discharge their accountability for the proper conduct of business.

Under each principle, the means by which the DFRA will meet and demonstrate its commitment for good corporate governance in relation to each particular aspect is exemplified.



## How Will We Demonstrate We Are Achieving Good Governance?

**Core Principle A:** Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting rule of law.

*Behaving with integrity*

*Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical value*

*Respecting the rule of the Law*

**We ensure** members, officers and all employees behave with integrity and lead a culture that acts in the public's interest, protecting the reputation of the organisation.

**We seek** to establish, monitor and maintain ethical standards and performance, underpinned by personal integrity and behaviour.

**We expect** members and staff to demonstrate a strong commitment to adhere to the relevant laws of the land.

**We deal** with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively.

[Our Vision, priorities & Core Values](#) sets out the Authority's expectations with respect to standards of behaviour.

We have a [Code of Conduct for DFRA Members](#).

Elected Members must declare [a notification of public interest](#) and [register a record of gifts and hospitality](#), which is available on the external website.

Elected Members comply with the Local Government Association's code of ethics and behavioural standards.

The [Code of Conduct for Employees](#) provides us with an ethical framework designed to support the decisions, actions and behaviours of our employees in carrying out our duties.

We have a [Volunteers Code of Conduct](#) which explains the behaviours we expect our volunteers to adhere to.

A robust zero tolerance strategy is in place to eliminate [Bullying and Harassment](#) from the workplace.

A [Whistle-Blowing Policy](#) is in place, along with a free confidential helpline to support staff.

We do not tolerate fraud of any type or in any circumstances. We have an [Anti-Fraud Policy and Anti-Fraud Service Procedure](#) to ensure any are dealt with effectively.

We publish how we manage [Complaints and Feedback](#) on our external website.



**Core Principle A:** Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting rule of law.

*Behaving with integrity*

*Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical value*

*Respecting the rule of the Law*

All discipline, grievance & complaints under the [Dignity at Work Policy](#) are processed in accordance with this policy.

We annually review the number of seats and elected member appointments to committees, groups, panels and forums that make up the governance structure of DFRA.

We have a Monitoring Officer who ensures lawfulness and fairness of decision-making, conducts investigations, supports the Standards Committee and provides advice as to whether Authority decisions are within the budget and policy framework.

We have 2 posts for Independent Persons who sit on the Standards Committee. They meet quarterly and have a structured [working committee agenda](#) that is reviewed annually at the June AGM.

The [Standards Committee meetings](#) assist, advice and train Members and Independent Persons on matters relating to the Members Code of Conduct. They overview the constitution, whistle-blowing and take any action required on receipt of any complaints against a Member. Promoting and maintaining high ethical standards and standards of conduct by Members is delivered through training and discussed at each meeting.

The [Governance and Performance Working Group](#) monitors the effectiveness and outcomes relating to Authority policies on Whistle blowing, Anti-fraud and Anti-corruption strategy, external Complaints Procedure, employee Grievance Procedure, Bullying and Harassment Procedure, and Disciplinary Procedure.

The [Inclusion and Equality Forum](#) ensure that equality, fair treatment and social inclusion are integral in all Decision-making processes.

The [Independent Community Inclusion Board](#) (ICIB) meet to ensure they work closely and transparently with our partners and the Community.

To ensure we obtain the same ethical values from our external providers, we expect those providing services and goods to us to demonstrate their commitment to equality. We set out the necessary prerequisite principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity, on the grounds of nationality, transparency and competitive [procurement](#).

[Derbyshire Police and Fire Collaboration](#)

Key Operating Principles established between the collaboration of the Police and Fire HQ.

[Derbyshire Fire Authority Meetings](#) are attended by [all members of the Fire & Rescue Authority](#) and the [Strategic Leadership Team](#).



## Core Principle B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Openness

Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders  
Engaging stakeholder effectively, including individual citizens and service users

**We have** an open culture that demonstrates transparency in its engagement, publications, consultation and decision-making process.

**We hold** a database of key stakeholders who we can consult with to ensure we deliver effective, inclusive outcomes.

**We plan**, target and communicate what we consult upon as part of our Strategic Planning Cycle and publish this under: **'Have Your Say'**.

**We encourage**, collect and evaluate the views and experiences of our communities and internal staff.

**We manage/monitor** a **partnership register** that recognises value in the need for partnership working, clear and robust partnership agreements and an understanding of joint outcomes.

**We have** a planned annual consultation and evaluation programme. We out external consultation events to reach the wider communities and those areas where the objectives may have a greater impact. **We're open and transparent** in our feedback, publishing how their views have been taken into account.

**We publish** Committee Agendas, meeting minutes and decisions on the external website.

Progression against the IRMP are discussed in the Governance and Performance Working Group.

Information that we hold about the Authority and the Service is available at <http://www.derbyshire-fire.gov.uk/>.

We have a **Data Transparency** site that meets the requirements of the Local Authority Transparency Code 2015.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the public can make a **FOI request – all requests are published**. The Authority produce a **Publication Scheme** which is a guide to information available to the public, where it can be found and whether it is free or subject to a charge.

Our decision-making protocols are available to view in our **Members Handbook** which is reviewed annually.

We publish our Integrated Risk Management Plan, supporting Action Plan and Annual Report at: **Corporate Plans** to demonstrate how we are achieving our **Vision, Values and Priorities**

Decision-making Reports are managed through the **Governance and Performance Working Group**, **Inclusion and Equality Forum**, **Standards Committee** and **Full Authority Meetings**.



## Core Principle C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits

Defining outcomes

Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

**We review** [Our Vision, Service Priorities and Core Values](#) based on external drivers and consultation feedback relating to what local people say matters most to them.

**We manage** our resources to risk to ensure we are able to deliver defined outcomes and manage performance through a structure performance board.

**We publish** the [Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-22](#), considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision.

**We take** a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints.

We publish the [IRMP, supported by an Action Plan](#), this is followed up with identifying what outcomes have been achieved.

Monitoring and management of performance is captured through various performance boards which feeds into the Governance and Performance Working Group and Authority Meetings.

The Authority has an Asset Management Plan based on an assessment of the condition of stock and a Capital Programme that ensures the Authority takes account of the economic and environmental impact.



## Core Principle D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

*Determining interventions*

*Planning interventions*

*Optimising achievement of intended outcomes*

**We use** a [Planning Cycle](#) to provide a robust planning process that cover strategic and operational priorities and plans

**We have** a strategy ([IRMP](#)) and [Action Plan](#) that clearly sets out what needs to be delivered, and targets to help identify what we need to do and when.

**We have** a [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) which informs medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy.

**We prepare** budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan.

**We have** decision-making working groups with clearly set Terms Of Reference, defined meeting dates with meeting minutes published on the external website.

**We consult** with our communities on proposals that may impact on them.

**We have** a 'non decision-making' sounding board group working with senior officers, who provide scrutiny and explore the details and implications of subject areas which are presented to them.

**We have** evaluation arrangements in place for joint partnership working to ensure agreed achievements / outcomes are made.

**We recognise and support** the Public Contract Regulation, Public Service (Social Value) Act 2012 and the Modern Day Slavery Act 2015 as part of the Procurement of good process.



**Core Principle E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it**

*Developing the entity's capacity*

*Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals*

**We have** a structured reporting process in place to ensure progression of our objectives against the IRMP, which is scrutinised in the Governance and Performance Working Group.

**We are a member** of 'Family Group 4' who are a group of fire & rescue services that have similar demographics to Derbyshire. The forum shares performance data, discuss best practices and seek knowledge and advice.

**We have** a [People Strategy 2015 - 17](#).

**We conduct** biennial Cultural Survey.

**We publish** a [Public Sector Equality Duty Report](#) annually which provides information about our employees in terms of age, gender, ethnicity to name but a few elements.

**We have** conducted a [Gender Pay Gap](#) analysis which has been published on the external website.

**We have** a Workforce Plan which has been developed to identify numbers, structures, skills sets to support the implementation of the projects and actions to deliver the IRMP.

**We carry out** Positive Action prior to Whole-time Recruitment which helps identify and remove the barriers and issues to the employment, retention and progression of people from 'under-represented' groups, whilst still employing people on merit.

**We conduct** annual Performance Appraisal and Development Reviews on employees.

**We ensure** Members are made aware of their duties, role and responsibilities through induction and training days. Members planning days are planned when required through the Standard Committee.

**We will** resource external expertise / advice when there is a need / necessity.

**We publish** the role and responsibility of the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and the Strategic Leadership Team within the [Members Handbook 2017 18](#).

**We have** an appraisal system in place which capture personal development plans.

**We review** our [Scheme of Delegation](#) annually in light of legal and organisational changes. The Scheme complies with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and details the powers and responsibilities allocated to the main roles within the organisation and which powers are permitted to be delegated.



## **Core Principle F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management**

*Managing risk    Managing performance    Robust internal control    Managing data    Strong public financial management*

**We have** a policy and service procedure for Corporate Risk, and a process for managing this that is managed by the Senior Leadership Team.

**We have** key principles in place for partnership working and have partnership working as a corporate risk.

**We have** a Partnership Register that highlights the purpose, frequency and outcome of meetings.

**We have** data sharing protocols in place for partnership working.

**We have** a Data Protection Officer to lead on compliance of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

**We have** a structured methodology and process in place to manage performance data.

**We manage** performance information through Service Performance Dashboards and an IRMP Programme Board.

**We have** annual internal and external audits to review key subject matters and our financial arrangements.

**We have** an [Anti-Fraud Policy](#) and [Anti-Fraud Service Procedure](#) to ensure any are dealt with effectively.

**We are** compliant with the Code of Practice on Managing Risk of Fraud and Corruption (CIPDA 2014).

**We scrutinise** the management of Corporate Risk, internal control and the management of data in the Governance and Performance Working Group.

**We publish** what we spend and how we spend it in our sections: 'Income and Expenditure', 'Our Budget and Your Council Tax', 'Procurement' and 'Expenditure Over £250.00'.

**We produce** an Annual Governance Statement that forms part of our Statement of Accounts.



**Core Principle G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability**

*Implementing good practice in transparency*

*Implementing good practices in reporting*

*Assurance and effective accountability*

**We have** a visible [Data Transparency](#) site on the external website.

**We publish** all Fire Authority and authority working group meeting minutes

**We offer** a free language translation service on our external website that allows our communities to read the web pages into 103 different languages.

We publish [Newsletter](#) to inform our communities of key activities, events and celebrations that have taken place.

**We publish** an Annual Report and Annual Governance Statement that captures how we have progressed against the IRMP, key performance measures, internal/external surveys and feedback and value for money.

**We conduct** internal / external audit duties through the Governance and Performance Working Group to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the governance and risk management framework. They recommend the commissioning of work from internal and external audit comment on the scope of work to ensure it gives value for money.

**We have** a governance framework in place for the Derbyshire Fire/Derbyshire Constabulary Limited Liability Partnership for the new joint headquarter and training centre.



## **Code of Corporate Governance: Reviews and Reporting**

The DFRA is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. This code of corporate governance will help ensure proper arrangements are in place to meet the responsibilities the DFRA faces.

The DFRA will undertake an annual review of its governance arrangements and issue an annual governance statement with the published accounts. This will provide assurance that governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively in practice and ensure that where there are gaps action is planned which will strengthen governance in future. The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) will also detail any planned changes in the coming year. Location of AGS reports.

### **Further Information**

If you have any concerns about the way in which the Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Authority, Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service, its Members, officers or agents conduct business, or believe that elements of this code are not being complied with please contact one of the following as appropriate. Your enquiry will be treated confidentially and a response made following investigation of the facts in each case.

#### **The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive**

Terry McDermott

Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Butterley Hall, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3RS. Telephone: (01773) 305 305

#### **The Monitoring Officer / Solicitor**

Louise Taylor

Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Butterley Hall, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3RS. Telephone: (01773) 305 305

#### **The Director of Finance/Treasurer**

Simon Allsop

Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Butterley Hall, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3RS. Telephone: (01773) 305 305

#### **The Internal Auditor**

Mandy Marples

Derby City Council. The Council House, Corporation Street, Derby DE1 2FS. Telephone: (01332) 293111

#### **The External Auditor**

KPMG. One Snowhill, Snowhill, Queensway, Birmingham. Tel: (0121) 232 3000

