Annual Governance Statement

2016 - 2017

CONTENTS

1. Background and Scope of Responsibility

North West Leicestershire District Council 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. In addition, the Council 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.

In discharging the overall responsibility the Council is required to for putting into place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council has approved and adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' 2016. A copy of the Code is available on our website at http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/corporate_policies or can be obtained from the Council Offices in Coalville upon request.

This Statement explains how the Council has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the preparation and approval of an Annual Governance Statement. The Council's arrangements comply with each of the principles in the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework - Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.

2. The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values, by which the authority is controlled and directs its activities and through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The Council's system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The governance framework has been in place for the year ended 31 March 2017, and up to the date of the approval of the Statement of Accounts.

3. The Governance Framework

The Council's vision is set out in the Council Delivery Plan. The plan which was adopted by Council on 22 March 2016 includes our Vision, Priorities and Values for the District.

'North West Leicestershire will be a place where people and businesses feel they belong and are proud to call home' is the Vision for North West Leicestershire, as set out in the CDP.

The Council's priorities reflect the overall vision and are detailed in a series of critical activities which are incorporated into annual departmental team business plans and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The following section lists the key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Council's governance framework with a commentary setting out how the Council's arrangements comply with each of the principles in the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework - Delivering Good Governance in Local Government as follows:

Principle A – Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Arrangements have been put in place to ensure probity when dealing with different stakeholders and these are frequently updated. Accordingly, the Council has a Members' Code of Conduct, Planning Code of Conduct, Licensing Code of Conduct and Citizens' Rights which are all set out in the Constitution. These are regularly reviewed to take account of the latest legislation and guidance, the last review of these codes being completed in March 2016 as part of the annual update of the Council's Constitution.

The Constitution contains a section on the "Principles of Decision Making", and non-compliance is a ground for "call-in" of Cabinet decisions by the Policy Development Group.

During 2016/17 the Audit & Governance Committee had a pro-active work programme and each meeting of the Committee received a report from the Monitoring Officer on complaints about members under the code of conduct and the ethical indicators report.

The Council has robust arrangements for monitoring compliance with the Member Code of Conduct (including gifts and hospitality). The Officer Register of Gifts and Hospitality received its six monthly checks by the Monitoring Officer. Members are responsible for ensuring their register of interests is kept up to date. The Monitoring Officer and her staff provide training, advice and guidance to members in completing their register of interests forms and on the implications of their interests on decision making.

The Head of Paid Service, Acting Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer are part of the Corporate Leadership Team to ensure a consistent approach to governance at a strategic level. Their work includes monitoring compliance with standards of conduct across the Council, including both Officers and Members, and horizon scanning.

The Council's Whistle Blowing Policy includes Members, contractors, suppliers and service providers and people working in partnership with the Council (e.g. volunteers). All reports received under the policy are investigated thoroughly.

Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the monitoring officer function

The "Monitoring Officer" function is carried out by the Head of Legal and Support Services who reports to the Interim Director of Resources. The Legal Team Manager who has

responsibility for legal matters and is also the "Deputy Monitoring Officer", reports to the Head of Legal and Support Services.

Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the Head of Paid Service function

The "Head of Paid Service" role is undertaken by the Council's Chief Executive. The Human Resources Team Manager, who is responsible for all HR matters reports to the Chief Executive. The Head of Paid Service can delegate this function during their absence.

Undertaking the core functions of an Audit Committee, as identified in CIPFA's Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities

The Council has an established Audit and Governance Committee whose remit and functions are based on the guidance set out in a CIPFA publication which identifies best practice in relation to roles and responsibilities. The Committee meets quarterly and receives regular reports from both the Acting Section 151 Officer and the Senior Auditor. Arrangements are in place for the Senior Auditor to report independently to the Audit Committee should he/she feel it appropriate to do so.

Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful

The Council ensures compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations through various channels. Two statutory officers (the Acting Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer) have responsibility for ensuring that the Council does not act in an ultra vires manner, supported by the Human Resources Team Manager who facilitates the management and mitigation of risk and the Senior Auditor who provides assurance on matters of internal financial control. All reports delivered to Council, Cabinet and otjer Comittees are subject to checking by the statutory officers.

There is an in-house, Lexcel accredited legal team. Lexcel is the Law Society's legal practice quality mark for excellence in legal practice management and excellence in client care. The Legal Team work closely with all teams across the council providing risk based advice.

The Human Resources function uses appraisals and other performance driven and developmental processes ensure that officers are equipped to discharge their duties in accordance with the requirements of the Council.

Whistle-blowing and for receiving and investigating complaints from the public

The Council has in place and promotes appropriate whistle blowing policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated where required. A revised Whistle Blowing policy was approved by Audit and Governance Committee on 25 March 2015 Staff are aware of the Whistle Blowing policy through the I-Net (Council intranet) and as an integral part of their induction.

There is also a well established and responsive complaints procedure to deal with both informal and formal complaints from its customers and the residents of the District. Regular information relating to performance in respect of complaints (and compliments) is presented to Heads of Service and the Corporate Leadership Team.

Principle B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

At the heart of the Council's strategic planning process is the Council Delivery Plan (CDP), annual Team Business Plans and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The Council's CDP has been developed in line with the Council's strategic aims and was updated and adopted by Council on 21 March 2017 for 2017/20. The MTFS 2017/18 to 2019/20 was approved by Cabinet on 11 October 2016.

Our Communications Strategy sets out who we communicate with, and why and how we do it. The Council uses various means to communicate key messages to staff and members of the public, such as the weekly NWL News and the Chief Executive's road shows for staff, and increased use of the internet and Social Media for the public.

The Council has adopted a consultation framework which involves staff at all levels and a formal, regular mechanism of meetings with representatives and officials from the recognised Trade Unions is in place.

The Council's scrutiny arrangements are designed to ensure that key elements were externally scrutinised and involve all sections of the community and stakeholders as necessary.

Principle C – Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

Incorporating good governance arrangements in respect of partnerships and other group working and reflecting these in the authority's overall governance arrangements

The Council participates in a range of joint working arrangements with other bodies. For those that deliver services to our customers there are service level agreements or contractual arrangements in place to ensure delivery and protect reputational risk. Should there be corporate risks based on partnership arrangements these will be detailed within the corporate risk register. The Council is particularly mindful of the financial and reputational risks that can arise through entering into joint working and collaborative arrangements, including the potential for a detrimental reputation impact on the Council should the partnership fail.

Enhancing the accountability for service delivery and effectiveness of other public service providers

The Council is a partner in the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Resilience Partnership (LRIP). All Councils at Unitary, District and Borough levels are members of the Partnership to bring together emergency management resources to prepare for and respond to civil emergencies within the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland area. The HR Manager is the Council's representative on the LRIP Management Board.

The Council has over recent years invested considerably to promote the economic development and regeneration of Coalville through the Building Confidence in Coalville project.

Principle D – Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcome

The Council Delivery Plan and our Medium Term Financial Strategy detail how we have planned all our resources, both financial and staffing to deliver against our priorities.

The Council's performance management arrangements include the Business Planning process across all of the Council's aims and objectives to better align activities, improvements and resources. A set of clear and consistent Team Business Plans was developed this year. Teams were able to plan for a single year or for the 3 year period to match the CDP. All plans are monitored throughout the year by management on a monthly basis and reported to Cabinet publicly on a quarterly basis using a traffic light system to facilitate robust member challenge. After the month end, enabling managers to respond to issues in a timely manner, profiled financial monitoring reports which also project the outturn are reviewed by all budget holders on a monthly basis. Similarly, financial performance is reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

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

The Council's "BEE Valued" programme includes rigorous recruitment and selection, performance management and staff development processes.

The Council fully supports the requirements to ensure that both Members and senior officers have the necessary skills sets to fulfil their strategic role in the organisation. A comprehensive induction programme exists for both Members and Officers which has been developed to deal with all relevant core issues. The Council is committed to creating an environment where elected Members' skills can develop and thrive with regular courses being delivered.

An annual development review is undertaken for all officers, which includes the identification of training and development needs, which are then considered and built into a service level and corporate training programme where appropriate.

The end of 2016/17 marks a new beginning for North West Leicestershire District Council with the appointments of a new Chief Executive and Acting S151 Officer.

Principle F – Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public management

The Policy Development Group carries out the Council's Scrutiny function. The Council maintains an Executive Decision Notice of key decisions to maximise transparency and consultation. The writing of formal reports follows a prescribed procedure which requires the completion of a number of procedural requirements for content including Statutory Officer checks for legality, budgetary compliance, rationale, etc. Reasons for all decisions must be given and these are recorded in the minutes.

The Member and Officer Codes of Conduct and associated procedures act as a safeguard against conflicts of interest or bias.

The Audit & Governance Committee undertook the functions of an audit committee as identified by CIPFA Guidance. It received reports and presentations from the External Auditor and is independent of Cabinet.

The Council has a customer feedback complaints system and this information is used to improve service delivery and customer satisfaction.

The Council has a Risk Management Strategy and maintains and reviews its strategic risk register on a quarterly basis. The risks identified have been linked to Council priorities/strategic aims and lead officers have been identified to manage each risk. Risk Management also forms a key element of the Council's Delivery Plan and the Service Planning process and Risk Management is an integral part of the Council's performance management arrangements.

As part of the Council's Corporate Project Management Framework, all major projects have their own risk log and all reports going to Members include the risk implications associated with the decision Members are being asked to make. The corporate project toolkit has been reviewed in 2017 to improve its accessibility and use by managers. A risk based approach has been taken to the production of the toolkit and compliance with the strict requirements of project management methodology depending on, inter alia, size, value and reputational factors.

The Council is committed to the effective use of IT and has an ICT strategy and IT Security Policy which were reviewed during 2015/16.

The Council's 2016/17 Treasury Management Strategy was approved by Council in February 2016, and risks are fully evaluated as part of this strategy.

Principle G – Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

<u>Ensuring the Authority's Financial Management Arrangements Conform With the Governance Requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016)</u>

For most of 2016, the Head of Finance was absent from the organisation, leaving in September 2016. As a result the Acting S151 Officer fulfilled this role for part of 2015/16 and for the full 2016/17 financial year. The Council's financial management arrangements during this time have continued to conform with the governance requirements as set out in the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016).

<u>Ensuring the authority's assurance arrangements addresses the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2010)</u>

The Council's internal reporting arrangements are designed to ensure the independence of the internal audit function. Appropriate resources are made available to provide an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the Council's operations. It brings a systemic disciplined approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. The Senior Auditor reports directly to the Council's Audit and Governance Committee on all matters appertaining to audit outcomes.

4. The Council's governance framework

Role of the Council

The extent of the role of full Council in reviewing and monitoring effectiveness of internal control is set out in Article 4 of the Council's constitution. Article 4 provides that the Council is responsible for setting the policy and budgetary framework. The 'Call-in' provisions found within the Constitution provide members of the Policy Development Group with a mechanism to scrutinise decisions of Cabinet where they feel that they have been taken outside the budget and policy framework.

The Council's statutory officers who consist of the Head of Paid Service (the Chief Executive), the Monitoring Officer (Head of Legal & Support Services) and Acting S151 Officer (Financial Planning Team Manager) fulfil the statutory duties associated with their roles, including ensuring that the Council's activities are in accordance with the law and legislative requirements, and that financial budgets are set appropriately and are monitored regularly. The Council's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements as set out in the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016). Although there was not a Head of Finance, S151 Officer in post the function was fulfilled during the 2016/17 year by the Deputy S151 Officer acting up.

The Constitution of the Council is subject to a continuous review process which sets out matters reserved to Council, Cabinet and Committees for decision, all other decisions are delegated to officers The Constitution has undergone a revision this year and the new version, which was actively reviewed by Members, was approved by Council on 22 March 2016.

The Council formally reviews its Financial Regulations on a regular basis albeit on-going updates are implemented as part of the regular reviews of the Constitution.

Role of Cabinet

The Cabinet has responsibility for all executive functions and for making recommendations to Council within the Budget and Policy Framework. Its remit is clearly set out in the Constitution and it plays a major role in reviewing key aspects of overall service delivery, including monitoring its effectiveness and related governance issues.

Role of Audit and Governance Committee

The Audit and Governance Committee which meets the external auditor to discuss findings in the Annual Audit Management Letter and reports and was responsible for ensuring that the Council's systems for internal control were sound by reviewing control mechanisms, and guidelines (both internal and external) as well as adherence to these; ensuring continued probity and good governance of the Council's operations.

Role of Policy and Development Group

The Policy Development Group carries out the Council's Scrutiny function. The Policy and Development Group can "call in" a decision which has been made by the Cabinet but not yet implemented, to enable them to consider whether the decision is appropriate.

The Constitution contains a section on the "Principles of Decision Making", and non-compliance with one or more of those principles is a ground for "call-in" by the Policy Development Group.

Risk Management

The overall objective of the Council's risk management strategy is the identification, analysis, management and financial control of those risks which can most impact on the Council's ability to pursue its approved delivery plan"

The Risk Management Strategy was updated and approved by Cabinet on 29 July 2014 and all reports to Council, Cabinet and Committees have a risk management section. A Corporate Risk Register has been developed and approved at both Corporate Leadership Team and by Elected Members. The Corporate Risk Register is accepted as a live document constantly under review for progress on managed risks and new risks that could impact on the Council. A risk review cycle has been developed that will allow closer links with the service planning process

The Corporate Risk Group is represented by each of the Council's services. The CRG will identify new risks and review the corporate risk register. Review of corporate risks is part of the terms of reference of the Audit and Governance Committee. Risks are reported to Cabinet as part of the quarterly Performance Management Report.

Role of Internal Audit

The Internal Audit service is responsible for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of systems of internal control. A risk model is used to formulate an annual work plan, progress against which is reviewed each quarter by the Audit and Governance Committee. The reporting process for Internal Audit requires a report of each audit to be submitted to the relevant Director and Head of Service as well as the Acting S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. The reports include an independent opinion on the adequacy of the applicable internal controls, audit findings and recommendations for improvements with an agreed timescale for implementation. . Progress against recommendations is followed up by Internal Audit and reported to Audit and Governance on a quarterly basis throughout the year. The Internal Audit Annual Report 2016/17 was considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 21st June 2017. The opinion overall, based on all Internal Audit work during the year, was a Grade 2 which means that internal controls require improvement in some areas. This is a positive opinion and no Grade 3 audit reports were issued during 2016/17.

5. Effectiveness

Review of Effectiveness

The Council has responsibility for conducting at least annually, a review of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of senior managers and directors within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment, the Internal Audit Annual Report, the work of the Audit & Governance Committee plus the comments of external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

6. Assurance

Assurance Review

An assurance review was undertaken in respect of the 2016/17 year with evidence identified to support where the Council meets the CIPFA/SOLACE guidance. No significant governance issues were identified, however a number of improvement areas have been identified for 2016/17.

The Assurance Review and Evidence document lays out the evidence in support of the Council's Annual Governance Statement and includes an assurance score, with any significant governance issues and/or improvement areas identified.

This document will, in future years, also look back at any identified significant governance issues and/or improvement areas relating to the previous year and provide an update, although 2016/17 forms the first year of this in depth review.

There were no issues identified in 2015/16.

In terms of specific assurance, the Council has considered its position in relation to Council owned housing stock following the recent catastrophe at Grenfell Tower. The Council, having checked records, has confirmed that there are no high rise blocks within the Council's ownership or buildings with cladding or external wall insulation that do not meet fire safety regulations.

The table overleaf is an extract from the Assurance Review and Evidence document and includes details of the improvement areas identified. Please note that due to the cross-cutting themes of the CIPFA/SOLCAE framework, some improvements are repeated against the different principles.

Where appropriate, improvements will be included in the Council Delivery Plan.

(For full details on the assessment, evidence and identification of improvement areas please refer to the Assurance Review and Evidence document).

Table 1 – Areas of improvement identified during 2016/17

CIPFA/SOLACE Principle	Improvement
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law	Review of Equality policy.
	Currently the Acting S151 Officer is fulfilling Statutory Officer duties in line with CIPFA's *Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government* (CIPFA, 2015). Formal arrangements will be put in place with regards to the S151 Officer role.
	Review approach to consultation (see principle B).
Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	Development of a Communications Strategy to support key Communications policies.
	Review the need for a Partnership Working framework as part of development of a Commercial and Sustainability Strategy (see principle D).
	Review approach to consultation, including the need for processes to be structured to improve inclusion with varying methods used to gather views from different stakeholder groups. Development of a Communications Strategy to support key Communications policies.
Core Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits	MTFS to be extended over longer time period in order for Members to be making informed decisions regarding future years.
	Review approach to consultation (as above).
	Review the need for a Partnership Working framework as part of development of a Commercial and Sustainability Strategy (see principle D).
	Review of Strategic and Financial Planning timetables to be undertaken to allow for better alignment for 2018/19 planning.
	MTFS to be extended over longer time period in order for Members to be making informed decisions regarding future years (as above). Develop Commercial and Sustainability strategy to support MTFS, to include approach to partnerships.
	Implement longer term revenue planning from 2018/19 budget planning.
Principle E : Developing the entity's capacity, including the	Review approach to consultation (as above)
	Review the need for a Partnership Working framework as part of development of a Commercial and Sustainability Strategy (see

capability of its leadership and the individuals within it	principle D)
	Update People Plan following appointment of new Chief Executive
	Review approach to consultation (as above).
Core Principle F : Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management	Ensure the Audit and Governance Committee review risks on a regular basis.
	Review the Council's approach to and appetite for risk and the associated Risk Management strategy and policy.
	Development of performance management system to be more intuitive and less administratively burdensome.
	Risks to be reported to Audit and Governance Committee twice per year for review.
	Training for Audit Committee members, development of active Audit Committee participation.
	Develop new financial model to achieve balance between budget holders and finance team in respect of responsibilities.
Core Principle G : Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability	Evidence used for assessment of governance to be documented and made available to users of financial statements
	Review opportunities to undertake peer governance review.

7. Overall opinion and conclusion

Conclusion

The Council is satisfied that appropriate governance arrangements are in place however it remains committed to maintaining and where possible improving these arrangements, in particular by addressing the issued identified in undertaking the annual review. The Council will continue to seek to enhance and strengthen governance arrangements within these areas for improvement and monitor progress made as part of our next annual review.

8. Statement of Leader and Chief Executive

We have been advised on the implications of the result of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework carried out by members of the Corporate Leadership Team and that the arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

Signed _____   Signed _____

   Councillor Richard Blunt   Bev Smith

   Leader of the Council   Chief Executive

   27 September 2017   27 September 2017

Annual Governance Statement

Assurance Review

August 2017

Assurance and evidence in support of the Council's annual governance statement

Assessment Score:

Good – Good governance exists and there are no improvements required
Fair – Satisfactory governance exists but improvements are required to meet good governance
Poor – Significant issues with governance exist which needs addressing

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

Supporting Principle 1: Behaving with Integrity				
Requirement of local authorities to:	**Asse-ss-ment**	**Evidence**	**Significan t Issues**	**Areas for Improvement**
1. Ensuring members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation.	Good	Constitution (incl. statutory officers, scheme of delegation, financial management and procurement rules) Council, Cabinet, Committees Service policies Complaints procedure Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer HR policies and procedures Anti-fraud and corruption policy, which includes whistle-blowing and other countering fraud arrangements Staff and member training including mandatory training for planning and licensing and appeals committees Induction for new members and staff. Codes of conduct BEE valued appraisal system. Standards and Ethics report taken to Audit and Governance Committee quarterly Corporate Leadership Team and extended Corporate management Team. External Audit reports Internal Audit reports	None.	None.
2. Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)	Good	Council Delivery Plan Council's values as set out in the Council Delivery Plan	None.	None.

3.	Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions	Good	Council leadership (Leader of the Council and portfolio holders) Declarations of interest noted. Up-to-date register of gifts and hospitality.	None.	None.
4.	Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively	Good	Anti-fraud and corruption policy, register of interests and annual declaration of related parties. Whistle blowing policy which staff are aware of. Anti-fraud and corruption audit undertaken in 2016/17 identified a number of improvements required which are timetabled in an action plan. Complaints policy well established and continually reviewed, improved and reported on. Members and officers code of conduct refers to a requirement to declare interests Minutes show declarations of interest were sought and appropriate declarations made.	None.	None.

Supporting Principle 2: Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values					
Requirement of local authorities to:	**Asse- ss- ment**	**Evidence**		**Significant Issues**	**Areas for Improvement**
1. Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance	Good	Values embedded into induction process for officers and members and appraisals for staff. Standards and Ethics report taken to Audit and Governance Committee quarterly.		None.	None.
2. Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation	Good	Values embedded into induction process for officers and members and appraisals for staff.		None.	None.
3. Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values	Fair	Appraisal process built upon values of the Council. Equality Policy in place, but requires review as existing policy does not		None.	Review of Equality Policy.

			satisfy equalities obligations or reflect changes in legislation (i.e. do not fulfil publish information requirements).		
4.	Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation	Good	Key partnerships have mechanisms in place to define role and scope of partners.	None.	None.

Supporting Principle 3: Respecting the rule of law					
Requirement of local authorities to:		**Asse ss- ment**	**Evidence**	**Significant Issues**	**Areas for Improvement**
1.	Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations	Good	Constitution is adhered to and reviewed regularly. Statutory provisions are adhered to. Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer	None.	None.
2.	Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements	Fair	Job descriptions and roles of statutory officers are well defined and understood by the organisation. Structure of the CLT ensures statutory officers are included in key decision making. S151 duties fulfilled in line with CIPFA's *Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government* (CIPFA, 2016) by Deputy S151 Officer.	None.	Currently the Deputy S151 Officer is fulfilling Statutory Officer duties in line with CIPFA's *Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government* (CIPFA, 2016). Formal arrangements will be put in place with regards to the S151 Officer role.

3.	Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders	Good	Arrangements in place for legal advice and recording of advice. All reports requiring a decision are considered by Finance, Legal and HR staff before being considered by the relevant decision making forum	None.	None.
4.	Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively	Good	Proper arrangements in place for legal advice and recording of advice, Monitoring Officer referenced to give advice and ensure Council's operates within the law at all times.	None.	None.
5.	Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively	Good.	Whistleblowing policy, anti-fraud & corruption policy Call-in arrangements	None.	None.

Core Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Supporting Principle 1: Openness				
Requirement of local authorities to:	**Asse ss- ment**	**Evidence**	**Significant Issues**	**Areas for Improvement**
1. Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness	Good	Council Delivery Plan and Annual Report FOI requests actively responded to, website, online publishing of expenditure. Anti-fraud and corruption audit undertaken in 2016/17 identified a number of improvements required which are timetabled in an action plan.	None.	None.
2. Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided	Good	Record of decision making and supporting materials Standard report format used. The Council's governance framework aims to ensure it sets and meets its objectives and responsibilities in a lawful, timely, open, inclusive and honest manner; and that its use of public money and resources are safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively	None.	None.
3. Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear	Good	Decisions well documented with supporting information and advice included. Forward Plan detailing report publication on a timely basis. Calendar of dates for submitting, publishing and distributing timely reports is adhered to Council, Cabinet and committee meetings are norm ally open to the public The conduct of business is defined by	None.	None.

	Assessment	Evidence	Significant Issues	Areas for Improvement
		formal procedures and rules that are set out in the Constitution.		
4. Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action	Fair	Customer and staff satisfaction surveys carried out regularly. Consultation exercise carried out periodically. However a Council policy for consultations does not exist.	None.	Review approach to consultation (see principle B, supporting principle 3).

Supporting Principle 2: Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders				
Requirement of local authorities to:	**Assess-ment**	**Evidence**	**Significant Issues**	**Areas for Improvement**
1. Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably	Fair	Formal and informal partnerships in place.	None.	
2. Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively	Fair	Partnership working across the authority is strong in some areas but needs to be embedded across the Council. Service Level Agreements. Partnership agreements exist.	None.	Review the need for a Partnership Working framework as part of development of a Commercial and Sustainability Strategy (see principle D, supporting principle 2)
3. Ensuring that partnerships are based on: trust, a shared commitment to change, a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit	Fair	As above, good, strong partnerships exists in some areas. Partnership agreements exist. Partnership framework to be developed.	None.	

Supporting Principle 3: Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users					
Requirement of local authorities to:	**Assess-ment**	**Evidence**	**Significant Issues**	**Areas for Improvement**	
1. Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.	Fair	Council regularly consult on major changes to service e.g. annual budget consultation, customer satisfaction survey.	None.	Review approach to consultation, including the need for processes to be structured to improve inclusion with varying methods used to gather views from different stakeholder groups.
2. Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement	Good	Communication policies in place. includes Internal, external, social media, intranet, style guide, corporate branding guide.	None.	Development of a Communications Strategy to support key Communications policies.
3. Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs	Fair	Communications policies. Council regularly consults on major changes to service e.g. annual budget consultation, customer satisfaction survey.	None.	
4. Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account	Fair	Council regularly consults and feedbacks on major changes to service e.g. annual budget consultation, customer satisfaction survey.	None.	
5. Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity	Fair	Consultation processes established	None.	
6. Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users	Fair	Use of relationships with academies to understand views of the younger generation.	None.	

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

Supporting Principle 1: Defining outcomes				
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assessment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1. Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions	Good	The Council Delivery Plan defines the vision for the Council, including values and priorities. Service Plans are developed based on the Council Delivery Plan.	None.	None.
2. Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer	Good	Intended impacts set out in Council Delivery Plan	None.	None.
3. Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available	Good	Team Business Plans developed for each service area. Monthly performance and finance reports monitored by CLT and Portfolio Holders; Quarterly reports monitored by CLT and Cabinet.	None.	None.
4. Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes	Good	Monthly performance and finance reports monitored by CLT and Portfolio Holders; Quarterly reports monitored by CLT and Cabinet.	None.	None.
5. Managing service users expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available	Good	Performance Indicators within Team Business Plans include agreed set of quality standard measures.	None.	None.

Supporting Principle 2: Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits				
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assess-ment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1. Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision	Good	Capital Strategy in place. 5 year capital budget planning.	None.	None.
2. Taking 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	Fair	Record of decision making and supporting materials made available publicly on website. MTFS provides medium term view.	None.	MTFS to be extended over longer time period in order for Members to be making informed decisions regarding future years.
3. Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs	Fair	Elected members act in public interest. Record of decisions made available to public via website. Consultations on key projects with key groups.	None.	Review approach to consultation (as above).
4. Ensuring fair access to services	Good	Equalities Officer in post. All new policies presented for approval require Equalities Impact Assessment to be completed and regularly reviewed as part of ensuring fair access.	None.	None.

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

Supporting Principle 1: Determining interventions				
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assessment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1. Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided	Good	All reports details options appraisals and risks associated with decisions.	None.	None.
2. Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts	Good	Car park strategy. MTFS.	None.	None.

Supporting Principle 2: Planning interventions					
Requirement of local authorities to:		*Assess-ment*	**Evidence**	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1.	Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets	Good	calendar dates agreed in advance, reports published in a timely manner Monthly performance and finance reports monitored by CLT and Portfolio Holders; Quarterly reports monitored by CLT and Cabinet.	None.	None.
2.	Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered	Fair	Consultation and engagement policies	None.	Review approach to consultation (as above).
3.	Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks	Fair	Strong partnerships exist in some areas. Partnership agreements exist. Partnership framework to be developed and linked to risk management strategy	None.	Review the need for a Partnership Working framework as part of development of a Commercial and Sustainability Strategy (see principle D).
4.	Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances	Good	Delegated responsibility in some areas. Constitution is flexible.	None.	None.
5.	Establishing appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process in order to	Good	KPIs established and approved for each service and included in Team Business Plans	None.	None.

	identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured				
6.	Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly	Good	Performance is included to give context for decisions to be made where necessary	None.	None.
7.	Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan	Fair	CDP and Team Business Planning timetable currently not in sync with financial planning timetable.	None.	Review of Strategic and Financial Planning timetables to be undertaken to allow for better alignment for 2018/19 planning
8.	Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy	Fair	Medium Term Financial Plan in place via MTFS for 3 year period from 2017/18. 35 year HRA Business Plan cash flow model.	None.	MTFS to be extended over longer time period in order for Members to be making informed decisions regarding future years. Develop Commercial and Sustainability strategy to support MTFS, to include approach to partnerships.

Supporting Principle 3: Optimising achievement of intended outcomes				
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assess-ment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1. Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints	Good	MTFS and budget formulated with strategic view of service priorities and involvement of Members and CLT.	None.	None.
2. Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term	Fair	5 year Capital budget planning. Revenue currently only planned 1 year at a time. MTFS focuses on 3 year medium term.	None.	Implement longer term revenue planning from 2018/19 budget planning.
3. Ensuring the medium term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage	Good	Financial summary of MTFS updated annually or more frequently if information is received warrants an update.	None.	None.
4. Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning.	Good	Social value considered through procurement processes. I.e. new build council housing.	None.	None.

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

Supporting Principle 1: Developing the entity's capacity				
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assess-ment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1. Reviewing operations, performance use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness	Good	Reviews of structures, ways of working and performance carried out as necessary. Interim Property Services team establishing an asset register so that strategy can be developed.	None.	None.
2. Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the authority's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently	Good	Services encouraged to make use of APSE benchmarking subscription via Team Business Planning process.	None.	None.
3. Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved	Fair	Revenues and Benefits Partnership, Shared Internal Audit service. Strong partnerships exist in some areas. Partnership agreements exist. Partnership framework to be developed.	None.	Review the need for a Partnership Working framework as part of development of a Commercial and Sustainability Strategy (see principle D).
4. Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources	Fair	People Plan.	None.	Update People Plan following appointment of new Chief Executive

Supporting Principle 2: Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals					
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assess-ment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*	
1. Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained	Good	Regular Strategy Group meetings between the Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Executive and Directors.	None.	None.	
2. Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body	Good	Regular review of delegation and financial regulations. Constitution.	None.	None.	
3. Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads the authority in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority	Good	Clear roles and responsibilities with CE's objectives set and monitored by Members. Regular 1:1's in place for Chief Executive.	None.	None.	
4. Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by: • ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged • ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are	Good	Members trained as and when required. Formal induction process for new administration and new members.	None.	None.	

	able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis • ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external				
5.	Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation	Fair	Have your say, Tenant groups.	None.	Review approach to consultation (as above).
6.	Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections	Good	Members performance monitored, Cabinet held to account by PDG and call-in arrangements.	None.	None.
7.	Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs	Good	Staff development plans linked to BEE appraisals	None.	None.
8.	Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing	Good	Discount on leisure facilities for staff. Careserve, 24 hours service proving advice and counselling service, family, personal, debt, workplace, home and health.	None.	None.

Core Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Supporting Principle 1: Managing risk				
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assess-ment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1. Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making	Fair	Risk Management system in place with regular monitoring at Team Manager/HoS level and CLT and Cabinet.	None.	Ensure Audit and Governance Committee are reviewing risks on a regular basis.
2. Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively	Fair	Risk management policy formally approved and adopted. Policy requires review	None.	Review the Council's approach to and appetite for risk and the associated Risk Management policy.
3. Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated	Good	Risk Management system in place with regular monitoring at Team Manager/HoS level and CLT and Cabinet. Each risk has an owner responsible.	None.	None.

Supporting Principle 2: Managing Performance				
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assess-ment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1. Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review	Fair	Performance data held Team Business Plans currently Calendar of dates published and reporting dates adhered to.	None.	Development of performance management system to be more intuitive and less administratively burdensome.
2. Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook	Good	Information discussed at Cabinet pre-meet and Strategy Group as necessary.	None.	None.
3. Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the organisation's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible (OR, for a committee system) Encouraging effective and constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives to support balanced and effective decision making	Good	Scrutiny role established via Audit and Governance Committee and Policy Development Group. Meetings once per quarter and published in advance. Agendas and minutes published.	None.	None.
4. Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement	Good	Calendar of dates published and reporting dates adhered to	None.	None.
5. Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (eg financial statements)	Good	Standing orders in place. Approval reports separate from financial updates.	None.	None.

Supporting Principle 3: Robust internal control					
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assess-ment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*	
1. Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the objectives	Good	Risk management strategy, audit plan and regular audit reports.	None.	None.	
2. Evaluating and monitoring the authority's risk management and internal control on a regular basis	Fair	Risk management policy with risks reviewed regularly by CLT and Cabinet. Risks should be monitored by the Audit and Governance Committee but this has not happened since November 2015.	None.	Risks to be reported to Audit and Governance Committee twice per year for review.	
3. Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place	Good	Compliance with the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption (CIPFA, 2014). Anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies in place. Anti-fraud and corruption audit undertaken in 2016/17 identified a number of improvements required which are timetabled in an action plan.	None.	None.	
4. Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor	Good	Annual governance statement, internal audit arrangements adequate with internal audit actively involved in service improvement.	None.	None.	
5. Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body: provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon	Fair	Audit committee complies with best practice. See Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (CIPFA, 2013) Terms of Reference in place for Committee.	None.	Training for Audit and Governance Committee members, development of active Audit Committee participation.	

Supporting Principle 4: Managing Data				
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assessment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1. Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data	Good	Policies in place for data management and data protection. Designated data protection officer. Information CAT in place to monitor safeguarding measures and lead strategy for the organisation supported by Information Champions in each department	None.	None.
2. Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies	Good	Data sharing agreements in place and data processing agreements where necessary.	None.	None.
3. Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	Good	Regular internal audits carried out	None.	None.

Supporting Principle 5: Strong public financial management

Requirement of local authorities to:	Assessment	Evidence	Significant Issues	Areas for Improvement
1. Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance	Fair	Review of finance function during April 2017 identified some improvements in respect of support to service areas in respect of financial management.	None.	Develop new financial model to achieve balance between budget holders and finance team in respect of responsibilities.
2. Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls	Good	Budget monitoring reports and regular reviews	None.	None.

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

Supporting Principle 1: Implementing good practice in transparency				
Requirement of local authorities to:	*Assess-ment*	*Evidence*	*Significant Issues*	*Areas for Improvement*
1. Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate	Good	Website user friendly, annual report, reports written in 'plain English'.	None.	None.
2. Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand	Good	Website user friendly, annual report, reports written in 'plain English'.	None.	None.

Supporting Principle 2: Implementing good practices in reporting				
Requirement of local authorities to:	_Asse-ss-ment_	_Evidence_	_Significant Issues_	_Areas for Improvement_
1. Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources	Good	Council Annual report, Statement of Accounts. Regular customer satisfaction surveys with results published in Annual reports.	None.	None.
2. Ensuring members and senior management own the results	Good	Members and CLT approve reports	None.	None.
3. Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (annual governance statement)	Fair	Annual governance statement.	None.	Evidence used for assessment of governance to be documented and made available to users of financial statements.
4. Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate	Good	Annual governance statement, application of policies where NWLDC works in partnership with other organisations.	None.	None.
5. Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other similar organisations	Good	Format follows best practice	None.	None.

Supporting Principle 3: Assurance and effective accountability

Requirement of local authorities to:	Assess-ment	Evidence	Significant Issues	Areas for Improvement
1. Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon	Good	Recommendations from external audit acted upon. Compliance of Internal Audit arrangements with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.	None.	None.
2. Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon	Good	Internal Audit report directly to Audit and Governance Committee. Recommendations from internal audit acted upon with internal audit being actively referenced to assist with service improvements. Compliance of Internal Audit arrangements with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.	None.	None.
3. Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations	Fair	Peer challenge and review welcomed, but not undertaken.	None.	Review opportunities to undertake peer governance review.
4. Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement	Good	Strong partnership approach in place –e.g. the Revs and Bens Partnership	None.	None.
5. Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met	Good	Strong partnership approach in place –e.g. the Revs and Bens Partnership	None.	None.