

Code of Corporate Governance

September 2022

Introduction

The latest framework for good governance was produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) in 2016. Dudley issues its own Code of Corporate Governance based around the CIPFA/SOLACE model.

Corporate Governance is defined by CIPFA/SOLACE as comprising the arrangements (including political, economic, social, environmental, administrative, legal and other administrative arrangements) put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.

The framework aims to help local government take responsibility for developing and shaping an informed approach to governance; to achieve the highest standards in a measured and proportionate way. The overall aim is to ensure that:

- Resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities,
- There is sound and inclusive decision making,
- There is clear accountability for the use of those resources in order to achieve desired outcomes for services users and communities.

The Code of Corporate Governance is based on the seven principles detailed in the CIPFA/SOLACE guidance “Delivering good governance in Local Government” but broken down into key governance areas. The seven principles are:

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values,
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement,
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits,
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes,
- Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it,



- Managing the risks and performance through robust internal controls and strong public financial management,
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

Internal Audit and Assurance

- Internal Audit is required to be externally assessed against the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) every five years. The last assessment in March 2020 confirmed that PSIAS were being met. The Head of Audit Services complies with the key requirements of CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit.
- The Head of Audit Services provides an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's governance, risk management and internal control, which is then used in the production of the Annual Governance Statement.
- Internal Audit risk based plans are approved by Audit and Standards Committee.
- Progress reports on the delivery of the Internal Audit Plan are presented to Audit and Standards Committee.
- An Annual Governance Statement is compiled in accordance with the CIPFA publication "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government". This is approved by Audit and Standards Committee and signed by the Chief Executive and the Leader of the council and published as part of the Statement of Accounts.
- The Annual Governance Statement discusses the effectiveness of the council's governance framework and identifies any areas of significant concern.
- As part of the Risk Management Framework assurance is now obtained on the management of risk.

Fraud and Corruption

- The council has an Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy that is regularly reviewed. There are also fraud resources held on the council's intranet site including online training.
- The council has a Corporate Fraud Manager who has the ability to undertake in depth investigations and prepare cases for criminal prosecution.
- A Fraud Action Plan is approved by Audit and Standards Committee on an annual basis.
- A fraud hotline is available to Officers, Members, Contractors and members of the public.
- An Annual Fraud Report is presented to Audit and Standards Committee, which details work undertaken in relation to fraud.

- Fraud and corruption assessments against good practice guidance are presented to Audit and Standards Committee.
- Clauses on fraud and corruption appear in the council's standard terms and conditions.

Risk Management

- A Risk Management Framework is in place that is reviewed and approved by Audit and Standards Committee.
- The Risk Management Framework states that risk identification and analysis should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity in the business process and should be forward thinking as well as reflective.
- The Risk Management Framework emphasises the importance of assigning ownership of risks and mitigating actions.
- Risks are reported to Strategic Executive Board and Audit and Standards Committee up to four times a year.
- Audit and Standards Committee select risks for detailed scrutiny.
- Directors are required to complete on a regular basis a risk assurance protocol to confirm that risks are being identified and managed.
- Key risks in relation to proposed decisions should be detailed in all Committee reports and decision sheets, where appropriate.
- Training is provided to Members and Officers on risk management on request.

Financial Management

- The Council has established a robust financial management regime.
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy takes account of the full cost of delivering services over the medium term. It balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints.
- As part of the annual budgeting process, the Director of Finance and Legal submits a report to Council on the robustness of evidence and adequacy of reserves (under Section 25 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003) and qualifies this opinion as required.
- Reports on budgetary management are provided to all levels of Management.



- Regular financial monitoring reports are taken to Cabinet and full Council to assist in decision making and effective stewardship of public funds.
- The Director of Finance and Legal complies with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (CIPFA, 2015).
- The annual Statement of Accounts is published on the council's website.
- The Council has a rolling Capital Programme which sets out detailed capital investment plans for each Directorate funded from a number of sources. This is supported by a Capital Strategy and Capital Investment and Disposal Guide.
- The Council complies with CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance and reports to Members, where necessary.
- The Council has adopted CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management as an integral part of the Treasury Strategy, which is approved by Members. Regular reports on treasury management are presented to Audit and Standards Committee and full Council.
- The council has Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations that form part of the council's constitution.
- An employee suggestion scheme has been established to try and identify innovative change proposals and to deliver savings and efficiencies.
- A contracts register has been developed.
- Standard contract terms and conditions are in place.
- A Procurement Management Group has been established to ensure that there is proper governance of procurement decisions.
- A Commercial Opportunities Group has been established to discuss commercial/investment ideas and to discuss ways of generating income for the authority.
- A Commercial Strategy has been produced.

Decision Making/Constitution

- The constitution sets out the council's decision making framework, clearly detailing decisions to be taken by full Council, Cabinet, Committees, Cabinet Members and Senior Officers.
- The constitution clearly details the responsibility for Members and Officers to follow statutory provisions.

- The constitution demonstrates the council's commitment to an open and accessible style of operation by Members and Officers in all dealings.
- The constitution is reviewed on an annual basis. The constitution sets out how council decisions are made and the appropriate conduct at meetings.
- The constitution includes relevant guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.
- The role of the Chief Executive and Leader have been clearly defined within the council's constitution.
- The constitution sets out the Financial Management Regime, which includes Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- There are agreed templates in place for producing committee reports and decision sheets. These templates require the law in relation to the decision to be detailed and the impact on equality. Within the committee report/decision sheet, the benefits of the proposed course of action and the risks in relation to it should also be clearly explained.
- Members are encouraged to discuss with officers the information they require in order to make decisions.
- Democratic Services provides training to Senior Managers on how committee reports and decision sheets should be completed and emphasise that the corporate standard must be followed. Training is also provided on the process to get committee reports and decision sheets agreed and published.
- A "forward plan" of items for which a decision is due to be made is published.
- A timetable of dates for submitting and distributing reports is maintained.
- All committee reports and decision sheets/memorandums unless exempt can be accessed by the public through the council's website.
- Officer job descriptions include the requirement to follow statutory provisions and guidance, where appropriate.

Environmental

- The corporate reporting template requires consideration of environmental and sustainability factors.
- The council have declared a climate emergency. The existing governance arrangements are currently under review but include a Steering Group that provides leadership for the programme and three thematic groups: Buildings and Energy, Transport and Environment. The groups have been tasked with looking at what is possible and to formulate action plans around identified topics, together with carbon reduction and offsetting solutions.
- The programme consists of two phases: Phase1 the council will look at itself and determine what direct action it can take and Phase 2 the work will be expanded to encompass our communities and other key stakeholders.
- The council has a target of reducing carbon emissions by 90% by 2030 and the final 10% to achieve carbon neutrality by 2041.
- The council is also reviewing its Corporate Energy Management function. It now has a new Energy Manager in post. There is a programme of work to improve council's energy and environmental performance on sustainable development. A Corporate Energy Strategy has been produced.
- The council are developing a 25-year sustainable waste strategy to minimise the borough's waste.

Asset Management

- A Corporate Estate Strategy (2017-2022) is currently being updated. It will include capital investment and disposals. The Corporate Estate Strategy will ultimately deliver a smaller and more flexible core of operational buildings and sites that are fit for their intended purpose. It will seek to realise savings, generate new revenue income and deliver efficiencies through working differently and collaborating with partners in the context of the council's land and property base.
- The Corporate Estate Strategy is delivered via the Corporate Landlord Services Business Plan.

Information Management

- The importance of Information Risk is recognised and built into the council's Risk Management Framework.
- The council has a Data Protection Officer with a reporting line directly to a representative from the council's Strategic Executive Board in order to provide the required independence that his position requires.
- All Officers are required to undertake mandatory information governance training and refresh that training annually.
- Strategic Executive Board have formally recognised that all Heads of Service are Information Asset Owners (IAO's)
- Members are provided with training on information governance.
- The council has a suite of Information Governance policies and procedures.
- The Information Governance Team maintains a register of Information Sharing Agreements, Data Protection Impact Assessments and other information providing assurance for its information processing activities.
- Privacy Notices have been completed for all key services and are displayed on the council's website.
- The council has received accreditation for Cyber Essentials and its policies align with the ISO27001 standard supported by an Information Security Management System (ISMS).
- The Information Governance Team routinely benchmarks its practices and processes against other members of the West Midlands Information Governance Forum, including neighbouring Local Authorities.
- A Freedom of Information Act publication scheme is maintained on the council's website along with Open Data and Transparency pages.
- The council has an Information Governance Board that is attended by senior representatives (Information Risk Officers) from each directorate.
- The Director of Finance and Legal is the Senior Information Risk Officer.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- A Corporate Equality Board has been set up chaired by the Chief Executive. This Board drives forward the Equality, Diversity and

Inclusion Strategy and subsequent annual delivery plans, as well as other strategic plans to drive equality.

- An annual report on equality is presented to Strategic Executive Board and Cabinet and Future Council Scrutiny Committee and provides detail of progress in implementing Action Plans and includes employment monitoring data for protected characteristics including race, disability and sex. Employment data is also benchmarked against other local authorities e.g. the gender pay data - which has resulted in some actions being identified to help close the council's gender pay gap.
- All staff are required to undertake a mandatory Equality and Diversity on-line training course.

Community Engagement

- The public are entitled to attend all committee meetings unless an exempt report is being discussed.
- The council co-ordinates and has mechanisms in place for the effective engagement of clients/service users in all commissioning activity.
- The "Big Question" is an annual survey of borough residents to obtain their views on budget setting.
- The council has established Community Forums to give local citizens a greater say in council affairs. These cover electoral wards and their main purpose is to provide an opportunity for issues to be discussed locally. They involve the ward Councillors and are held in public.
- All significant decisions are subject to consultation with the public.
- The council attends or facilitates many groups involving residents or service users.

Customer Feedback

- The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter is presented to Cabinet.
- A digital platform has been launched which allows residents to raise their service requests and feedback online.



- The council has a Corporate Complaints Policy that:
 - defines a complaint
 - clarifies issues managed through other processes
 - describes the two-stage process should a complainant appeal
 - defines a vexatious complainant and how we manage these
 - states that we must respond to complainants within 20 working days
 - notes we must learn from complaints.
- The Complaints policy is underpinned by a procedure that stipulates the process every service area must follow, the performance KPIs that must be achieved and ensures delivery of a resident first experience. A Resident Action Group is held quarterly to monitor customer feedback, ensure learning takes place, contribute to strategic performance reporting commentary and undertake projects to deliver an effective and efficient complaint and failure management strategy and process.
- Information on Compliments and Complaints is presented to Strategic Executive Board and Informal Cabinet via formal corporate KPI reporting.
- A new public webpage on complaints has been launched.

Communication

- The council has a Social Media Policy and social media is used extensively to communicate with residents and stakeholders.
- Media training of current and newly elected Councillors.
- Crisis communications management.
- Multi-channel approach to communication is deployed featuring broadcast, TV, digital networks, media, social media (including digital marketing) and outdoor advertising platforms.
- Council e-bulletins are issued to targeted groups of residents and businesses who have subscribed to content (in excess of 150,000 email addresses).
- Facebook forums are used to engage with borough residents.
- The council's 'Your borough YOUR HOME' magazine features news and information and is distributed to more than 125,000 borough households every quarter.

- The council's Communications and Public Affairs Team produce quarterly digital analytic reports which summarise media, social media, delivery and campaign activity. Digital analytics reports are hosted on "Connect" and are available to all staff.
- Regular meetings are held with relevant lead members to brief them on developments in their service area and issues of concern.
- Weekly communications updates provided to Strategic Executive Board and a communications highlight report goes to informal cabinet on a monthly basis.
- An employee survey is undertaken on a biannual basis and is supplemented with pulse surveys to test the temperature of the workforce on key initiatives.
- Internal communication has been reviewed and now there are a number of mechanisms to relay information to council staff:
 - Chief Executive's vlog,
 - "Rewind" (which is an e-bulletin catch-up of all key news and information, which is sent out at the end of each week),
 - "Managing Matters" (aimed at line managers across the authority; has been launched with the objective of ensuring all managers are informed and up to speed on key corporate messaging in order to support them in their role as managers in communicating with their workforce),
 - "Engage" (a new electronic "e-zine" to provide fresh content to engage staff and provide a brief summary of core messaging),
- A Corporate Communications Plan for 2022-25 is in development to update the 2019-22 plan. The responsibility for delivering the plan applies to all elected Members, leaders and managers in line with our value of accountability. This is supported by a Communications Toolkit.
- Graphics design and visual communications, including infographics, video clips and new media.
- Language 2 Language – Communications in formats suitable for all audiences to enable equal and fair access – Community languages, large print and formats for people with disabilities.

- Leadership Forum meetings of the council's senior managers take place four times a year and is a forum for cascading key information.
- Express Briefings run alongside Leadership Forums to further cascade key information to council's workforce.

Scrutiny Committees

- The council operates Scrutiny Committees which undertake "in depth scrutiny investigations/enquiries and contribute to policy development in respect of issues/items falling within their terms of reference". The terms of reference of the five Scrutiny Committees cover all of the council's executive functions.
- The Chairs of Scrutiny Committees meet regularly to co-ordinate scrutiny activity. Scrutiny Committees have considerable flexibility to amend the Annual Scrutiny Programme to reflect developments during the year.
- Individual Scrutiny Committees will carry out investigations into any decisions of the Cabinet, Cabinet Members, the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive or Directors that are called in for scrutiny in accordance with the Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of the constitution.
- Scrutiny Committees report annually to the full Council with details of their activities and annual work programme. Minutes of the Scrutiny Committees are submitted to full Council to increase transparency. The Annual Reports are available on the Council's website setting out the key issues considered and the outcomes of scrutiny work during the year.
- The Council periodically reviews scrutiny arrangements to ensure they remain "fit for purpose".
- The Local Government Association and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny have previously assisted the council with scrutiny development work.
- The council has appointed the Democratic Services Manager as "Scrutiny Officer" pursuant to Section 9FB of the Local Government Act 2000. The role of this Officer is to promote the role of the Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committees, to provide support to the Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committees and to provide support and guidance to Members and Officers in

relation to the functions of the Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

- All Scrutiny Committee agendas include a "Public Forum" to encourage greater public involvement in the council's work.
- Meetings of Scrutiny Committees are programmed in the Council calendar and additional meetings can be called if necessary. Members of Scrutiny Committees are sent links to enable them to have oversight of the Forward Plan of Key Executive Decisions.

Audit and Standards Committee

- The Audit and Standards Committee comprises nine elected members which are appointed by full Council. No Cabinet Members will be appointed to serve on the Committee.
- The Audit and Standards Committee operates to an agreed terms of reference. The terms of reference has been reviewed in light of the CIPFA publication "Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police".
- The Audit and Standards Committee has responsibility for the system of internal control, both financial and otherwise.
- Audit and Standards Committee produce an annual report that is presented to full Council.
- Regular assessments are undertaken of Audit and Standards Committee's effectiveness against good practice guidance.
- The skills of Members that serve on the Audit and Standards Committee are assessed to identify any training needs.
- New Members to Audit and Standards Committee are offered induction training.
- The effectiveness of internal audit and the adequacy of internal audit resources are monitored by Audit and Standards Committee.
- Recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are reported to Audit and Standards Committee and they ensure that appropriate action is taken.
- Progress reports on the delivery of the Internal Audit Plan are presented to Audit and Standards Committee.
- National reports issued on standards in public life are discussed at Audit and Standards Committee.
- Audit and Standards Committee approve the Certified Statement of Accounts.

Strategic Executive Board

- Strategic Executive Board is made up of the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Directors and some senior managers.
- The Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer are permanent members of Strategic Executive Board and have access to all information and have the right to attend any meetings.
- Strategic Executive Board operate to an agreed terms of reference.
- The Strategic Executive Board (SEB) exists to create a high-performing council which forges a future for all in Dudley, with excellent leadership and front-line delivery. It does this by providing strategic leadership, high-quality corporate governance, and embracing and role modelling our organisational values and behaviours.
- The Board meets weekly.

Values and Behaviours/Code of Conduct

- The council's constitution contains Codes of Conduct for both Members and Officers to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained. The Codes of Conduct include requirements relating to the declaration of interest and the receipt of gifts and hospitality.
- The Employees' Code of Conduct is brought to the attention of all new starters to the council and forms part of the induction process. All employees are required to electronically accept the Code and declare any interests on the HR and Payroll System.
- It is a mandatory requirement that all Members of the council receive training from the Monitoring Officer on the Code of Conduct. This includes Member conduct, declaring interests and equality duties.
- Those Members who attend regulatory committees are required to attend mandatory training on a biennial basis.
- Each Director maintains a gifts and hospitality register for their staff.
- Member declared interests are shown on the council's website.
- Protocol on Member/Officer Relations forms part of the council's constitution.



- Code of Practice for Members and Officers dealing with planning matters and Developer Selection Protocol forms part of the council's constitution.
- Each committee agenda asks for any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct and any declarations would be recorded within the minutes. The agendas and minutes are available on the council's website.
- Employee and Member Codes of Conduct detail the requirement to adhere to statutory provisions and guidance.
- The council has a "Values and Behaviour Framework" to demonstrate how behaviour and decision making can help achieve its vision.
- The values and behaviours framework has been embedded in the Member and Officer Charter, Employee Survey and My Annual Review. Leadership Forum events have incorporated a values led theme and a staff recognition and celebration segment to recognise values in action.
- Training sessions are delivered to Managers on the values and behaviours framework. Managers are responsible for cascading the framework to their teams.
- Proper standards of behaviour are set out within Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which ensure that systems and processes for financial administration, financial control and the safeguarding of resources are in place. These are monitored by Internal Audit and reported upon as part of audit work
- The Leader and Leaders of the opposition groups are required by the constitution to set an example to all Members and employees of the council in their conduct and the performance of their function. They will promote the Codes of Conduct, the Protocol for Member and Officer Relationships and encourage attendance at training courses.
- The council's Contract Standing Orders and procurement guidance are underpinned by ethical considerations.
- Leadership accountabilities which set out the standards of behaviour expected of employees in leadership roles and strengthen accountability have been identified and promoted at Leadership Forum. Leadership accountabilities have been embedded into council induction and within new job descriptions.

- Statutory responsibility is covered by the Members' Code of Conduct and associated training/guidance to Members from the Monitoring Officer.
- A Suppliers' Code of Practice has been produced and approved by the Leader of the council and distributed to all suppliers for which the council had an email address and the top 350 irrespective of whether an email address is held. The top 350 were asked to confirm their adherence to the Code

Whistleblowing

- The council's Whistleblowing Policy is reviewed on an annual basis and a report on referrals is presented to Audit and Standards Committee.
- Posters are displayed throughout the council promoting the Whistleblowing Policy and who to contact. A clause on whistleblowing is included in the council's standard terms and conditions.

People Management

- All officers are required to have a My Annual Review (performance and development review meeting) which takes account of the council's Values and Behaviours Framework.
- All new staff are required to attend a comprehensive corporate induction.
- Heads of Services are reminded on a monthly basis to complete key people management procedures such as My Annual Review and Return to Work Interviews.
- A workforce planning model and toolkit is used to develop directorate workforce plans across the council.
- Workforce planning is integral to the council's business planning process and seeks to maximise capacity through ensuring that the right people, are in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills and qualifications, and where new appointments are made, they demonstrate a commitment to the council's values and behaviours framework.
- Training and Leadership Development programmes are run for different tiers of management.

- The council has a Recruitment and Selection Policy and a suite of HR policies and procedures.
- The council has approved a Pay Policy Statement to clarify the council's strategic stance on pay in order to provide direction for Members and Officers making detailed decisions on pay and to provide the citizens of Dudley with a clear statement of the principles underpinning decisions on the use of public funds. The Pay Policy Statement sits alongside the Pay Arrangements Policy which sets out the council's approach to pay and reward, including temporary payments for additional responsibilities and temporary market forces supplement payments.
- The Pay Policy Statement is reviewed each year and approved by a resolution of full Council. The policy statement is published on the council's website.
- There is a Pay Governance group to deal with pay policy issues at an organisational level.
- A People Strategy is in place and has five key priorities:
 - Attract, Recognise and Retain Talent,
 - Develop A High Performing Workforce,
 - Deliver inspirational and effective leadership,
 - Build a diverse, engaged, inclusive and healthy workforce,
 - Foster a thriving learning culture which embraces change.
- The governance arrangements for the People Strategy have been identified as part of the governance framework that is to be implemented for the Future Council Programme.
- Quarterly workforce data and intelligence reports are presented to Strategic Executive Board on a quarterly basis. This provides information on the workforce and whether key workforce KPI's are being achieved.
- There are a wide range of resources available to support employee health & wellbeing and they can be accessed via the council's intranet site. Employees can also access counselling services, which are available for self-referral.

Role of Members

- A Members' induction programme is in place, which is open to all Members to attend
- Some training is mandatory for all Members to attend.



- Political groups are responsible for undertaking reviews of Members' skills.
- The council have developed a training and development programme for all Members, including Cabinet Members, which is subject to review.
- The Local Government Association have provided training on scrutiny and chairing meetings.
- A Councillors' Guide has been prepared that provides the key information a Councillor needs to be aware of.
- Members are encouraged to attend events run by the Local Government Association (LGA).
- Members receive training to assist with decision making, particularly for quasi-judicial committees.
- All Members are required to attend the mandatory Members' Code of Conduct training when elected.

Performance Management

- The Council Plan 2022-25 sets out the council's vision and priorities under four core priorities:
 - **A borough of opportunity** - providing the best possible start in life with continued access to integrated health and social care as well as quality education and training allowing people to live full and independent lives.
 - **A safe and healthy borough** - where work is undertaken to tackle inequalities, keep our communities safe in healthy, sustainable environments and improve individual health and wellbeing.
 - **A borough of ambition and enterprise** - where regeneration and growth support innovation, modernisation, and access to a full range of opportunities for businesses and residents
 - **Dudley Borough the destination of choice** - with a wide range of attractions and accommodation where both residents and visitors can celebrate the borough's diverse culture, history, and communities.



- The Council Plan is refreshed every three years and details the journey and commitment to improve how services are delivered to meet the needs of local people.
- The Council Plan is supported by a future council programme that ensures the council is 'fit for the future' and includes the following programmes:

People - We will be an employer of choice, our values and behaviours will define how we work together, development opportunities to acquire new skills and our smaller, diverse and agile workforce will reflect the population of Dudley.

Managers will have developed new competencies to lead and support their staff in a much more agile working environment. Our values and behaviours will define how we work together, with elected members, with partners and with the public. Automation and self-service will significantly change staff roles but there will be development opportunities to acquire new skills in areas like data analytics.

Delivered through the People Strategy and links to and supports the council's strategic priorities by identifying what the workforce needs to look like and how it needs to operate to deliver outcomes for the residents of Dudley borough.

Digital - We will do things smarter by utilising technology, data insight and analytics will be fully utilised, and we will transform wellbeing and care through digital technologies, delivering improved outcomes for service users.

All transactions will be automated, self-service, cashless and paperless except where individuals need personal support. The use of artificial intelligence, robotics, low carbon and smart solutions will be the norm in tackling urban challenges such as traffic congestion, pollution and remote service support. We will transform wellbeing and care through digital technologies, delivering improved outcomes for service users.

This theme will be delivered via the Digital Roadmap . The roadmap includes:

- Initiatives specific to directorates,



- Initiatives to modernise our technology architecture,
- Corporate initiatives including assessing requirements for future workplace and deploying solutions as per the business case approved spending and roll-out timeframes,
- Initiatives to develop a digital front door including assessing and reaching an agreement on the platform for digital front door,
- Borough wide initiatives including agreeing a strategy to deploy fibre across the borough and 5G technology.

Place - Our buildings and facilities will be safe, fit for purpose, low carbon and embracing the latest smart technology. We will make our buildings available as provider shared spaces for communities to come together. With improved public transport and cycling facilities, there will be reduced reliance on private cars.

Our smaller and increasingly agile workforce will require significantly less office accommodation. Centralised in Dudley Town Centre it will be flexible, providing touch down, hot desk and meeting spaces, shared with partners where appropriate. With improved public transport and cycling facilities, there will be reduced reliance on private cars.

Delivered through the Corporate Estates Strategy, that represents a framework aligning policy principles, strategy, and work plan to ensure the Council vision is delivered and in doing so commits the Council to a rigorous and business-like approach to the management of its estate. Property is the Council's most important non-people resource and property costs are usually the second largest cost after staff. Whilst individual properties may have been associated for many years with a particular Directorate or function, they are, above all, corporate assets that the Council needs to manage on behalf of the Council as a whole.

Process - We will strengthen our governance, processes and procedures to take informed and transparent decisions, managing risk, setting clearly defined functions and roles and ensuring robust accountability whilst upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

Support for this theme is given across multiple policies and procedures. It relates to governance, performance, risk and audit, with strong links to our values and behaviours.



Financially sustainable - In addition to these four core priorities the Future Council programme also aims to ensure we are financially sustainable and fit for the future. Driving value for money underpins everything we do and is delivered through the Commercial Strategy, Procurement Strategy, Social Value Policy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

- At the heart of the Council Plan is the Borough Vision – ‘Forging a Future for All’. This was produced in conjunction with partners and has seven aspirations:
 - An affordable and attractive place to live with a green network of high quality parks, waterways and nature reserves that are valued by local people and visitors,
 - A place where everybody has the education and skills they need, and where outstanding local schools, colleges and universities secure excellent results for their learners,
 - A place of healthy, resilient, safe communities with high aspirations and the ability to shape their own future,
 - Better connected with high quality and affordable transport, combining road, tram, rail, and new cycling and walking infrastructure,
 - Renowned as home to a host of innovative and prosperous businesses, operating in high quality locations with space to grow, sustainable energy supplies and investing in their workforce,
 - A place to visit and enjoy that drives opportunity, contributing to its ambitious future while celebrating its pioneering past,
 - Full of vibrant towns and neighbourhoods offering a new mix of leisure, faith, cultural, residential and shopping uses.
- The Forging a Future Executive (FAFE) oversees delivery of the Borough Vision. Three strategic boards report into the FAFE: Dudley Health and Wellbeing Board, Dudley Employment and Skills Board, Dudley Economic Growth Board and they have ownership of the delivery plans.
- The Council Plan is supported by Directorate plans that provide more detailed information on the service actions the council are



taking to deliver its priorities. The plans have a three year focus and are reviewed annually in support of the Council Plan, Future Council Programme and Borough Vision.

- Corporate Performance is monitored by Management, Strategic Executive Board, Informal Cabinet and Future Council Scrutiny Committee each quarter. Each Directorate will have a number of actions and performance indicators that they monitor.
- Future Council Scrutiny Committee select performance indicators for detailed scrutiny.
- Directorate summary schedules are presented to Future Council Scrutiny Committee. These provide information on the services delivered and detail on the performance of the directorate including benchmarking and key achievements.
- Unacceptable performance is challenged.
- Benchmarking is used to evaluate performance and for the setting of targets.
- Publish quarterly and annual performance reports on the council's website.
- An annual report and account is published on adult social care services, which provides an assessment of how the council has performed as a provider and commissioner of adult social care as well as identifying areas for further focus.
- The council has established the Dudley Deal, which is a series of informal pledges. The Business Deal is about growing the economy, the Community Deal is about supporting stronger communities and the Green Deal is about focusing on a cleaner, greener borough. Each sets out what the council will commit to and also how residents, businesses and community groups can play their part.

Programme and Project Management

- A new Corporate Portfolio Management Office (CPMO) is being developed to provide the infrastructure to support the delivery of programmes/projects, frameworks, business case methodology, governance structures, reporting and assurances stages to provide greater oversight of activity.
- This will provide greater monitoring and accountability for activity and ensure the correct level of scrutiny.



- A baseline of all projects will also be developed that captures outcomes and benefits expected and the monitoring and assurances processes put in place will ensure benefits realisation and any efficiencies that were due to be achieved are captured, evidenced and reported.

Partnership Working

- The council is the accountable body for the following statutory partnerships: Community Safety, Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and ensures appropriate governance is in place.
- There is a Dudley Business Champions Group made up of business leaders and council officers, focusing on supporting the delivery of key national, regional and sub regional economic strategies and aligning activities to the priorities in the Borough Vision 2030. The group also act as ambassadors for Dudley and by example promote Dudley as a place to invest and do business.
- A Town Deal Board has been established in Dudley and Brierley Hill. The Town Boards will prioritise and drive investment and seek long term economic and productivity growth through investment in connectivity, land use, skills and enterprise infrastructure.

