



Local Code of Corporate Governance

2024/2025

Next Review: 2025

Time-table for approval:

- Extended Management Team - August 2024
- Audit and Scrutiny Committee - September 2024



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Foreword

Tandridge District Council ('the Council') believes that effective corporate governance is achieved by:

- putting in place sound control systems and processes;
- regularly checking to make sure those systems and processes are working in practice; and
- reviewing those control systems and processes at least annually.

CIPFA/SOLACE have together produced a corporate governance framework which was updated for 2016/2017. It is an integrated system that brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes. The governance framework produced by CIPFA/SOLACE remains a discretionary code and is offered to local authorities as good practice.

In conducting its business, the Council is fully committed to the key principles of good governance set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE framework. The framework is underpinned by seven core principles. This Local Code of Corporate Governance ('Code') sets out how the Council demonstrates that its governance structures comply with these seven core principles (A-G). The guidance defines the seven core principles, each supported by sub-principles that should underpin the governance framework of a local authority

The Code will be reviewed, at least once every two years and updated as required.



The Corporate Governance Principles

What does good Corporate governance look like? It is often seen as the framework by which the Council ensures it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

Achieving the intended outcomes (doing the right thing) requires arrangements for:

- Being clear about what the Council wants to achieve for residents, the environment and the economy.
- Being clear about the actions needed to achieve the Council's aims.
- Making sure the Council has the skills, ability and money to achieve its' aims.
- Making sure the Council manages risks, budgets and performance .
- Making sure that the Council operates in an open, accountable and transparent way.

All of the above mean the Council needs to have in place ways to ensure the Council is acting in the public interest (doing it the right way). This means the Council needs to:

- Behave with integrity and demonstrate a strong commitment to ethical values and respect the rule of law.
- Ensure the Council is open and engaged with our communities and stakeholders.

Defining Corporate Governance

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) defines corporate governance for local authorities as "the systems and processes, the cultures and values, by which local government bodies are directed and controlled and through which they account to, engage with and, where appropriate, lead their communities".

The Council's work is underpinned by Our Values:

Taking ownership: Be proactive, identify problems and own the solution.

Committed and supportive: Focus on the customer and support each other.

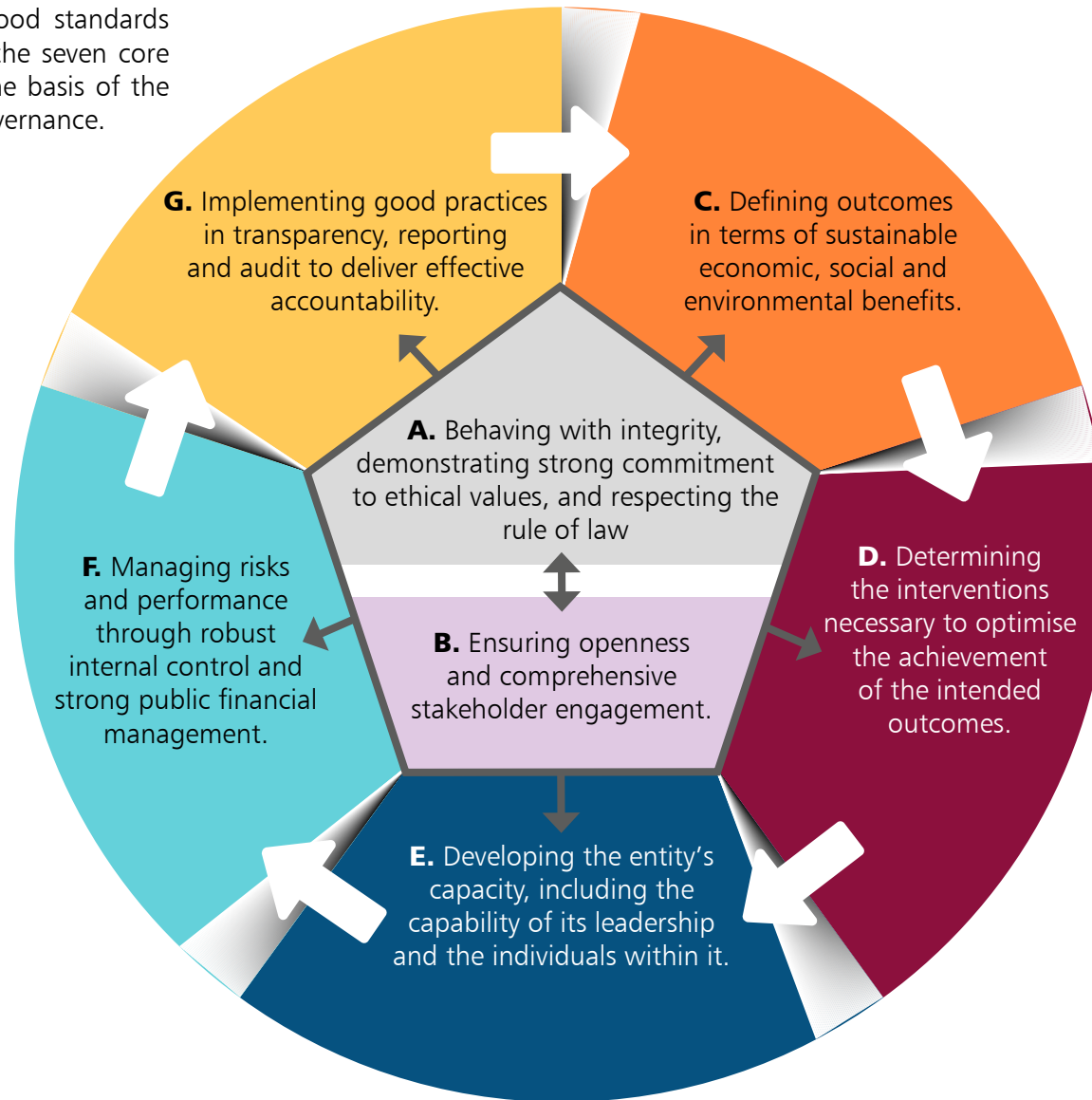
Learning and development: Always learning and encouraging others to think differently.

Positive and flexible: Working with passion, energy and enthusiasm and being adaptable to change.



What is our Local Code of Governance based upon?

The Council aims to achieve good standards of governance by adhering to the seven core principles below, which form the basis of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.



Source: CIPFA / SOLACE framework – Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016)

Governance structure

The Council

- Consists of 43 councillors.
- Approves the Constitution.
- Appoints committees and sub-committees.
- Sets council tax.
- Set the budget framework.

Policy Committees

- Main decision-making function of the Council.
- Comprise four committees who have responsibilities for particular areas.
- Membership is politically balanced.

Audit & Scrutiny Committee

- Provides assurance to the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance arrangements, risk management framework and internal control environment.
- Approves the Local Code of Corporate Governance, Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts.
- Review and scrutinise decisions and performance of the Council and audit arrangements.

Other regulatory committees

- Licensing: deals with all aspects of local licensing for which the Council is responsible.
- Planning: makes decisions on certain planning applications and deals with other development control issues such as enforcement.
- Standards Committee: promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted Councillors.

Extended Management Team

- Responsible for developing, maintaining and implementing the Council's governance, risk, performance and control framework.
- Contribute to the effective corporate management and governance of the Council.
- Operationalised by attending and contributing to management team, extended management team, departmental leadership team, partnership and other corporate cross-cutting board meetings.

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

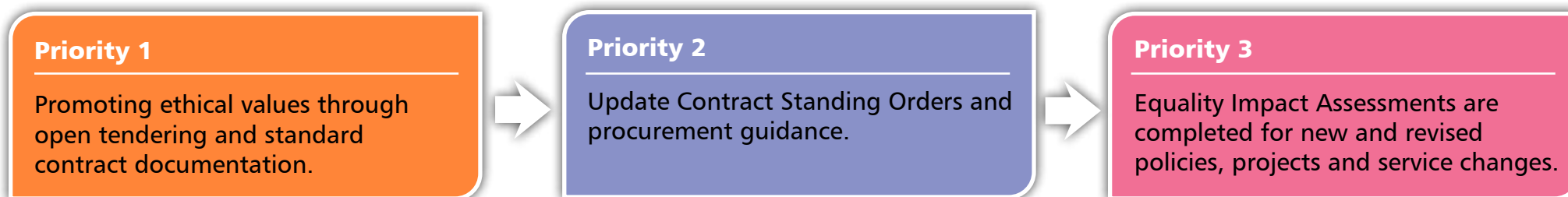
To achieve this the Council will:

- Maintain Councillors Code of Conduct, Protocol for relations between Councillors and Employees and the Nolan Principles.
- Maintain a framework which addresses the risks of fraud and corruption including an Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy and a Whistle-blowing Policy.
- Maintain a register of interests.
- Maintain arrangements to investigate complaints against Members and Officers.
- Maintain a learning and development programme for Officers which includes mandatory training and refresher training where required, Managers to regularly monitor attendance.
- Ensure Officers will observe all specific legislative requirements placed upon the Council as well as the requirements of general law, and in particular integrate the key principles of administrative law – rationality, legality and natural justice into the procedures and decision making.
- Ensure that professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making.

This is evidenced by:

- [Councillor Code of Conduct](#).
- [Protocol for Member / Officer Relations Constitution July 2024](#).
- [Council Meeting Minutes Browse Meetings](#).
- [Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy](#).
- [Anti-Fraud Strategy Statement](#).
- [Whistle-blowing Policy](#).
- [Internal Audit reports](#).
- [Member Register of Interests](#).
- [Complaints Policy](#).
- [Constitution](#).
- [Equality and Diversity Policy](#).
- [The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Letter](#).

Priorities for 2024/2025



Principle B - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

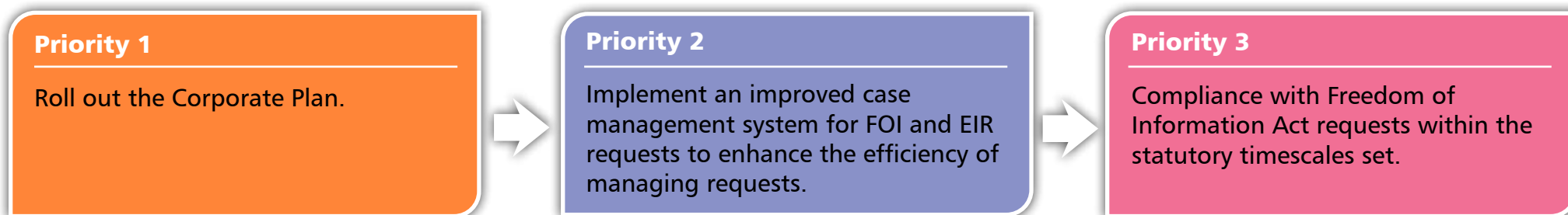
To achieve this the Council will:

- Ensure that the Council's Corporate Plan, Local Plan and priorities are developed through robust mechanisms, and in consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders, and that they are clearly articulated and disseminated.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for the public to engage effectively with the Council including rights to information, participation and how to complain or comment.
- Ensure Council meetings are accessible.
- Publish Agendas, minutes, report packs for Council meetings.
- Set a balanced budget.
- Publish an Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Auditor's report.
- Maintain an effective website.
- Attempt to publish all Committee agenda items under "part 1" unless there is the need to preserve confidentiality (where it is proper and appropriate to do so).
- Ensure that any emergency decisions made by the Chief Executive (Head of the Paid Service) follow constitutional arrangements.

This is evidenced by:

- Public attendance at Council meetings.
- [Constitution](#).
- [Publication of all council agendas and minutes](#).
- Public inspection of accounts.
- Partnership Agreements.
- Public speaking in Planning Committee.
- Communications Strategy.
- [Corporate Plan 2024-2028](#).

Priorities for 2024/2025



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

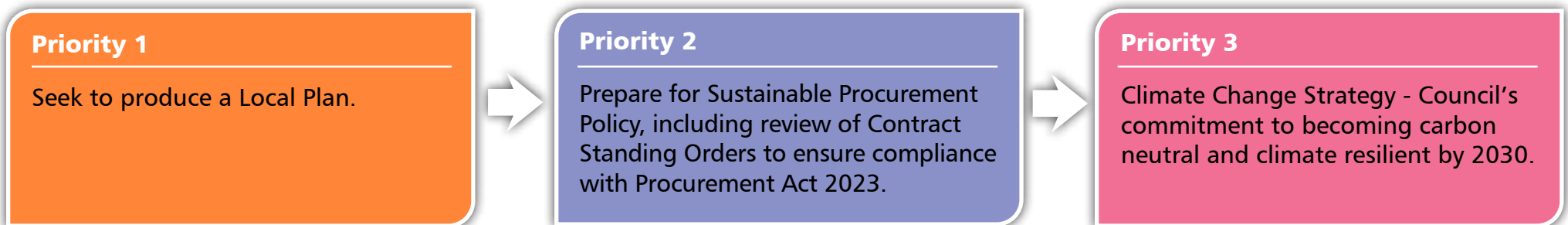
To achieve this the Council will:

- Ensure compliance with the CIPFA codes regarding a Prudential Framework for Capital Finance and Treasury Management.
- Ensure that those making decisions are provided with financial and non-financial information that is fit for the purpose – relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications.
- Identify and manage risks to the achievement of outcomes.
- Ensure that a Corporate Plan sets out the Council's vision and priorities based on consultations with local community and other key stakeholders.
- Ensure that policies in the new Local Plan will actively protect the Green Belt and countryside.
- Ensure that decision making takes account of these and the effects on residents and paying due regard to the public sector equality duty.

This is evidenced by:

- Our Council vision within our Corporate Plan.
- [Annual Governance Statement](#).
- [Statement of Accounts](#).
- External Auditor's letter and report.
- Service Plans.
- [Publication of transparency data](#).
- [Climate Change Action Plan](#).
- [Procurement Strategy](#).
- [Corporate Plan 2024-2028](#).
- [Equality & Diversity Policy \(September 2023\)](#).
- Engagement via [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [NextDoor](#) and [X](#).
- [E-newsletters](#).
- Freedom of Information Processes.

Priorities for 2024/2025



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

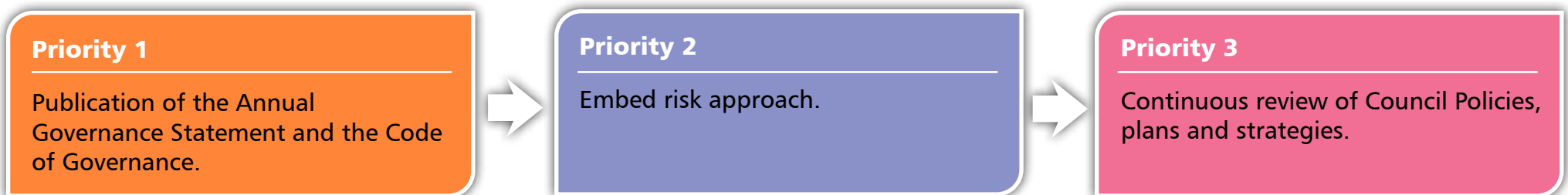
To achieve this the Council will:

- Ensure a Corporate Plan will have measurable objectives.
- Ensure that Key Performance Indicators are measurable and take account of the Council's objectives.
- Ensure budgets are prepared in accordance with organisational objectives and regularly reported on.
- Ensure a robust budget preparation process is in place that reflects the Council's objectives and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- Ensure there is a sound risk management framework to support the achievement of the Council's intended outcomes.
- Have robust contingency arrangements for business continuity and disaster recovery.
- Provide a robust programme of work to continuously improve Council processes and the service we provide.

This is evidenced by:

- Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- Regular financial and performance reporting to committees.
- Business Continuity Plans, Disaster recovery arrangements and emergency plan.
- [Council strategies & policies](#).
- The Council has LGA (Local Government Association), SOLACE and CIPFA membership to ensure best practice.
- [Risk Management Strategy](#) (updated Jan 2024).

Priorities for 2024/2025



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

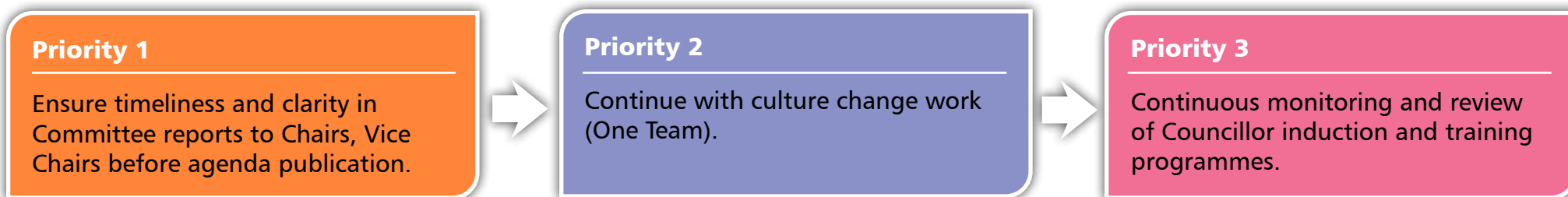
To achieve this the Council will:

- Maintain an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources and ensure effective succession planning.
- Maintain a comprehensive councillor development programme of training sessions.
- Participate in partnerships where there is a sound business case that it will add value.
- Assess the skills required through the appraisal process and address any training gaps to enable roles to be carried out effectively.
- Regularly review the Constitution update when required.
- Ensure arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of officers.

This is evidenced by:

- Appraisal Procedure, including periodic performance reviews.
- Exit interviews.
- Effective induction programme for officers and councillors.
- [Constitution](#).
- [Codes of Conduct \(Members and Officers\)](#).
- [Scheme of delegation](#).
- Staff Forum.
- EMT away days.
- [Values and behaviours](#).

Priorities for 2024/2025



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

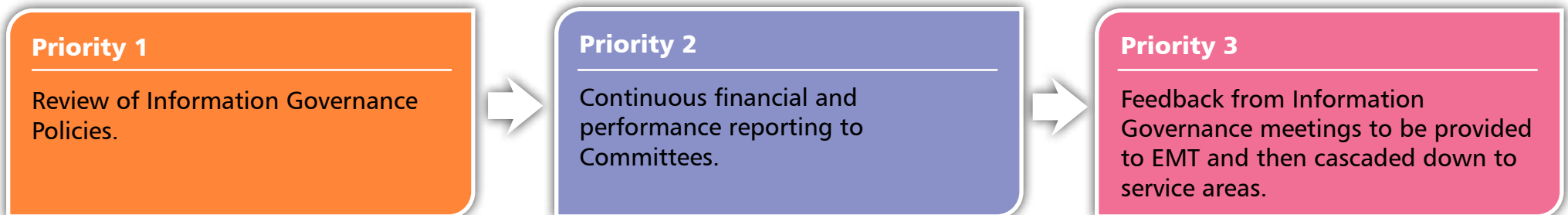
To achieve this the Council will:

- Maintain an effective Audit & Scrutiny Committee.
- Ensure that risk management is an integral part of the Council's activities and decision making.
- Ensure that the risk register is reviewed by all service managers and EMT quarterly.
- Maintain sound financial regulations and procedure rules to ensure consistency and clear financial protocols.
- Maintain an effective internal audit function to provide assurance on governance, risk management and control.
- Ensure effective anti-fraud and corruption arrangements are in place.
- Ensure effective information governance arrangements.

This is evidenced by:

- Regular reporting to Audit & Scrutiny Committee.
- [Risk Management Strategy](#).
- Statutory Officers.
- Corporate & Service Risk Registers.
- [Financial Regulations in Constitution](#).
- [Contract Standing Orders in Constitution](#).
- [Scheme of delegation in Constitution](#).
- Internal Audit Charter.
- [Anti-fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy](#).
- [Anti-Fraud Statement](#).
- [Annual Governance Statement](#).
- Information governance policies & procedures.
- Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- Quarterly budget reporting.
- IT policies.
- [RIPA \(Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act\) Policy](#).

Priorities for 2024/2025



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

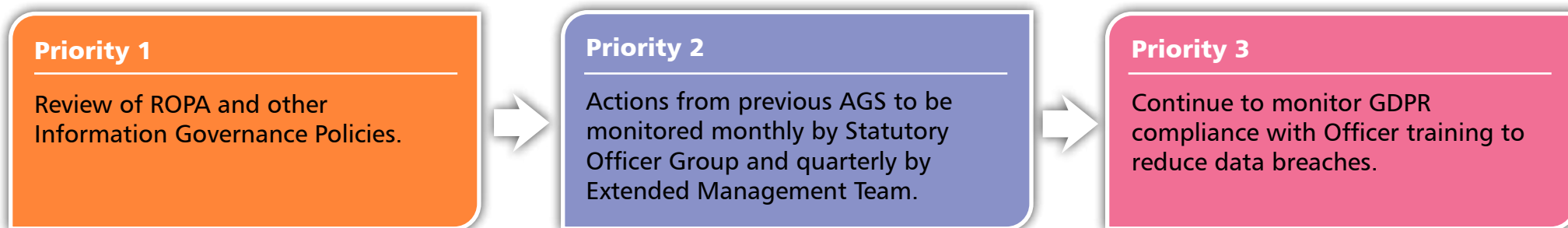
To achieve this the Council will:

- Have a defined process to ensure that reports for the public/stakeholders are fair, balanced and easy to access and understandable for the audience.
- Maintain an effective internal audit function which conforms to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit.
- Have processes to ensure that external/internal audit feedback is acted upon/responded to by EMT and councillors.
- Welcome peer challenges and inspection from regulatory bodies and implement recommendations.
- Maintain compliance with the local government transparency code and publish all required information in a timely manner
- Compliance and transparency with data protection legislation.
- Prepare an annual governance statement on the robustness of this framework.

This is evidenced by:

- Information Governance Policies and Procedures.
- Audit & Scrutiny Committee.
- Annual Governance Framework.
- Internal Audit Charter.
- Chief Internal Auditor annual report.
- Regular progress reports on results of internal audit reports.
- Quarterly financial and performance reporting.
- [Accessibility Statement Freedom of Information requests, Environmental Information requests and Subject Access Requests.](#)
- [Publication Scheme.](#)
- [Transparency Code.](#)
- Annual report and Statement of accounts.
- [Privacy Notice, Record of Processing Activity \(ROPA\), Retention Schedule.](#)

Priorities for 2024/2025



Who is responsible for maintaining the Local Code of Governance?

Corporate governance and good governance are everyone's responsibility. There are however a number of specific responsibilities in relation to the implementation, monitoring and review of the Code and the production of the Annual Governance Statement.

Leader of the Council

- Championing and role modelling good governance, in the spirit of the Code.

Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive

- Championing and role modelling good governance, in the spirit of the Code.

Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

- Overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the Code.
- Reviewing the operation of the Code and advising on any changes that may be necessary to maintain it and ensure its effectiveness in practice.
- Undertaking an annual review of the Code to provide assurance on the extent of compliance with it, and reporting on the extent of that assurance in the Annual Governance Statement.

Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)

- Leading the promotion and delivery by the whole organisation of good financial management so that public money is safeguarded at all times and used appropriately, economically, efficiently and effectively.

Head of Internal Audit (Southern Internal Audit Partnership)

- Reporting to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on audit activities during the year, with particular emphasis on the systems of internal control and arrangements for corporate governance.

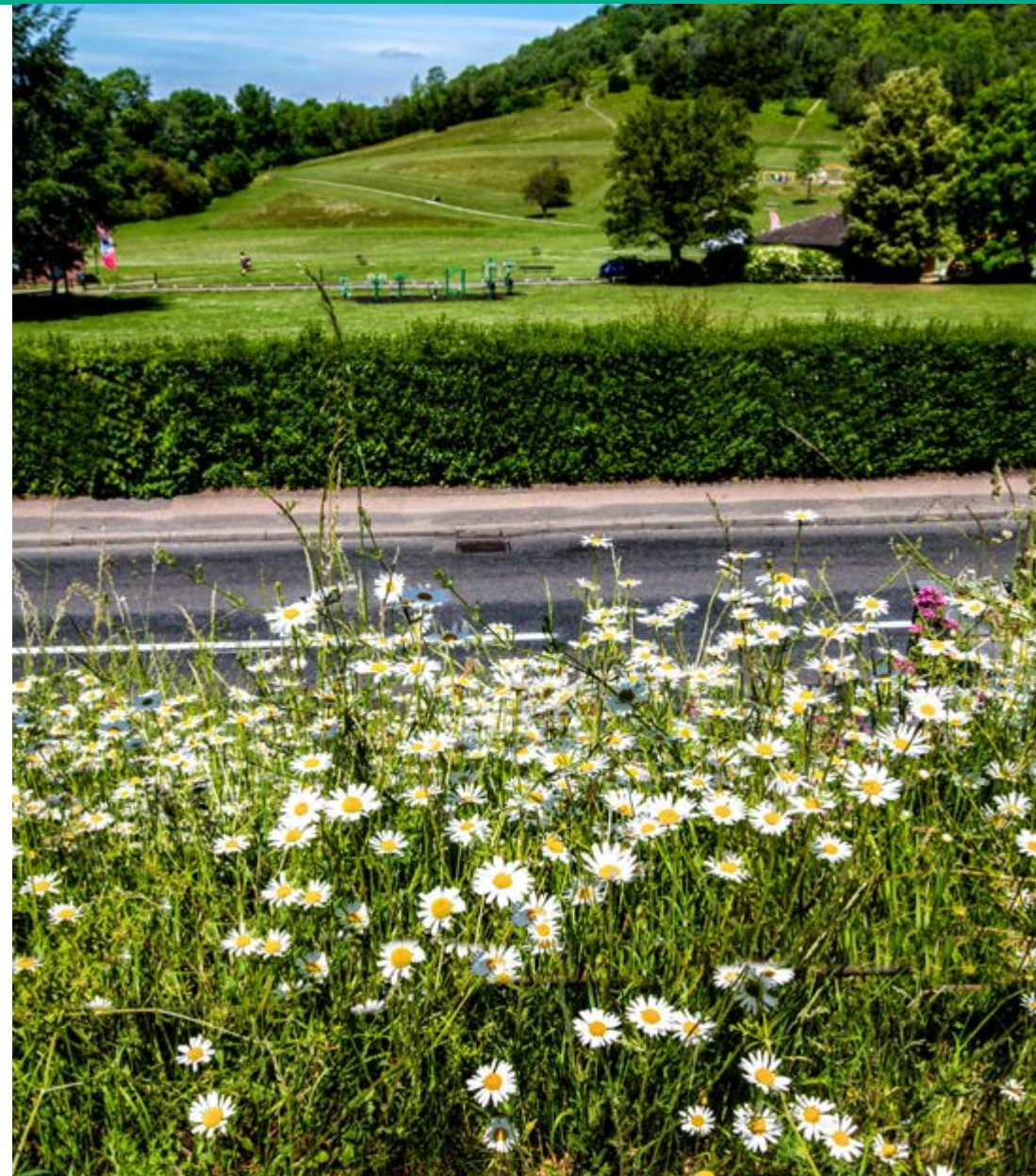


Monitoring and review

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the Council to review at least once a year the effectiveness of its system of internal control and to approve and publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

This Code will facilitate the Council's review of its corporate governance arrangements for the purposes of the AGS.

The AGS is monitored and reviewed by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee. This should be undertaken in conjunction with the annual Statement of Accounts. Due to national delays in having the Statement of Accounts audited this has not been feasible and the AGS is currently approved in isolation.



Certification

We hereby certify our commitment to this Local Code of Corporate Governance and will ensure that the Council continues to review, evaluate and develop the Council's Governance arrangements to ensure continuous improvement of the Council's systems.



Councillor Catherine Sayer
Leader of the Council



David Ford
Chief Executive





Local Code of Corporate Governance 2024-2025

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