

**THE COUNCIL'S ADOPTION OF THE GOOD GOVERNANCE STANDARD FOR
PUBLIC SERVICES**

COUNCILLOR MISS ELAINE WOODBURN – THE LEADER

DR JOHN STANFORTH – CHIEF EXECUTIVE

LEAD OFFICER: John Stanforth, Chief Executive

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Summary: To adopt the Good Governance Standard for Public Services

Recommendation: That the Council adopts the Good Governance Standard for Public Services and the associated action plan.

Impact on delivering the Corporate Plan: Good Governance is fundamental to the successful achievements of the Council

Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21): None of this report

Financial and human resource implications: None of this report

Project & Risk Management: The Code of Corporate Governance will be monitored by Corporate Team and as part of the annual audit review.

Key Decision Status

- **Financial:** None
- **Ward:** None

Other Ward Implications: None

Background

- 1.1 The Good Governance Standard for Public Services was published in January 2005 by the Independent Commission for Good Governance in Public services, supported by the Office for Public Management, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, in partnership with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- 1.2 More than 450,000 people contribute as governors (in the case of local government & elected Members) to a wide range of public services, whose expenditure in the current year is expected to exceed £500 billion. The aim of the Commission was to draw up a common code for public service governance, which would among other things, provide a common framework for assessing good governance practice.
- 1.3 Standards of corporate governance are used to evaluate performance as part of the Audit Commission's comprehensive performance assessment of local authorities.
- 1.4 The Council will be required to comply with this new Code (its existing code dates from 2002).

What does it mean?

- 2.1 The framework of accountability to users, stakeholders and the wider community, within which organisations lead and conduct their functions, and take decisions to achieve their objectives.

It combines the hard factors such as robust systems and processes with softer characteristics of effective leadership and high standards of behaviour.

- 2.2 Good Corporate Governance is fundamental and integral to everything the Council does. It is not an 'add-on'.

Why is it important?

- 3.1 Good Governance is critical to providing high quality services. Where there have been weaknesses in Governance, these have led directly to service failure.
- 3.2 It is critical in raising trust and understanding among the public by improving the quality of services and by being open and honest about performance and mistakes

Who is responsible?

- 4.1 This Council. The Governing Body has the overall responsibility for directing and controlling an organisation, establishing strategic direction, ensuring accountability and that the organisation is managed with probity and integrity.

Core principles of the guide

- 5.1 Good governance means focusing on the organisation's purpose and outcomes for citizens and service users.
- 5.2 Good governance means performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles.
- 5.3 Good governance means promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour.
- 5.4 Good governance means taking informed transparent decisions and managing risk.
- 5.5 Good governance means developing the capacity and capability of the governing body to be effective.
- 5.6 Good Governance means engaging stakeholders and making accountability real.

Compliance with the Code

- 6.1 An action plan, illustrating how the Council might comply with the Standard is attached. This comes with the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Performance and Resources, where it was subject to some considerable debate.

List of Appendices

Appendix A : Good Governance Standard for Copeland Borough Council with actions [Good Governance Standard for Public Services \(amended\).doc](#)

List of Background Documents:

CIPFA good practice

List of Consultees:

OSC P&R, Councillors; Corporate Team; internal audit