

FOR INFORMATION

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL
AUDIT COMMITTEE
23rd September 2014**

Report of: Chief Internal Auditor

Report Title: Final Draft of Annual Governance Statement and Updated Code of Corporate Governance

Ward: Citywide

Officer presenting report: N/A – Documents provided for Information

Contract Telephone Number: 0117 92 22063/22448

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to note the attached final draft of the Annual Governance Statement and the updated Code of Corporate Governance. These documents were presented to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources on 12th September 2014.

SUMMARY

Please see paragraph 1 below for a summary of changes to the Annual Governance Statement.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES IN THE REPORT ARE:

- Final changes which have been made to the Annual Governance Statement (Paragraph 1 below)
- Appendix A – Final Annual Governance Statement and Action Plan
- Appendix B – Updated Code of Corporate Governance

Policy

There are no new policy implications arising from this report

Consultation:

Internal: None necessary

External: None necessary

1. Background and Context – Annual Governance Statement:

- 1.1 The City Council is required to prepare an Annual Governance Statement to accompany its published financial statements. A review of the internal control, risk management and governance arrangements has taken place and the initial draft Statement was considered by SLT in June 2014 and the Audit Committee in early July 2014.

The comments from both meetings have now been incorporated into this final draft of the Statement; together with update on any matters arising since the initial draft Statement was published.

As there have only been minor changes to the Statement since presentation in June it is provided to this meeting for information only, however updates, views and comments are welcome.

1.2 Summary of changes:

The Annual Governance Statement:

- A Forward from the Head of Paid Service (City Director) has been added.
- Some minor changes to the body of the text to ensure accuracy and clarity.

Statement Action Plan:

- At the request of the Audit Committee the Metrobus Project (item 9) risk status has been changed from Green to Amber as the Committee felt this was a major project which could have a material impact on the City and its citizens and as such expose the Council to reputational and financial risk.
- Target dates for 2014/15 actions have been added.
- Some minor changes have been made to the actions to ensure accuracy and clarity.

2. Background and Context – Code of Corporate Governance:

- 2.1 It is recommended as good practice to underpin the Control, Risk and Governance environment within the Council and to support the Annual Governance Statement, that a Code of Corporate Governance which details the ways in which the Council will achieve good governance is adopted and regularly updated.

The Code is updated annually as part of the Annual Governance Statement review process and as such is considered by the Audit Committee at its September meeting when it will also consider the Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts.

The Code is a public document being published on the Council's website and as such it offers an opportunity to demonstrate to the public many of the services the Council provides in order to keep the citizens of Bristol informed and involved.

- 2.2 A copy of the Code has been provided at Appendix A , both in strike out and Final version, so that the additions and deletions to/from the Code as a result of this review can easily be identified.

Other Options Considered

Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

The need to maintain a robust Risk, Governance and Control environment is pivotal to the effective operations of the Council's functions, a statutory requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 and an implied requirement of the External Auditor.

Failure to maintain and where required improve this environment will not only impact on the proper practices of the Council, but will also be in breach of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 and may attract an adverse opinion from the External Auditor.

Equalities Impact Assessment

None necessary for this report

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal - none sought

Resources - none arising from this report

Appendices

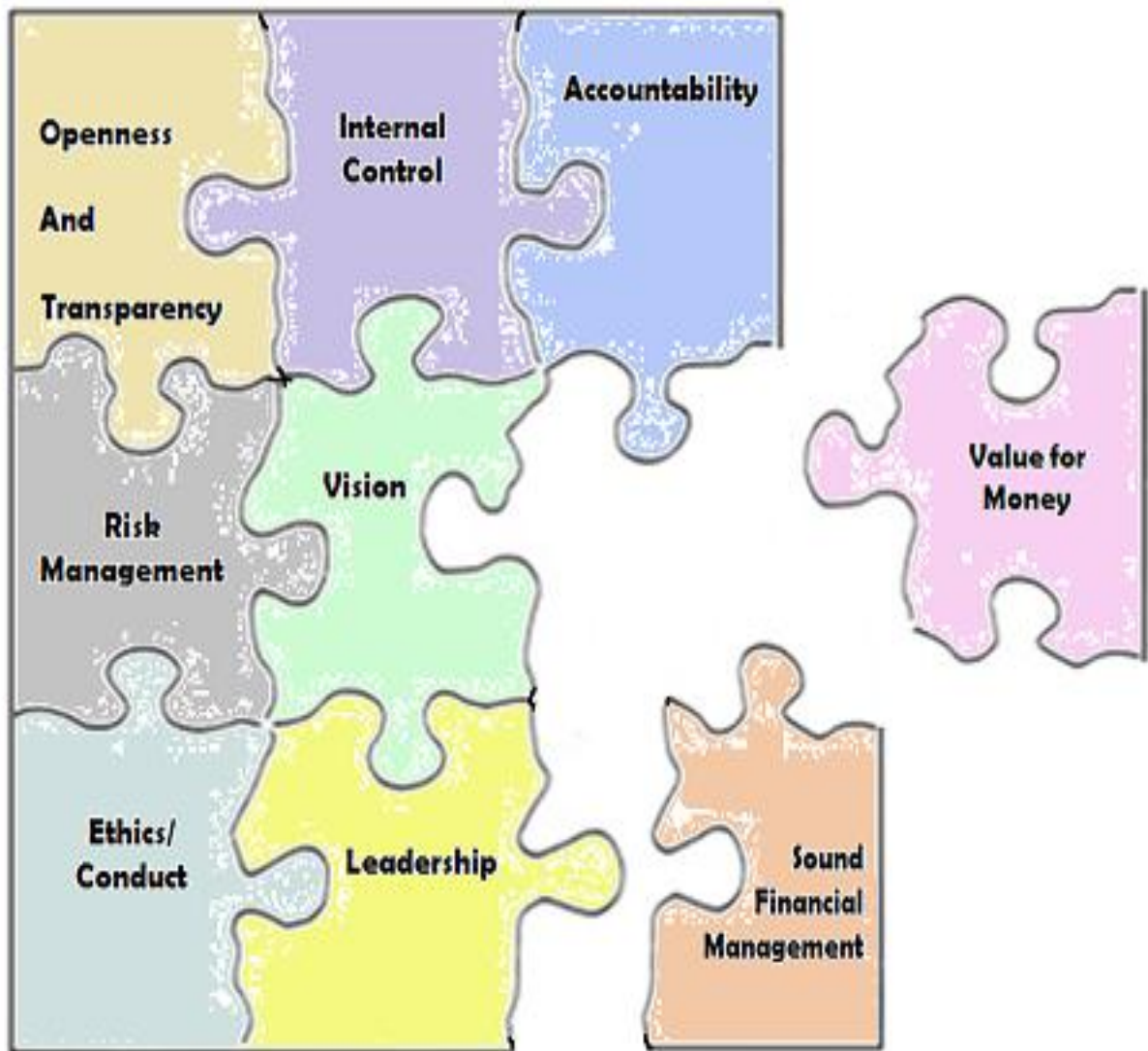
Appendix A - Final Annual Governance Statement
Appendix B - Updated Code of Corporate Governance

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCESS TO INFORMATION



ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

2013-14



FORWARD:

It has been an interesting year for the city council with many challenges facing us during the year and the years ahead. However, it is pleasing to report that there have been measurable improvements in the control risk and governance environment during the year. Many of the governance issues which were identified in the 2012/13 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) have now been either completely resolved or are well on their way to resolution, and the issues identified as occurring during 2013/14 and to date have also been tackled head on with progress towards their resolution clearly evident.

There has been a considerable amount of hard work undertaken to ensure the governance environment within the Council has improved over the year and the details of each area is provided in this statement and in the attached appendix. In particular, I would like to highlight the following areas which were considered significant areas of concern in 2012/13, but have improved sufficiently in 2013/14 for them to no longer be considered an issue going forward. They are:

- Senior Management Capacity
- Capital Projects
- Information Security
- Decision-Making
- Mayor's Forward Plan
- Care Charging Policy
- Development Control Area Committees
- The Constitution

There remain only a small number of matters arising from 2012/13 which although having made good progress during the year, continue to be an AGS item until full resolution has been achieved and/or the impact/benefits of the actions in place are fully realised.

Specifically I would like to give recognition of the extra work that has been done in order to retain good progress towards resolution in the following areas:

- **Financial Governance** - despite early issues with the implementation of the new financial system, work continued at a pace in order to achieve improvements in the control environment and ensure the production of accurate year-end accounts in a timely manner. The former has been achieved with the latter well on its way to full achievement.
- **Change Programme** – (Formerly Business Change) - this is a matter arising which has been identified in the AGS over a number of years. However, unlike previous years control over the changes within the Council has now considerably improved with the introduction of a single change board instead of one for each project as was the case previously, weekly update meetings which include monitoring and challenge of work stream progress and key milestones and outcomes identified from each work stream. Good progress has been made in the current ongoing change projects with some already realising the projected savings.

With regard to the matters which have arisen during 2013/14 I am pleased to report that in all cases remedial action is already in progress and as such none of the matters are considered High risk, but rather Medium risk with a positive direction of travel. I am confident that many matters will reach effective resolution during the year.

The current year, 2014/15, promises to be another interesting year with lots of challenges for the Council, but I am pleased with the positive improvement in the control, risk and governance environment which has already been achieved and can only see good progress on the horizon.

In conclusion I would like to say that much has been achieved in the past year, but there remains much to be done and as such we are committed to do all possible to support the Council in the achievement of its vision for Bristol now and into the future.



Nicola Yates OBE

Head of Paid Service (City Director)

1 Scope of Responsibility

- 1.1 Bristol City Council has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, the Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and is used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 1.2 In discharging these overall responsibilities, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for risk management and internal control systems.
- 1.3 This statement explains how the Council endeavours to deliver good governance and reviews the effectiveness of these arrangements. It also meets the requirements of regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011, which require the Council to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) in accordance with proper practice in relation to internal control.
- 1.4 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the Council's local Code of Corporate Governance ([the Code](#)), which was approved and adopted by the Council in January 2009 and is revised annually.
- 1.5 The Code provides in depth details of the framework the Council has in place to meet the six core principles of effective governance, as prescribed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) / Society Of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) guidance 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. A copy of the Code is available via the above link or on the Council's website.

2 The Council's Governance Framework

- 2.1 The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which the Council is directed and controlled, and by which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It includes arrangements to monitor the achievement of the Council's strategic objectives and to consider whether this has led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.
- 2.2 The 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.
- 2.3 The system of internal control encompasses the policies, processes, tasks, behaviours and other aspects of the authority that, taken together facilitate its effective and efficient operation by enabling it to respond appropriately to significant business, operational, financial, compliance and other risks to achieving the Council's aims and objectives.

3 The Constitution

- 3.1 The Council has a Constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable. Some of these processes are required by law, while others have been decided by the Council. The Constitution is available to the public on the Council's website.
- 3.2 The constitution was amended in May 2013 to address anomalies in legislation since the last review and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Full Council, the elected Mayor and his chosen Cabinet. A fundamental review of the Constitution was recommended by the Council's external auditors in 2013/14 and a full review has been undertaken as part of the Boundary review with a revised governance structure agreed by Full Council in June 2014. *(Please see item 8 in Appendix A)*

4 Strategic and Decision Making Governance

The following details the strategic and decision making governance arrangements in place within the Council, many of which are specifically required by the Constitution:

- 4.1 In 2013/14 the Council continued to maintain its spending plans and priorities as set out in the three year Medium Term Financial Plan for 2012/13 - 2014/15. However during the year as the Elected Mayor's vision for the future of the City became clearer a set of interim corporate strategy themes were agreed by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) in order to re-align the vision of the Mayor to the Council's longer term strategy. Progress against these themes was monitored by the Mayor and the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). The themes were as follows:
- Active and creative
 - Learning and working
 - Caring and protective
 - Moving and connected
 - Greener and healthier
 - A flexible and enabling council
 - Safer homes and communities
- 4.2 For 2014 – 2017 the Council is delivering a three year financial strategy/budget and an organisational plan, which aligns our resources and activities behind our priorities and the Mayor's vision for the city. The Corporate Plan and the Medium Term Financial Strategy were agreed by Full Council in July 2014. In 2013/14 performance reporting was fragmented as many of our performance indicators did not align with the new corporate priorities. However, effective financial reporting has been enhanced throughout the year, with a structure now in place to ensure timely financial reporting to SLT/Cabinet in 2014/15 and a review of our performance indicators in order to more closely align them with the Council's priorities is currently underway. *(Please see item 10 in Appendix A)*
- 4.3 The Cabinet (or Executive) is made up of the Mayor and Executive Members, known as Assistant Mayors. The makeup of the Cabinet is decided by the Mayor. The current Mayor's policy has been to invite councillors from all parties who are

represented on the council into his Cabinet, additionally; the Mayor has established a new role of Cabinet Advisor. The Cabinet Advisors will support Assistant Mayor's across the four principal portfolios established by the Mayor at the Full Council Annual General Meeting. The current Cabinet has four Assistant Mayors, a Deputy Mayor, four Cabinet Advisors and the Mayor.

- 4.4 The Mayor takes all key decisions in consultation with Cabinet on the basis of reports from officers and/or where appropriate in consultation with one of the Council's strategic Boards namely the Property Board, Health & Wellbeing Board or Learning City Board. The Mayor's Forward Plan of key decisions to be taken over the next four months is published on the Council's website. The late submission of items for inclusion in the Forward Plan which had been an issue in 2012/13 is now resolved and items are now recorded in the Forward Plan in advance to allow for scrutiny by interested parties. *(Please see item 5 in Appendix A)*
- 4.5 Cabinet meetings where key decisions are made by the Mayor are open to the public and available via web cast through the Council's website. All reports are considered for legal and financial issues before submission to Members. *(Please see item 4 in Appendix A)*
- 4.6 The Council appoints a number of committees to discharge the Council's regulatory and scrutiny responsibilities. All committees have clear terms of reference and work programmes which set out their roles and responsibilities. During the year the Council sought the views of the Centre for Public Scrutiny who conducted a review of the Council's Scrutiny Commissions to enhance the effective challenge of policy development and Mayoral decisions. The outcome from that review was a number of recommendations for improvements some of which have already been put in place, whilst others will be progressed during 2014/15. *(Please see item 14 in Appendix A)*
- 4.7 The Council has dedicated Development Control area planning committees which are made up of Members who are professionally advised by Council officers with the provision of reports on planning applications being considered and making recommendations. A matter which was identified in 2012/13 concerning the use of officer advice in these decisions was investigated by Internal Audit during 2013/14 and no issues were found. *(Please see item 7 in Appendix A)*
- 4.8 There is a Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) made up of the City Director and Strategic Directors that meets each week to discuss matters which are of strategic and operational importance to the Council. The issue of senior management capacity as raised in the 2012/13 AGS has now been resolved with the appointment of a permanent senior management team to ensure consistency in the Council's performance and clear direction towards achievement of long term strategic objectives. *(Please see item 1 in Appendix A)*
- 4.8 There remain a number of senior management positions occupied by interim managers, however this temporary solution was recognised by the Council as an appropriate measure at a time of significant and rapid business change. A number of these arrangements are being phased out as the corporate restructure proceeds to completion, however it is accepted that the use of consultants and interims is an integral part of the Council's programme of restructure and the use of this option is unlikely to change. *(Please see item 13 in Appendix A)*

- 4.9 An Executive Board consisting of SLT, the Mayor and Cabinet Members meet regularly to ensure good communication and coherent vision.

5 Operational Governance

The following details the operational governance arrangements in place within the Council, some of which are specifically required by the Constitution:

- 5.1 The Council has a Mayor's scheme of delegation in place with supporting procedure notes / manuals that clearly defines how decisions are taken.
- 5.2 To achieve the Mayor's vision and outcomes set up in the Corporate Plan such as delivery of excellent services to all our customers, the Council engages with the local community through 14 neighbourhood partnerships which provide an opportunity for local communities to have a greater say in the way services and local issues are managed by the Council and its partner agencies.
- 5.3 The Council is also involved in a number of other partnerships many of which are strategic partnerships which are governed by its Constitution, however for partnerships which are not strategic there remains a need for governance and control in order to ensure the Council is achieving synergy between its partners in fulfilling the Mayor's vision for Bristol. *(Please see item 9 & 16 in Appendix A)*
- 5.4 Major changes are on-going throughout the Council to meet the budget reductions imposed by the current financial climate and to improve delivery of services. The Council adopted an invest to save strategy to restructure the current organisation in order to reduce management levels and operational cost and at the same time to improve buying strategies. There are many work streams within the Programme but all are governed and managed by a single programme board, which is chaired by the Strategic Director for Business Change and consists of the Extended Leadership Team (ELT) members. The Change Programme Board meets on a weekly basis for progress updates, challenge and troubleshooting. The Programme replaced the multiple Business Change programmes from 2012/13 and has addressed many of the issues which arose in 2012/13. The business case for the Change Programme will be presented to Cabinet in July 2014. *(Please see items 11 in Appendix A)*
- 5.5 The Council utilises, manages and stores large amounts of data on various different databases and servers. The Council is heavily dependent on managing and maintaining the control environment within its computerised systems, especially with the aim of delivering many of our services digitally. The implementation of a new Finance system has had a positive impact on the resolution of many of the issues which were identified with regard to financial governance and control in 2012/13. After a less than effective start to the implementation, work on the System during the year has progressed and the direction of travel is good. There remain however a number of issues which are being resolved at this time. *(Please see item 12 in Appendix A)*
- 5.6 Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that expenditure is incurred lawfully and that best value is obtained; Financial Regulations, Procurement Regulations and a large number of financial and human resources policies are in use throughout the Council. However, many of the policies and procedures have become out-of-date

and are not reflective of the changes currently ongoing within the Council. A detailed review of Financial Regulations is underway in 2014, with a full review of the adequacy and appropriateness of all policies and procedure having commenced in June 2014. *(Please see item 6, 15 & 19 in Appendix A)*

- 5.7 The Council has processes and policies in place to ensure that all information collected, processed and used by the Council is held safely and securely. Breaches in information security are monitored by the dedicated Senior Information Risk Owner. *(Please see item 3 in Appendix A)*
- 5.8 Members' and Officers' behaviour is governed by Codes of Conduct which include the requirement for a Declarations of Interest to be completed by all Members annually, by all new staff, and biennially by staff working in sensitive areas or paid above a certain grade.
- 5.9 The Council encourages a free and open culture and is committed to high standards of honesty. The Council will not tolerate any form of malpractice and recognises that employees have an important part to play in reporting any concerns. The Council has a Whistleblowing Policy which encourages and enables employees to raise concerns internally within the Council, rather than overlooking the problem or raising the concern outside.
- 5.10 The Council adopts a zero tolerance approach to fraud and corruption within its services. The following policies and procedures are in place to ensure all appropriate measures are taken to prevent, detect and investigate suspected fraud/irregularities.
- Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Strategy/Policy
 - Whistle Blowing policy
 - Anti-Money Laundering policy
 - Gifts and Hospitality policy and register
 - Pecuniary Interest policy and register
 - Code of Conduct for Members and Employees including ethical behaviour
 - Information Security policy

Additionally, the Council has both a dedicated Housing Benefit Fraud Investigation Team and a Corporate Fraud Team within its internal audit function.

Having implemented all of the above the Council is satisfied that it has adopted a response that is appropriate for its fraud and corruption risks and commits to maintain its vigilance to tackle fraud.

- 5.11 The Council has a Performance Management and Development Scheme which manages performance and development needs for each member of staff . The existing process is currently under review with a planned redesign in order to ensure that it is fit for purpose into the future. The review will include redesigning the process to ensure that individual performance measures and targets are more clearly aligned to roles and the Council's priorities.
- 5.12 The Council recognises the value of well trained and competent people in effective service delivery, and as such aims to ensure that Members and managers within the Council have the skills, knowledge and capacity they need to discharge their responsibilities.

5.13 The Monitoring Officer has responsibility for maintaining the Constitution, ensuring lawfulness and fairness of decision making, providing legal advice and conducting investigations. The Monitoring Officer leads the legal department who ensure legal compliance by the Council in its activities; any concerns are raised with senior management for resolution.

5.14 In compliance with the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework', the Council's financial management arrangements generally conform with the requirements of the CIPFA Statement of the role of the Chief Financial Officer and Head of Internal Audit in Local Government (2010). More detailed compliance information is provided below:

- The Service Director: Finance and the Head of Legal Services although not members of SLT have an open invitation to attend when necessary and receive all papers. Both have a direct reporting line to the City Director in relation to governance issues. Both also attend Cabinet and Cabinet briefings.
- The Council's six statutory officers meet every six weeks to discuss matters arising that are relevant to their statutory role. Meeting attendees are:
 - Head of Paid Service
 - S151 Officer
 - Monitoring Officer
 - Director of Public Health
 - Director of Children's and Adult Services
 - The Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)
- The Service Director: Finance is the Council's Chief Financial Officer and is a professionally qualified accountant. He is the Council's lead officer for the Audit Committee and attends all meetings as well as reporting regularly to the appropriate Scrutiny Commission. Although he is not a Strategic Director he is the Council's Financial lead and as such is fully involved in all material business decisions and planning processes, and contributes to all key decision reports to SLT and Cabinet.
- The Chief Internal Auditors (job share) are senior managers within the Council with regular engagement with the Audit Committee. They have an operational reporting line to the Service Director: Finance and a functional reporting line to the Audit Committee. They are also able to report to SLT, the City Director, the elected Mayor and to other Directors as required.
- The Chief Internal Auditors are both qualified accountants with many years of Local Authority Internal Audit experience and they provide an Internal Audit Service which is professional, proficient and adequately resourced (as concluded by the Audit Committee in their Annual Report). The service capacity and resources are continually under review to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

6 Assurance Mechanisms

The following assurance mechanisms are built into the governance framework to ensure that the framework is operating as required:

- 6.1 The decision-making process is scrutinised by a scrutiny function which holds the Mayor to account and undertakes some pre-decision and policy development work. The Resources Scrutiny Commission is responsible for maintaining an overview of service and financial performance, efficiency and effectiveness. *(Please see item 14 in Appendix A)*
- 6.2 The Council has an audit committee comprising elected and Independent Members that reports directly to full council in line with best practice. The Audit Committee meet throughout the year to provide independent assurance to the Council in relation to the effectiveness of the risk management framework, the internal control environment, and any issues relating to the conduct of Members. The Committee met six times during the year, receiving regular reports on risk management, internal control and governance matters.
- 6.3 The Council has a complaints procedure and where appropriate obtains feedback from service users to ensure an appropriate quality of service is provided. However, the technical support of the complaints process requires improvement in order to enable the Council to efficiently /effectively monitor complaints, learn from them, and instigate timely and effective improvements and aide transparency. Remedial action in this area is in its early stages, but the actions proposed clearly demonstrate a commitment to ensure improvements. *(Please see item 18 in Appendix A).*
- 6.4 SLT is responsible for considering overall financial and performance management and receives comprehensive reports on a quarterly basis. They are also responsible for initiating corrective action in relation to risk and internal control issues.
- 6.5 The Corporate Risk Register (CRR) has been extensively reviewed over the past year by the Extended Leadership Team in order to ensure it is focussed on the highest risks to the Council upon which it can have a positive impact, whilst still maintaining a watching brief on the risks, while high, cannot be fully mitigated by the Council alone. Directorate risk registers will also be reviewed utilising the same approach and taking into account the new structure within the Council. The risk registers will continue to be reviewed by the Audit Committee, with an element of challenge being introduced via the Scrutiny function.
- 6.6 An Internal Audit Service is in place which provides an independent and objective assurance service to senior management, the Council as a whole and specifically the Audit Committee. They complete a programme of reviews throughout the year to provide an opinion on the internal control, risk management and governance arrangements. In addition, the Service undertakes fraud investigation and proactive fraud detection work which includes reviewing the control environment in areas where fraud or irregularity has occurred. Significant weaknesses in the control environment identified by Internal Audit are reported to senior management, the appropriate Cabinet Member and the Audit Committee.
- 6.7 An External Audit function is in place which reports to senior management and the Audit Committee regarding Value for Money, governance issues and the final accounts including the Annual Audit Letter.

7 Review of Effectiveness

7.1 Bristol City Council annually reviews the effectiveness of its governance framework, as detailed in the local [Code of Corporate Governance](#), including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by managers within the Council, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the work of the internal auditors and by comments made by the external auditors and other inspection agencies.

7.2 In addition to the in-year assurance mechanisms detailed above the following year-end reviews of the governance arrangements and the control environment were undertaken:

- as the Strategic Directors have recently been appointed they were invited to discuss the key elements of the control framework during the preparatory work. Assurance was obtained from discussion with senior officers who had responsibility for the control framework in place during the year, and any areas where control weaknesses had resulted in significant issues arising for the Directorate are reflected in this Statement and Appendix A together with their comments. The final Statement itself was considered by SLT on 9th September 2014 and the Audit Committee on 23rd September 2014 and is supported by them as an accurate reflection of the governance arrangements in place for the year.
- obtaining assurances from senior management, including the s151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer that internal control and corporate governance arrangements in key areas were in place throughout the year.
- reviewing external inspection reports received by the Council during the year, the opinion of the Chief Internal Auditor in their annual report to management and an evaluation of management information in key areas to identify any indications that the control environment may not be sound.
- consulting the Audit Committee regarding any potential issues they felt could indicate a problem with the control environment as a result of their work during the year.

8 Significant Governance Issues

- 8.1 The review process has highlighted a number of significant issues from 2012/13 which have now been resolved, together with a number of issues which whilst good progress has been made further work is required to achieve full resolution. Additionally a number of in-year issues have been identified, but similarly action has been taken during the year and whilst full resolution has not yet been achieved the direction of travel is positive. Only a small number of issues have been identified where immediate action is required.
- 8.2 The Action Plan at [Appendix A](#) to this statement provides details of each issue and the actions, proposed, in progress and/or concluded at the time of writing this statement.

9 Certification

- 9.1 To the best of our knowledge, the governance arrangements, as defined above, have been effectively operating during the year with the exception of those areas identified in Appendix A. We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the matters arising to further enhance our governance arrangement. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified during the review of effectiveness, and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Mayor: George Ferguson _____ Date:

City Director: Nicola Yates _____ Date:

s151 Officer : Peter Gillet _____ Date:

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (AGS) ACTION PLAN 2013/14 and 2014/15

This action plan is split into three sections, issues which were identified in the 2012/13 AGS which have now been resolved, issues which were identified in the 2012/13 AGS which have not reached full resolution at this time and issues which have been identified in 2013/14. In all cases the action plan provides details of the actions which have taken place in- year to tackle the issue and where appropriate, those which are planned for 2014/15 to progress/enhance resolution of the issue. Each issue has been RAG rated both from an inherent risk and a residual risk prospective, the key to the rating is as follows:

Red - Significant issue immediate action required to resolve

Amber- Remedial action has progressed well, but has not yet fully resolved the issue or the impact/benefits of actions have not been fully realised yet.

Green- Issue resolved, no longer considered a significant governance item.

Issues identified in 2012/13 which have been resolved.

| Item No | Matters Arising in 2012/13 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Action undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
|---------|---|----------------|--------------|---|--|
| 1 | Senior Management Capacity – fluid senior management position has led to a large amount of change at Strategic Director level and below and a disappearing of organisational memory. | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Director appointed in May 2013 • Appointment of all Strategic Directors on permanent basis complete by March 2014. • All interim arrangements at Strategic Director level have ceased. | No further action required |

| Item No | Matters Arising in 2012/13 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Action undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
|---------|--|----------------|--------------|---|--|
| 2 | <p><u>Capital projects</u></p> <p>A number of significant programmes had slipped in terms of expected timescales and costs and have not yet been delivered.</p> | | | <p>The capital programme has been revised during the year with control placed within the Capital Programme Board.</p> <p>Enhanced review and monitoring has been built into the regular financial reporting structure to increase visibility and control of this major area of expenditure.</p> | <p>The Capital Programme Board continues to enhance control and challenge over the capital programme which is fully set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The Board will be paying particular attention to deep dive assessments and ensuring that budget managers have the ability to appropriately forecast capital project spend.</p> <p>Target Date: January 2015</p> <p>Reporting on capital projects now forms part of the regular financial reports to SLT and Cabinet alongside Revenue, Treasury and Reserves movements.</p> <p>Strategic Director, Place</p> |

| Item No | Matters Arising in 2012/13 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Action undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
|---------|---|----------------|--------------|--|---|
| 3 | <p><u>Information Security</u></p> <p>Information Security – potential for significant fines to the Council and distress to individuals due to breaches in Children and Young People Services (CYPS) paper handling data security control.</p> | | | <p>Issues had been raised with CYPS DLT.</p> <p>A new Handling Sensitive Paper Records Standard was Issued and publicised.</p> <p>Information Security training was undertaken by all teams – with key reminders to implement quality assurance into manual processes where sensitive documents are handled.</p> | <p>Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) continues to monitor breaches as they arise.</p> <p>SIRO</p> |
| 4 | <p><u>Decision Making</u> – Constitutional changes needed to reflect the powers of the elected Mayor.</p> <p>Inadequate arrangements in place to ensure governance risks are identified and mitigated.</p> | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System in place around recording of delegated decisions. • Early involvement of SLT in Cabinet Reports (standard item in SLT cycle). • Timely involvement of Legal and Finance on detailed proposals for Cabinet reports. • Internal Audit review concluded satisfactory progress with regards to the tools and assistance available to report authors. | <p>No further action required</p> |

| Item No | Matters Arising in 2012/13 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Action undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
|---------|--|----------------|--------------|---|---|
| 5 | <p>Mayor's Forward Plan – Issues regarding late submissions and the ensuing impact on the Council's ability to make informed decisions.</p> | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of this area by Internal Audit has concluded satisfactory progress. • Items have generally been added in a timely manner. • Decision making section of constitution was updated in 2013/14. | No further action required. |
| 6 | <p>Care Charging Policy</p> <p>Policy was applied incorrectly to a number of cases losing Council revenue and causing undue confusion and stress among customers.</p> | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues have now been dealt with. • Errors were corrected. | No further action required |
| 7 | <p>Development Control (DC) Area Committees</p> <p>A number of Development Control (DC) Area Committees' decisions have been subject to appeal. On appeal the Planning Inspectorate has found against the Council and awarded costs (approx. £400k on one occasion)</p> | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Development Control by Internal Audit has resulted in an Audit Opinion of satisfactory. • Canvas of Committee members revealed that Members are generally happy with the paperwork they receive, including timeliness, | The Council has agreed to consolidate the Development Control committees from four committees', each of whom dealt with sections of the city, to two committees which deal with city-wide planning matters. |

| Item No | Matters Arising in 2012/13 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Action undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
|---------|--|----------------|--------------|---|--|
| | | | | <p>and the guidance provided by planning officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is offered to all DC Area Committee members and take up is good, with most Members having participated in some form of planning training in the past 4 years. | No further action required at this time. |
| 8 | <p><u>Constitution</u></p> <p>The Constitution may not be fit for purpose due to the fact that a fundamental review of it has not been completed.</p> | | | <p>The Constitution was amended to reflect some changes in legislation and the introduction of the Elected Mayor and his decision making process.</p> <p>It was agreed by Management that a fundamental review of the Constitution would take place in 2013/14.</p> | A full review of the Constitution has been undertaken as part of the Boundary Review and a revised governance structure was agreed by Full Council at its June 2014 AGM. |

Issues identified in 2012/13 where resolution is on-going.

| Item No | Matters Arising In 2012/13 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Action undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
|---------|--|----------------|--------------|---|--|
| 9 | <p><u>Metrobus (BRT) project-</u></p> <p>Significant issues identified in project including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding gap • Governance arrangements • Damage to Council reputation | | | <p>The West of England Programme Board considers the overall project status to be 'Amber' at this time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding gap now resolved. • improved level of focus from revised programme board. • high level of external review in this area with no major problems identified. | <p>Planning permission for all route was approved by the Development Committees in August 2014.</p> <p>As this is an ongoing major programme, monitoring will continue going forward.</p> <p>Strategic Director, Place</p> |
| 10 | <p><u>Performance Management/reporting</u></p> <p>Lack of timely performance, financial risk information to enable effective decision making.</p> <p>Improvement needed in compliance with the performance management framework.</p> | | | <p>Effective financial reporting has been enhanced through the year and a revised financial calendar prepared for 2014/15 to ensure a complete and timely financial report is prepared for SLT/Cabinet review.</p> <p>The corporate priorities for 2014 -2017 have been prepared based on the Mayor's vision for Bristol.</p> | <p>A review of the existing performance indicators is currently underway with a view to more closely aligning the indicators with the Council's strategic objectives and Mayor's vision for Bristol.</p> <p>Target date: Ongoing throughout year</p> <p>Service Director Policy,</p> |

| Item No | Matters Arising In 2012/13 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Action undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
|---------|--|----------------|--------------|--|---|
| | | | | | <p>Strategy & Communications Service Director, Finance</p> |
| 11 | <p>The Change Programme (CP) is a consolidation of a number of projects formally known as Business Change.</p> <p>CP is expected to deliver more than half of the required budget savings; therefore, failure to deliver projected benefits could have severe impact on the Council's ability in achievement of long term corporate objectives.</p> <p>The impact of having so many change project streams in progress at the same time could have a significant impact on the overall control environment, if the environment is not preserved appropriately.</p> <p>In particular the loss of experience and organisational knowledge, as a result of the current corporate restructure,</p> | | | <p>One overall programme board now in place led by Strategic Director of Business Change. The programme consists of six core streams albeit with a high number of project streams. This is a vast improvement on the previous arrangements where there were a high number of separate projects all with their own project boards.</p> <p>The programme is monitored on a weekly basis and owned by the Extended Leadership Team (ELT) and it is a key risk on the Council's Corporate Risk Register.</p> <p>Costs are built into the business case and Medium Term Financial Strategy with key project themes fully costed.</p> <p>Management are kept fully informed of the programme's progress through weekly Management Briefs which are then cascaded down to the wider staff base.</p> | <p>The formal business case for the Change Programme was presented to the Cabinet in July 2014.</p> <p>Delivery is still in early stages, but key restructure activity is on track to deliver the net target savings for 2014/15 albeit future year targets increase. Lessons learned are being applied to the next element of the project.</p> <p>ABW has been enhanced to provide sufficient information for Management to monitor and forecast their budgets.</p> <p>The project will be subject to quarterly performance and financial reporting to both SLT and Cabinet.</p> |

| Item No | Matters Arising In 2012/13 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Action undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
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| | could in the short term impact on the control foundation within the Council. | | | <p>The restructure programme has reinforced leadership and guidance to support managers' to deliver the cost reduction required while accepting modest risk in their operational delivery performance.</p> <p>The loss of key staff has formed part of the decision making process when considering the acceptance or rejection of a redundancy application. The restructure methodology is based on delivering services in a more efficient manner.</p> | <p>The Change Programme has already identified £13m of savings against the £22m target for 2014/15 demonstrating the commitment to the project and the delivery and realisation of savings and service improvements.</p> <p>The restructure process has created a defined corporate structure which, alongside an enhanced reporting structure, has more clearly defined roles and responsibilities in the senior management team.</p> <p>The Corporate restructure is scheduled to be completed by 31st October 2014.</p> <p>Strategic Director, Business Change</p> <p>Service Director, Business Change & ICT</p> |

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| 12 | <p><u>Financial Governance</u></p> <p>While good progress towards improvement in internal control of financial systems has been achieved, the new financial system is still not fully operating to the required level in order to fully achieve expected benefits and controls.</p> | | | <p>It is clear that the implementation of the ABW financial system was less effective than planned but the control environment continues to be enhanced as modules such as Income Manger and Bank Reconciliation are fully understood and utilised.</p> <p>Additionally the formation of the Finance Accounting Board (FAB), whose remit is to tackle current and emerging issues with regard to financial governance, has had a positive effect on the control environment.</p> | <p>Focus on key controls and appropriate reconciliations will be more structured and monitored to enhance control of debt, cash and access.</p> <p>Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegations being revised to reflect the new directorate management structure.</p> <p>Target Date: System fully functional by 2014/15 year end.</p> <p>Service Director: Finance</p> |
| 13 | <p><u>Consultants/Interims</u></p> <p>Lack of transparency in the use of consultants and poor monitoring of their performance.</p> | | | <p>Monitoring of consultant spend has been problematic but as the general ledger is optimised and reporting improved, visibility around such costs should be improved too.</p> <p>Appointments of consultants/interims are approved by Corporate People and Non-Pay Panels, who report to</p> | <p>It is accepted that the use of consultants/interims is an integral part of the Council's programme of restructure and that the use of this option is unlikely change at this time. Work is ongoing as part of the People and Non-Pay Panels remit, to ensure the cost of this resource/expertise can be</p> |

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| | | | | SLT. | appropriately monitored and controlled. Target date: Ongoing monitoring Service Director: Finance & Service Director: HR |

Issues identified in 2013/14

| Item No | Matters Arising in 2013/14 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Actions Undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
|---------|--|----------------|--------------|--|---|
| 14 | <p><u>Scrutiny Function</u></p> <p>The Scrutiny arrangements need improvement to ensure robust challenge of executive decisions by Members.</p> | | | <p>During the year the Council sought the views of the Centre for Public Scrutiny who conducted a review of the Council's Scrutiny Commissions to enhance the effective challenge of policy development and mayoral decisions with the following recommendations concerning the decision making governance arrangement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the council's policy framework, mayoral policy | <p>As with the Constitution, revised arrangements to clarify and enhance the role of scrutiny commissions were agreed by Council at its AGM in June 14. These included:</p> <p>An Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) which is focussed on Management Function and will oversee the work of the Scrutiny Commissions, including</p> |

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| | | | | <p>priorities and other major strategies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure transparency in policy development for the whole process from the first idea to the public meeting at which it is finally agreed; • The Council must significantly reduce its formal Commission and meetings structure if it is to have the capacity in terms of member time commitment, officer support and resourcing the overview and scrutiny function to fulfil the policy development role; • To draw up a clearer process for both Public Forum and Petitions, including clarifying | <p>receiving performance reports.</p> <p>Corporate visions/objectives as detailed in Corporate Plan to inform the Scrutiny work programme.</p> <p>Corporate Plan considered and signed-off by OSMB and Full Council in July 2014.</p> <p>A detailed review of the Council's policies and strategies is currently underway to identify relevant policies and procedures and to ensure they effectively align with the Mayor's priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>Proposals to reduce the number of Commissions and meetings during the municipal year have been agreed by Full Council. This will see 4 Scrutiny commissions, one for each directorate, each of which will meet 10 times per year. This will also ensure that the matters arising will be considered by the most appropriate Commission.</p> <p>Proposals were agreed that will separate out the Mayoral</p> |

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| | | | | the purpose and focus of the Public Forum arrangements; | <p>Question Time questions from Members and those of the public which will be dealt with in separate meetings. In addition there will be discrete opportunities for Mayoral questions at overview and scrutiny boards.</p> <p>Target date: OSMB to review scrutiny arrangements in January 2015.</p> <p>Monitoring Officer & Members and Service Manager- Policy & Research</p> |
| 15 | <p><u>Policy and Procedure</u></p> <p>Many key Policies and Procedures are out of date and not reflective of recent changes concerning the new financial system and its surrounding operation.</p> | | | <p>The major review of Policies and Procedures has been delayed due to the restructure and reallocation of management responsibilities.</p> <p>Key financial policies agreed as part of the 2014-17 budget process.</p> | <p>Detailed review of financial regulations is underway, and a revised scheme of delegation is being prepared for review and implementation by SLT and Cabinet.</p> <p>Target Date: Roll out complete and in use by 31/3/15</p> <p>Following the restructure of the Performance, Communications and Scrutiny section, a detailed review of the Council's policies</p> |

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| | | | | | <p>and strategies is currently underway to identify relevant policies and procedures and to ensure they effectively align with the Mayor's priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>Target date: Ongoing throughout year.</p> <p>Service Director Policy, Strategy & Communications</p> <p>Service Director, Finance</p> |
| 16 | <p><u>Partnership Governance</u></p> <p>Partnership governance outside of strategic partnerships may not be robust which may result in the Council not achieving maximum benefits through partnership working.</p> | | | <p>The majority of the Council's current arrangements with partners are set out in formal agreements.</p> <p>The Strategic Partnerships are regulated by the Constitution with clear Terms of Reference and a scheme of delegation agreed by the Mayor.</p> <p>A Strategic Leaders Board has been established and is now appropriately resourced to support the work of the Board.</p> | <p>Further develop an effective accountability framework for wider partnership working to ensure it is clear what each partner is expected to contribute.</p> <p>Target Date: 31/3/15</p> <p>Identify strategic and other partners and implement an accountability framework. Gain an understanding of differing priorities of each partner.</p> <p>Target Date: 31/3/15</p> |

| Item No | Matters Arising in 2013/14 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Actions Undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
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| | | | | | <p>Develop a stronger evidence base which demonstrates the benefits of partnership working.</p> <p>Target Date: 31/3/15</p> <p>Members and senior management to meet in informal settings to debate opportunities for partnership working and provide leadership which promotes a culture change towards delivering services jointly wherever possible and appropriate.</p> <p>Target Date: Ongoing</p> <p>The Strategic Leaders Board met for the first time in July 2014.</p> <p>City Director, Service Director – Policy, Strategy and Communication.</p> |
| 17 | <p><u>Commercial Contract Management.</u></p> <p>Poor contract management and monitoring.</p> | | | <p>Recent Internal Audit review of Commercial Contract Management application concluded satisfactory progress, but monitoring of contracts performance and challenging poor</p> | <p>Overall review of Commercial Contract Management to be undertaken in order to strengthen control issues.</p> |

| Item No | Matters Arising in 2013/14 | Inherited Risk | Current Risk | Actions Undertaken in 2013/14 | Action taken or to be undertaken in 2014/15, and Responsible Officer |
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| | | | | performance still needed improvement. | <p>Target date: January 2015</p> <p>Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)</p> |
| 18 | <p><u>Quality of Service /Complaints system</u></p> <p>Inefficient Complaints system</p> <p>Lack of reliable, readily available information of complaints/compliments received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to learn from mistakes/good practice. • Lost opportunity for improvement • Missed opportunity for greater transparency | | | <p>The problem with the complaints recording and monitoring system has been recognised.</p> <p>The Corporate Complaints team has been restructured to enable improvement in this area.</p> | <p>As part of the change programme a project has been taking place to review and redesign the corporate non statutory complaints process. The programme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authorisation for a new process which will see the current 3 stage process change to a 2 stage process to streamline and simplify the process for citizens. This is based on best practice and the national standard - New improved on line experience with better information and a new on line form - Replacement of the current IT system with the new Salesforce |

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| | | | | | <p>Customer Relationship system. This will significantly automate and improve reporting to support a much more robust and informed approach to identify themes and learning to drive improvement and service redesign.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roll out is planned from Aug – October 2014 - Update to management team planned for June 2014. <p>Target date: October 2014</p> <p>Service Manager – Customer Services.</p> |
| 19 | <p><u>Schools Corporate Governance</u></p> <p>A number of issues have arisen with regard to financial governance within schools, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to maintain an up-to-date Financial Regulations for Schools | | | <p>Issues regarding schools financial governance were brought to the attention of the Director of Finance; however remedial action has been delayed due to the issues arising from the implementation of the new finance system.</p> | <p>Schools Financial Regulations and Delegations are currently under review, with a draft Scheme to be presented to the Schools Forum.</p> <p>Target Date: End of September 2014.</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clarity with regard to the roles and responsibilities of the Trading with Schools function. Issues identified by Internal Audit with regard to governance, both finance and operational, within schools. | | | | <p>Appointment of a permanent Trading With Schools Service Manager - Complete</p> <p>Guidance for Schools who may be in financial difficulty to be rolled out. Target Date: End of October 2014</p> <p>Roles and Responsibilities to be refreshed and rolled out. Target Date: End of October 2014</p> <p>TWS to provide greater support to Schools who are experiencing difficulties. Target Date: Ongoing</p> <p>Service Director for Education Service Director: Finance</p> |



Bristol City Council

Code of

Corporate Governance

September 2014

Bristol City Council

Local Code of Corporate Governance

Index

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| Version | Reviewed By: | Review Date |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Full Council | 13 th January 2009 |
| 2 | Audit and Standards Committees | 9 th April 2010 |
| 3 | Audit and Standards Committees | 1st April 2011 |
| 4 | Audit Committee | 29 th June 2012 |
| 5 | Audit Committee | 28 th June 2013 |
| 6 | Audit Committee | 23 rd September 2014 |

1 What is Corporate Governance?

- 1.1** The Corporate Governance framework comprises of the systems and processes, culture and values by which an organisation is directed and controlled. For local authorities this includes how a council relates to the community it serves.
- 1.2** Good Corporate Governance requires the authority to be open, transparent, effective, inclusive of all sectors of the community, accountable to the public it serves and to demonstrate integrity.
- 1.3** This Code is a public statement of the ways in which the Council will achieve good corporate governance.

2 What is the purpose of Bristol City Council's Code of Corporate Governance and who should be complying with it?

- 2.1** By publishing a Code of Corporate Governance, the Council is demonstrating its commitment to ensuring the high quality of its public services.
- 2.2** By promoting the principles of openness, accountability, integrity and effective governance, the Council encourages public trust.
- 2.3** The Code provides the public with greater awareness of the Council's arrangements and equips them with the knowledge to question the Council's plans and actions, thereby becoming more involved in the running of their city.
- 2.4** The Code provides officers with an overview of the Council's governance arrangements and with the principles of good governance that each service and employee should be ensuring are in place.

3 The Principles of Corporate Governance

The Code is based around six principles which were identified in the joint publication by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). Their published guidance 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' identified the following as the essential criteria for the provision of good governance.

1. Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area
2. Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles
3. Promoting values for the Authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour

4. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk
5. Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective
6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

4 The following paragraphs provide details of how the council supports the 6 principles

4.1 Focusing on the purpose of the Council and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision of the local area.

4.1.1 The Council will communicate its purpose and vision and its intended outcomes for the citizens and service users of Bristol by:

- ➔ Publishing a three year Corporate PPlan and Medium Term Financial Strategy, which aligns our resources and activities behind our priorities and the Mayor's vision for the city Communication of the Mayor's Priorities and Vision for Bristol on the BCC website as part of the budget consultation.
- ➔ The Council being statutorily accountable for establishing the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Safeguarding Children's and Adults Board.
- ➔ Promoting a safer city through the work of the Safer Bristol Partnership.
- ➔ Publishing an Annual Review Report which incorporates performance against key measures.
- ➔ Providing the latest Council news through Our City online including current events around the city, news items relevant to the city and opportunities for readers to have their say on Bristol events.
- ➔ Working in partnership with other Authorities and the business community with shared vision and priorities for the sub-region in the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- ➔ Engaging with the fourteen Neighbourhood Partnerships.
- ➔ Operating the 'One Council' approach to ensure clear business drivers that will shape the direction and scope of the Council over the long term.

4.1.2 The Council will ensure that users receive a high quality of service whether provided directly, or in partnership, or by commissioning by:

- ➔ Maintaining a Citizen's Panel which was set up in 1998 and currently has approximately 2,000 members. The panel provides members with information on previous consultations as well as details of upcoming issues through feedback newsletters.
- ➔ Providing a complaints/comments procedure (Fair Comment), and utilising the resulting information to identify areas where service quality is not satisfactory in order to take action to bring about an improvement.
- ➔ Administrating "Enabling Commissioning Framework" which provides guidance and training for commissioners, identifying best practice and ensuring increased

efficiency and economy.

- ➔ Taking action upon weaknesses identified as a result of both internal and external reviews, for example Internal and External Audit, Ofsted, CSCI etc.
- ➔ Giving the citizens of Bristol access to their Council and the services it provides through Customer Service Points and the external website.
- ➔ Implementing a 'Customer Portal' for the external website which has been developed based around key life events for the customer with the aim of improving engagement with customers.
- ➔ Actively engaging staff in customer focus and providing appropriate training and development opportunities.

4.1.3 The Council will ensure it makes the best use of resources and that council tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money by:

- ➔ Promoting Value for Money as a key part of Business Planning and Service Redesign as part of everyday working.
- ➔ Developing a 3 year budget to enable a more strategic, long-term approach to policy and decision making.
- ➔ Progressing a Change Programme, which has consolidating all change proposals into one portfolio, is managed by one Change Board and chaired by the Strategic Director for Business Change. The Board provides a robust monitoring and challenge regime of work the 6 core work streams and appended project streams, thereby ensuring the proposed changes are actioned within predicted timescales and achieve value for money.
- ➔ Benchmarking with other Local Authorities where appropriate.
- ➔ Reviewing the performance framework and streamlining the performance reporting protocol in order to maximise use of management information and make best use of limited resources.
- ➔ Providing for public scrutiny of the budget proposals through 'Bristol's Budget Conversation'.
- ➔ Maximising the economic well being of Bristol citizens within global conditions.

4.2 Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

4.2.1 The Council will ensure that there is effective leadership with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for executive, non-executive and scrutiny functions by:

- ➔ Election of a Mayor and the establishment of the Executive consisting of the Mayor and his Cabinet Members and newly appointed Cabinet Advisors.
- ➔ Maintaining a Constitution which sets out the roles and responsibilities of both Members and officers, including a Scheme of Delegation which is updated annually.
- ➔ Appointing committees to discharge the Council's regulatory and scrutiny responsibilities.
- ➔ Providing all Committees with clear terms of reference and work programme to set out their roles and responsibilities.
- ➔ Appointing a Head of Paid Service (the City Director) and Strategic Leadership

Team, and ensuring all staff have clear conditions of employment and job descriptions which set out their roles and responsibilities.

- ➔ Appointing a Monitoring Officer (the Head of Legal Services), who carries overall responsibility for legal compliance, working closely with other officers to advise on requirements.
- ➔ Appointing to the other Statutory roles of :
 - Section 151 Officer
 - Director of Children and Adult Services
 - Director of Public Health; and
 - Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO)
- ➔ Providing the opportunity for the statutory officers to meet on a six weekly basis to discuss matters relevant to their statutory roles and responsibilities. Providing opportunities for the Mayor, Cabinet and Scrutiny members to come together both formally and informally, to ensure the Council's business is conducted appropriately.

4.2.2 The Council will ensure that a constructive working relationship exists between Council Members and officers and the responsibilities of said Members and officers are carried out to a high standard by:

- ➔ Maintaining a Members/Officers protocol within the Constitution which describes and regulates the way in which Members and Officers should interact to work effectively together.
- ➔ Maintaining a Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) made up of Strategic Directors that meets every week to discuss matters which are of strategic and operational importance to the Council.
- ➔ The introduction of the Executive Board where the Strategic Leadership Team, Mayor and Cabinet Members will meet regularly.
- ➔ Scheduling Extended Leadership Team meetings and Management briefs to ensure good communication of key issues and values.
- ➔ The Service Director Finance (Section 151 Officer) and the Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer), who are not members of SLT having an open invitation to attend when necessary and receiving all papers.
- ➔ Maintaining a performance management system for all staff including senior officers.
- ➔ Adopting Codes of Conduct for Members and officers, to which all must adhere.
- ➔ Maintaining a Scrutiny Function, which provide overview and scrutiny of all Council activities and operates a call in facility.
- ➔ Maintaining an Audit Committee with the responsibility for overseeing the governance arrangements within the Council and has responsibility for overseeing the behaviour of Members.
- ➔ Encouraging Members to attend training and development opportunities in order for them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.
- ➔ Officers providing the Executive Members with fortnightly briefings.

4.2.3 The Council will ensure that its relationships with its partners and the public are clear so that each knows what to expect of the other by:

- ➔ Ensuring Strategic Partnerships have clear Terms of Reference that form part of the Constitution.

- ➔ Being the accountable body and supporting a partnership agreement for all the formal strategic partnerships the Council is involved with, detailing the vision, objectives, the partners' roles and a resolution protocol for any disputes.
- ➔ Adopting good governance principles for key strategic partnerships
- ➔ Providing links to external strategic partnerships via the Bristol website.

4.3 Promoting the Council's values and upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

4.3.1 The Council strives to ensure its Members and officers exercise leadership by behaving in a way that exemplifies a high standard of conduct and effective governance by:

- ➔ Ensuring adherence to Codes of Conduct which include a requirement for declarations of interest to be completed by all Members annually, by all new staff, and biennially by staff working in sensitive areas or paid above a certain grade.
- ➔ Providing details of the standards of conduct required of Members within the Council's Constitution.
- ➔ Monitoring the conduct of Members through the Audit Committee, which is also responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct by Members where the Monitoring Officer deems appropriate.

4.3.2 The Council will ensure its values are put into practice and are effective by:

- ➔ Having a clear decision-making protocol contained within the Constitution.
- ➔ Providing an Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Policy for all Members and staff.
- ➔ Having a Whistleblowing Policy which is available to both Members and staff.
- ➔ Upholding an Equalities policy.
- ➔ Maintaining clear performance management arrangements for officers.

4.4 Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.

4.4.1 The Council will be rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken by:

- ➔ The Full Council setting the policy and the budget framework. Within this framework, all key decisions are made by the Mayor in consultation with the Cabinet.
- ➔ The decision-making process being scrutinised by a scrutiny function which also undertakes pre-decision and policy development work.
- ➔ Providing access to meetings, including web casts of Council meetings.
- ➔ The provision of a Public Forum agenda item at all Committee meetings, giving the public and Members the opportunity to raise issues of public interest related to the business of the Council.
- ➔ A consultation process for specific areas with the provision for the citizens of Bristol to have their say through e-consultation which is available on the Council

website.

- Publishing the Mayor's Forward Plan on the Bristol website and elsewhere, giving Bristol citizens access to details of forthcoming key decisions.

4.4.2 The Council will ensure good quality information, advice and support is provided to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs by:

- All key decisions made by the Mayor in consultation with Cabinet being on the basis of written reports, including assessments of the legal and financial implications, policy, equalities and environmental impact assessments, and consideration of the risks involved and how these will be managed.
- The Senior Leadership Team reviewing all key decision reports to ensure they are of good quality prior to their submission to the Executive.
- Scrutiny having the power to call in a decision if they feel it is made without proper consideration of accurate and relevant information.
- Publishing performance information on a regular basis.
- Making use of comparative data and participating in benchmarking where available and appropriate.
- Making provision for Members and public questions at full Council meetings.
- Providing numerous avenues for public participation including: Neighbourhood Partnerships; Citizens Panel; Tenants Groups; and libraries.
- Providing Bristol citizens with advice to maximise economic well being, including links to guidance and support networks through the BCC website.
- Implementing a Citizen Index which will improve the way we collect customer data and reduce the need to collect the same data more than once.

4.4.3 The Council will ensure all information collected, held, processed and used by the Council is held safely and securely by:

- Adopting an Information Security Policy.
- Nominating a member of the Strategic Leadership Team as Senior Information Risk Owner.
- Ensuring that all Information Security Breaches are recorded and resolved.
- Ensuring all staff are trained and aware of their data security responsibilities.
- Maintaining an Information Assurance Board to resolve any issues and set priorities for improvement.
- Introduction of a secure e-mail solution to non-governmental bodies.

4.4.4 The Council will ensure that an effective risk management system is in place by:

- Adopting a Risk Management Strategy which sets out a clear plan for consolidating, progressing and further embedding risk management into the culture of Council working.
- Adopting a Risk Management Policy statement which outlines the aims and key principles for managing risk, provides an overview of the framework and describes the mechanisms for its successful implementation.
- Maintaining a Corporate Risk Register which is reviewed by the Strategic

Leadership Team, the Extended Leadership Team and Members on a regular basis to endorse the content and validate the extent to which the risks included are being effectively managed.

- ➔ Requiring each directorate within the Council to maintain a Directorate Risk Register with the Strategic Directors to having overall responsibility for the directorate register and risk management processes.
- ➔ Requiring risk in decision making, projects and service delivery planning to be properly identified, evaluated and managed.
- ➔ Directorate Scrutiny Commissions having scrutiny responsibility for directorate risk registers.
- ➔ The Audit Committee overseeing the effectiveness of risk management arrangements and providing assurance to the Council in this respect in their annual report.
- ➔ Providing risk management training to Members and officers where appropriate.
- ➔ Providing Risk Management guidance on the Council's intranet.
- ➔ Undertaking a review of risk management practices both within the Council and at other Local Authorities and private sector organisations to identify improvements to the Council's arrangements where appropriate.

4.4.5 The Council will strive to ensure that Members are utilising their legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in their area by:

- ➔ Clearly documenting the roles and responsibilities of Members and the scope of their activities within the Constitution.
- ➔ Appointing a Monitoring Officer, whose responsibilities include the maintenance of the Constitution and the guidance to Members contained therein.
- ➔ Regularly reviewing Ombudsman and external audit reports to identify areas where improvements should be made.
- ➔ Members and directorates having legal advice available when required.
- ➔ Having an appeals/complaints systems which is available to the citizens of Bristol, details of which can be accessed through the Council website and other methods.

4.5 Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective

4.5.1 The Council will ensure that Members and officers have the skills, knowledge and experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles by:

- ➔ Developing and delivering a Councillor Development Programme to enhance and strengthen members' capacity as confident and effective political and community leaders. This includes the following and is underpinned by the Councillor Development Policy:
 - Providing a dedicated induction programme to newly elected members of the council
 - Providing a Refresher Programme of training for Members and a Core Skills Programme
 - The Councillor Development Steering Group (represented by all political groups) reviews the effectiveness of training and areas to be included in

the Core Skills Programme

- Issuing all members with the councillor handbook, A Guide to Being a Bristol City Councillor.
- Leadership development is offered to members via Political Group Leaders Core Skills Framework Programme jointly with neighbouring authorities offering core skills development such as chairing, public speaking, etc. The Joint Unitary Authority Councillor Development Group reviews effectiveness of training with neighbouring authorities.
- Providing briefings to members on relevant topics.
- ➔ Operating a Performance Management and Development Scheme which manages performance and development needs for each member of staff . The existing process is currently under review with a planned redesign in order to ensure that it is fit for purpose into the future. The review will include redesigning the process to ensure that individual performance measures and targets are more clearly aligned to roles and the Council's priorities.
- ➔ Providing new staff with an induction into the Council processes, offering cross cutting training and development to all staff.
- ➔ Ensuring all employees have a job description which clearly details their roles and responsibilities.
- ➔ Ensuring that Statutory Officers such as the Monitoring Officer and the s151 Officer have clear job descriptions and personal specification of their responsibilities.
- ➔ Requiring senior officers to consider resource implication when collating their plans.
- ➔ .

4.5.2 The Council will evaluate the performance of the people with governance responsibilities as individuals and as a group by:

- ➔ Maintaining a Councillor Development Programme.
- ➔ Offering the facility for Members to participate in individual 1:1 meetings with their group leaders to review their areas of interest and identify areas they would like to develop.
- ➔ Evaluating the effectiveness of the Audit Committee and reporting annually on the impact of their work.
- ➔ Mentoring, monitoring and management arrangements for officers to ensure they are performing effectively
- ➔ Giving recognition to Council staff who have exceeded their remit through an annual Celebration of Success.

4.5.3 The Council encourages new talent for membership of the Authority so that best use can be made of individuals' skills and resources in balancing continuity and renewal by:

- ➔ Supporting appropriate groups that have a primary role in encouraging new talent and representatives of all sections of the community to stand election as Members of the Council.
- ➔ Supporting Equalities Forums, Citizens Panels, and Stakeholder Engagement .
- ➔ Ensuring open recruitment of school governors, encouraging participation of

members of the community with varying skills. Supporting recruitment with appropriate training.

- ➔ Encouraging engagement in the 'Bristol Big Youth Vote' to elect young people onto the Bristol City Youth Council and the UK Youth Parliament. The democratically elected youth representatives receive the mandate from Bristol's children and young people to act as their representatives and advocates in arenas that matter.
- ➔ Providing training opportunities through the Bristol Apprentices scheme
- ➔ Working in partnership with the University of the West of England (UWE) to offer subsidised student internships.

4.6 Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

4.6.1 The Council will exercise leadership which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships, and develops constructive, accountable relationships by:

- ➔ Supporting Neighbourhood Partnerships to provide a focus for community engagement
- ➔ Providing the citizens of Bristol with information about the Council and its spending through the distribution of a leaflet with their Council Tax bill and the publication of a summary of the year end accounts on the Bristol City Council website.
- ➔ Publishing the three year budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan on the Bristol City Council website.
- ➔

4.6.2 The Council will take an active approach to dialogue with, and accountability to, the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery whether directly by the Authority, in partnership or by commissioning by:

- ➔ The Council being statutorily accountable for establishing the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Safeguarding Children's and Adults Board.
- ➔ Promoting a safer city through the work of the Safer Bristol Partnership and a learning city through its participation in the Learning City Partnership.
- ➔ The Council participating in the Bristol Property Board, which is chaired by the Mayor and whose aim is to achieve strategic cooperation regarding assets across the city so that participants manage their assets in a joined-up way.
- ➔ Maintaining and following the Council's Code of Good Practice on Consultation.
- ➔ Provide the citizens of Bristol with the opportunity to have their say through e-consultation, Ask Bristol and E-petitions and by participating in Citizen's Panels, or by completing a satisfaction survey where appropriate.
- ➔ Providing web casts of Full Council meetings on the Bristol City Council website in order to keep Bristol's citizens up-to-date.
- ➔ Maintaining an Equalities Forum.
- ➔ Supporting a Corporate Consultation Team and providing a Consultation Finder on the Bristol City Council website.

- ➔ All Cabinet reports containing a "Consultation" section.
- ➔ All Members being expected to offer, as best practice, surgeries, or equivalent means of providing assistance, for their constituents and key partners (eg. Police) could be involved where appropriate.
- ➔ The Council's planning and decision making process being designed to include consultation with stakeholders and the submission of views by local people including publishing applications on the website.
- ➔ Maintaining a comprehensive complaints/appeals procedure.
- ➔ Maintaining a Freedom of Information policy and acting upon requests in a timely manner.
- ➔ Maintaining a relationship and providing support to the Bristol Members of the UK Youth Parliament.
- ➔ Participating in outreach work with ethnic groups.
- ➔ Publishing the Council's performance annually.
- ➔ Striving to ensure good information exchange within the Council and with external partners, with the provision of an internal intranet site and an external website, which is accessible to our partners and the citizens of Bristol.

4.6.3 The Council will make the best of human resources by taking an active and planned approach to meeting responsibilities of staff by:

- ➔ Maintaining comprehensive consultation arrangements with the Trade Unions.
- ➔ Having an agreed consultation procedure for managing change.
- ➔ Maintaining and reviewing its Performance Management Development Scheme that requires all staff to participate in an annual development review.
- ➔ Maintaining comprehensive and effective HR policies including an Equalities policy.
- ➔ Accessing staff opinions through staff surveys including Health at Work Surveys.
- ➔ Working in partnership with local colleges, to maximise the number of opportunities for apprenticeships within the Council.
- ➔ Creating the tools, culture and working environments to enhance the way that officers serve the people of Bristol through the Bristol Workplace Programme.
- ➔ Operating the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). This service which is available to all employees provides help through a variety of ways to deal with personal issues that may have an impact on their work performance, health, and general well-being

5 Monitoring and Review

5.1 Good corporate governance requires the active participation of both Members and employees across the Council.

In order to ensure that this Code is effectively maintained and embedded within the Council, the following monitoring review procedures will apply.

Internal Audit will have the responsibility for:

- ➔ Ensuring the Code is maintained as a living document.

- Undertaking an annual review of internal control and governance, utilising assurance statements from the statutory officers and other appropriate senior staff
- Utilising the annual review to prepare a draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and implementing any changes to the Code identified by the AGS process.

5.2 The Audit Committee will have responsibility for providing assurance to Council in respect of:

- the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements, risk management framework and internal control environment, including overseeing:
 - risk management strategies
 - anti-fraud arrangements
 - whistleblowing strategies
 - Internal and External Audit Activities
- the effectiveness of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent it affects exposure to risk and poor internal control
- the approval of the Annual Governance Statement
- the review and approval of the annual statement of accounts, confirming the appropriate accounting policies have been followed, including the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts



Bristol City Council

Code of

Corporate Governance

June-September 20132014

Bristol City Council

Local Code of Corporate Governance

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1 What is Corporate Governance?

- 1.1** The Corporate Governance framework comprises of the systems and processes, culture and values by which an organisation is directed and controlled. For local authorities this includes how a council relates to the community it serves.
- 1.2** Good Corporate Governance requires the authority to be open, transparent, effective, inclusive of all sectors of the community, accountable to the public it serves and to demonstrate integrity.
- 1.3** This Code is a public statement of the ways in which the Council will achieve good corporate governance.

2 What is the purpose of Bristol City Council's Code of Corporate Governance and who should be complying with it?

- 2.1** By publishing a Code of Corporate Governance, the Council is demonstrating its commitment to ensuring the high quality of its public services.
- 2.2** By promoting the principles of openness, accountability, integrity and effective governance, the Council encourages public trust.
- 2.3** The Code provides the public with greater awareness of the Council's arrangements and equips them with the knowledge to question the Council's plans and actions, thereby becoming more involved in the running of their city.
- 2.4** The Code provides officers with an overview of the Council's governance arrangements and with the principles of good governance that each service and employee should be ensuring are in place.

3 The Principles of Corporate Governance

The Code is based around six principles which were identified in the joint publication by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). Their published guidance 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' identified the following as the essential criteria for the provision of good governance.

1. Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area
2. Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles
3. Promoting values for the Authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour

4. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk
5. Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective
6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

4 The following paragraphs provide details of how the council supports the 6 principles

4.1 Focusing on the purpose of the Council and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision of the local area.

4.1.1 The Council will communicate its purpose and vision and its intended outcomes for the citizens and service users of Bristol by:

- Publishing a three year Corporate Priorities Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan Strategy, which aligns our resources and activities behind our priorities and the Mayor's vision for the city which details the key outcomes the Council has for the city of Bristol and its citizens over the period.
- Communication of the Mayor's Priorities and Vision for Bristol on the BCC website as part of the budget consultation.
- Maintaining regular communications across multiple media internally and externally.
- Playing a leading role in the: Children and Young People's Trust Board Bristol Safeguarding Board; Health and Wellbeing Board; and the Safer Bristol Board. Working together with strategic partners and citizens to promote Bristol as one of the top twenty cities in Europe, with the Bristol 20:20 plan.
- The Council being statutorily accountable for establishing the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Safeguarding Children's and Adults Board.
- Promoting a safer city through the work of the Safer Bristol Partnership.
- Publishing an Annual Review Report which incorporates performance against key measures.
- Publishing on-line the Council's newsletter on the Bristol City Council website which clearly communicates the vision and priorities of the Council. Providing the latest Council news through Our City online including current events around the city, news items relevant to the city and opportunities for readers to have their say on Bristol events, with web facilities available in libraries, for viewing.
- Working in partnership with other Authorities and the business community with shared vision and priorities for the sub-region in the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Developing and Engaging with the fourteen Neighbourhood Partnerships.
- Operating the 'One Council' Target Operating Model approach to ensure clear business drivers that will shape the direction and scope of the Council over the long term.

4.1.2 The Council will ensure that users receive a high quality of service whether provided directly, or in partnership, or by commissioning by:

- Maintaining a Citizen's Panel which was set up in 1998 and currently has approximately 2,000 members. The panel provides members with, and conducting service user satisfaction surveys, publishing the results appropriately providing information on previous consultations as well as details of upcoming issues through feedback newsletters.
- Providing a complaints/comments procedure (Fair Comment), and utilising the resulting information to identify areas where service quality is not satisfactory in order to take action to bring about an improvement.
- ~~Maintaining joint Commissioning Arrangements with the National Health Service.~~
- Administrating "Enabling Commissioning Framework" Undertaking a Strategic Commissioning Programme, which will look at what the Council will commission, how we will do it, who will do it and how we will monitor it. provides guidance and training for commissioners, identifying best practice and ensuring increased efficiency and economy.
- Taking action upon weaknesses identified as a result of both internal and external reviews, for example Internal and External Audit, Ofsted, CSCI etc.
- Giving the citizens of Bristol access to their Council and the services it provides through Customer Service Points and the external website.
- Implementing a Customer Strategy which is looking to improve customer access points into the Council. A 'Customer Portal' for the external website which has been is currently being developed based around key life events for the customer and how with the aim of to improve engagement with customers.
- Actively engaging staff in customer focus and providing appropriate training and development opportunities.

4.1.3 The Council will ensure it makes the best use of resources and that ~~the~~ council tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money by:

- Promoting Maintaining a Value for Money Strategy which ensures that Value for Money is as a key part of Business Planning and Service Redesign and promotes Value for Money as part of everyday working.
- ~~Producing an annual Environmental Statement.~~
- ~~Publishing a 3 year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).~~
- Developing a 3 year budget to enable a more strategic, long-term approach to policy and decision making.
- Progressing a Transformation Change Programme, which has consolidating consolidating all change proposals into one portfolio, is managed by one Change Board and chaired by the Strategic Director for Business Change. The Board provides a robust monitoring and challenge regime of work the 6 core work streams and appended project streams, thereby ensuring the proposed changes are actioned within predicted timescales and achieve value for money, which has already resulted in efficiency savings and will continue to do so thereby increase the Value for Money received by the citizens of Bristol.
- Benchmarking with other Local Authorities where appropriate.
- Reviewing the performance framework and streamlining the performance reporting protocol in order to maximise use of management information and

make best use of limited resources.

- ➔ Providing for Public scrutiny of the budget proposals through 'Bristol's Budget Conversation'.
- ➔ ~~Adopting best practice in commissioning and procurement~~
- ➔ ~~Undertaking a Strategic Commissioning Programme which will review all of the Council's activity to ensure the right service is being provided by the right people for the right price.~~
- ➔ Maximising the economic well being of Bristol citizens within global conditions.
- ➔ ~~Implementing the Intelligent Council Programme which will improve the way we collect, process and distribute management information.~~

4.2 Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

4.2.1 The Council will ensure that there is effective leadership with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for executive, non-executive and scrutiny functions by:

- ➔ Election of a Mayor and the establishment of the Executive consisting of the Mayor and his Cabinet Members and newly appointed Cabinet Advisors.
- ➔ ~~Establishing an Executive Board which will consist of the Senior Leadership Team, the Mayor and selected Members to ensure good communication and clear vision.~~
- ➔ Maintaining a Constitution which sets out the roles and responsibilities of both Members and officers, including a Scheme of Delegation which is updated annually.
- ➔ Appointing committees to discharge the Council's regulatory and scrutiny responsibilities.
- ➔ Providing all Committees with clear terms of reference and work programme to set out their roles and responsibilities.
- ➔ Appointing a Head of Paid Service (the City Director) ~~(and Head of Paid Service)~~ and Strategic Leadership Team, and ensuring all staff have clear conditions of employment and job descriptions which set out their roles and responsibilities.
- ➔ Appointing a Monitoring Officer (the Head of Legal Services), who carries overall responsibility for legal compliance, working closely with other officers to advise on requirements.
- ➔ Appointing to the other Statutory roles of :
 - ✘ Section 151 Officer
 - ✘ Director of Children and Adult Services
 - ✘ Director of Public Health; and
 - ✘ Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO)
- ➔ ~~Providing the opportunity for the statutory officers to meet on a six weekly basis to discuss matters relevant to their statutory roles and responsibilities.~~
- ➔ Providing opportunities for the Mayor, Cabinet and Scrutiny members to come together both formally and informally, to ensure the Council's business is conducted appropriately.

4.2.2 The Council will ensure that a constructive working relationship exists between Council Members and officers and the responsibilities of said Members and officers are carried out to a high standard by:

- ➔ Maintaining a Members/Officers protocol within the Constitution which describes and regulates the way in which Members and Officers should interact to work effectively together.
- ➔ ~~Introducing 'You Can Do It' scheme for delegations and authorisations which promotes trust and empowerment and provides clear and simple information to direct officers in carrying out their responsibilities.~~
- ➔ Maintaining a Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) made up of -Strategic Directors that meets every week to discuss matters which are of strategic and operational importance to the Council.
- ➔ The introduction of the Executive Board where the Strategic Leadership Team, Mayor and ~~selected Members~~Cabinet Members will meet regularly.
- ➔ Scheduling Extended Leadership Team meetings and Management briefs to ensure good communication of key issues and values.
- ➔ The Service Director Finance (Section 151 Officer) and the Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer), who are not members of SLT having an open invitation to attend when necessary and receiving all papers.
- ➔ Maintaining a performance management system for all staff including senior officers.
- ➔ Adopting Codes of Conduct for Members and officers, to which all must adhere.
- ➔ Maintaining a Scrutiny Function, which provide overview and scrutiny of all Council activities and operates a call in facility.
- ➔ Maintaining an Audit Committee with the responsibility for overseeing the governance arrangements within the Council and has responsibility for overseeing the behaviour of Members.
- ➔ Encouraging Members to attend training and development opportunities in order for them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.
- ➔ Officers providing the Executive Memberss with fortnightly briefings.

4.2.3 The Council will ensure that its relationships with its partners and the public are clear so that each knows what to expect of the other by:

- ➔ ~~Adopting a policy for partnership working to ensure that there are clear governance arrangements and accountabilities when the Council is working with partners~~
- ➔ Ensuring Strategic Partnerships have clear Terms of Reference that form part of the Constitution.
- ➔ Being the accountable body and supporting a partnership agreement for all the formal strategic partnerships the Council is involved with, ~~including the Bristol Partnership~~, detailing the vision, objectives, the partners' roles and a resolution protocol for any disputes.
- ➔ Adopting good governance principles for key strategic partnerships
- ➔ Providing links to external strategic partnerships via the Bristol website.

4.3 Promoting the Council's values and upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.



4.3.1 The Council strives to ensure its Members and officers exercise leadership by behaving in a way that exemplifies a high standard of conduct and effective governance by:

- Ensuring adherence to Codes of Conduct which include a requirement for declarations of interest to be completed by all Members annually, by all new staff, and biennially by staff working in sensitive areas or paid above a certain grade.
- Providing details of the standards of conduct required of Members within the Council's Constitution.
- Monitoring the conduct of Members through the Audit Committee, which is also responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct by Members where the Monitoring Officer deems appropriate.

4.3.2 The Council will ensure its values are put into practice and are effective by:

- Having a clear decision-making protocol contained within the Constitution.
- Providing an Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Policy for all Members and staff., ~~with regular reminders of its existence through the Intranet and Fraud Bulletins.~~
- ~~Having clear and concise Financial and Procurement Regulations in place which are regularly updated.~~
- ~~Maintaining~~Having a Whistleblowing Policy which is readily available to both Members and staff.
- Upholding an Equalities policy.
- Maintaining clear performance management arrangements for officers.

4.4 Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.

4.4.1 The Council will be rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken by:

- The Full Council setting the policy and the budget framework. Within this framework, all key decisions are made by the Mayor in consultation with the Cabinet.
- The decision-making process being scrutinised by a scrutiny function which also undertakes pre-decision and policy development work.
- Providing access to meetings, including web casts of Council meetings.
- The provision of a Public Forum agenda item at all Committee meetings, giving the public and Members the opportunity to raise issues of public interest related to the business of the Council.
- A consultation process for specific areas with the provision for the citizens of Bristol to have their say through e-consultation which is available on the Council website.
- Publishing the Mayor's Forward Plan on the Bristol website and elsewhere, giving Bristol citizens access to details of forthcoming key decisions.

4.4.2 The Council will ensure good quality information, advice and support is provided to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs by:

- ➔ All key decisions made by the Mayor in consultation with Cabinet being on the basis of written reports, including assessments of the legal and financial implications, policy, equalities and environmental impact assessments, and consideration of the risks involved and how these will be managed.
- ➔ The Senior Leadership Team reviewing all key decision reports to ensure they are of good quality prior to their submission to the Executive.
- ➔ Scrutiny having the power to call in a decision if they feel it is made without proper consideration of accurate and relevant information.
- ➔ Publishing performance information on a regular basis.
- ➔ Making use of comparative data and participating in benchmarking where available and appropriate.
- ~~➔ Having a mechanism in place to make effective use of management information to inform where improvement in quality is required.~~
- ➔ Making provision for Members and public questions at full Council meetings.
- ➔ Providing numerous avenues for public participation including: Neighbourhood Partnerships; Citizens Panel; Tenants Groups; and ~~surveys including libraries, young people and public forums.~~
- ➔ Providing Bristol citizens with advice to maximise economic well being, including links to guidance and support networks through the BCC website.
- ~~➔ Implementing the Intelligent Council Programme which will improve the way we collect, process and distribute management information.~~
- ➔ Implementing a Citizen Index which will improve the way we collect customer data and reduce the need to collect the same data more than once.

4.4.3 The Council will ensure all information collected, held, processed and used by the Council is held safely and securely by:

- ➔ Adopting an Information Security Policy.
- ➔ Nominating a member of the Strategic Leadership Team as Senior Information Risk Owner.
- ➔ Ensuring that all Information Security Breaches are recorded and resolved.
- ➔ Ensuring all staff are trained and aware of their data security responsibilities.
- ➔ Maintaining an Information Assurance Board ~~and an Information Management and Technology Steering Group~~ to resolve any issues and set priorities for improvement.
- ➔ Introduction of a secure e-mail solution to non-governmental bodies.

4.4.4 The Council will ensure that an effective risk management system is in place by:

- ➔ Adopting a Risk Management Strategy which sets out a clear plan for consolidating, progressing and further embedding risk management into the culture of Council working.
- ➔ Adopting a Risk Management Policy statement which outlines the aims and key principles for managing risk, provides an overview of the framework and describes the mechanisms for its successful implementation.

- Maintaining a Corporate Risk Register which is reviewed by the Strategic Leadership Team, the Extended Leadership Team and Members on a regular basis to endorse the content and validate the extent to which the risks included are being effectively managed.
- Requiring each directorate within the Council to maintain a Directorate Risk Register with the Strategic Directors to haveing overall responsibility and to nominate a Risk Management "champion" tofor the maintain their directorate register and risk management processes.
- ~~→ Supporting a Corporate Risk Management Group which includes the relevant Executive Member and is chaired by the corporate officer 'champion', who meet to identify best practice in respect of risk management and provides opportunities for sharing learning across departments.~~
- Requiring risk in decision making, projects and service delivery planning to be properly identified, evaluated and managed.
- ~~→ The Audit Committee overseeing the effectiveness of risk management arrangements and providing assurance to the Council in this respect in their annual report. Directorate Scrutiny Commissions having scrutiny responsibility for directorate risk registers.~~
- ~~→ The Audit Committee overseeing the effectiveness of risk management arrangements and providing assurance to the Council in this respect in their annual report.~~
- Providing risk management training to Members and officers where appropriate.
- Providing Risk Management guidance on the Council's intranet, including guidance on risk within partnerships.
- Undertaking a review of risk management practices both within the Council and at other Local Authorities and private sector organisations to identify improvements to the Council's arrangements where appropriate.

4.4.5 The Council will strive to ensure that Members are utilising their legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in their area by:

- Clearly documenting the roles and responsibilities of Members and the scope of their activities within the Constitution.
- Appointing a Monitoring Officer, who'swhose responsibilities include the maintenance of the Constitution and the guidance to Members contained therein.
- Regularly reviewing Ombudsman and external audit reports to identify areas where improvements should be made.
- ~~→ Providing Members and directorates with Legal briefings on changes in legislation and~~ having legal advice available when required.
- Having an appeals/complaints systems which is available to the citizens of Bristol, details of which can be accessed through the Council website and other methods.

4.5 Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective

4.5.1 The Council will ensure that Members and officers have the skills, knowledge and experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles by:

- Developing and delivering a ~~comprehensive~~ Councillor Development Programme to enhance and strengthen members' capacity as confident and effective political and community leaders. This includes the following and is underpinned by the Councillor Development Policy:
 - Providing a dedicated induction programme to newly elected members of the council
 - Providing a Refresher Programme of training for Members and a Core Skills Programme
 - The Councillor Development Steering Group (represented by all political groups) reviews the effectiveness of training and areas to be included in the Core Skills Programme
 - Issuing all members with the councillor handbook, A Guide to Being a Bristol City Councillor.
 - Leadership development is offered to members via Political Group Leaders Core Skills Framework Programme jointly with neighbouring authorities offering core skills development such as chairing, public speaking, etc. The Joint Unitary Authority Councillor Development Group reviews effectiveness of training with neighbouring authorities.
 - Providing briefings to members on relevant topics.

→ ~~Providing a corporate development programme for officers including secondment opportunities across the Council.~~

→ ~~Operating a Performance Management & Development Scheme (PMDS) for all Council employees which incorporates an annual Personal Development Plan (PDP).~~

→ Operating a Performance Management and Development Scheme which manages performance and development needs for each member of staff . The existing process is currently under review with a planned redesign in order to ensure that it is fit for purpose into the future. The review will include redesigning the process to ensure that individual performance measures and targets are more clearly aligned to roles and the Council's priorities.

- Providing new staff with an induction into the Council processes, offering cross cutting training and development to all staff.
- Ensuring all employees have a job description which clearly details their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensuring that Statutory Officers such as the Monitoring Officer and the s151 Officer have clear job descriptions and personal specification of their responsibilities.
- Requiring senior officers to consider resource implication when collating their plans.

→ ~~Commencing the People Programme which looks to ensure that the Council has the right people with the right skills set are in the right jobs at the right time. The Programme is also addressing improvements in internal communication and engagement.~~

→ ~~Introduction of the Bristol Leadership Pipeline, an accessible at-a-glance practical guide to what good leadership looks like and how to develop the~~

~~necessary skills which is linked to the PMDS process.~~

4.5.2 The Council will evaluate the performance of the people with governance responsibilities as individuals and as a group by:

- ➔ Maintaining a Councillor Development Programme.
- ➔ Offering the facility for Members to participate in individual 1:1 meetings with their group leaders to review their areas of interest and identify areas they would like to develop.
- ➔ Evaluating the effectiveness of the Audit Committee and reporting annually on the impact of their work.
- ~~➔ Operating performance arrangements for the Strategic Leadership Team.~~
- ➔ Mentoring, monitoring and management arrangements for officers to ensure they are performing effectively
- ~~➔ Making provision for internal secondment opportunities to enable officers to acquire skills outside their normal remit.~~
- ➔ Giving recognition to Council staff who have exceeded their remit through an annual Celebration of Success.

4.5.3 The Council ~~attempts to~~ encourages new talent for membership of the Authority so that best use can be made of individuals' skills and resources in balancing continuity and renewal by:

- ➔ Supporting appropriate ~~groups, that~~ groups that have a primary role in encouraging new talent and representatives of all sections of the community to stand election as Members of the Council.
- ➔ Supporting Equalities Forums, Citizens Panels, and Stakeholder Engagement .
- ➔ Ensuring open recruitment of school governors, encouraging participation of members of the community with varying skills. Supporting recruitment with appropriate training.
- ➔ Encouraging engagement in the 'Bristol Big Youth Vote' to elect young people onto the Bristol City Youth Select Committee Council and the UK Youth Parliament. The democratically elected youth representatives receive the mandate from Bristol's children and young people to act as their representatives and advocates in arenas that matter.
- ➔ Providing training opportunities through the Bristol Apprentices scheme
- ➔ Working in partnership with the University of the West of England (UWE) to offer subsidised student internships.

4.6 Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

4.6.1 The Council will exercise leadership which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships, and develops constructive, accountable relationships by:

- ➔ Supporting Neighbourhood Partnerships to provide a focus for community

engagement

- ~~→ Supporting the Bristol 20:20 plan.~~
- Providing the citizens of Bristol with information about the Council and its spending through the distribution of a leaflet with their Council Tax bill and the publication of a summary of the year end accounts ~~in the Council newsletter publication~~ on the Bristol City Council website.
- Publishing the three year budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan~~Medium Term Financial Plan~~ on the Bristol City Council website.
- ~~→ Supporting a Citizens' Panels tackling local issues.~~
- ~~→ Requiring our Strategic Partners to report to the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee (OSM) on a regular basis.~~
- ~~→ Supporting a Planning user Group, who meet quarterly to review needs of customers and improve service.~~
- ~~Participating in a Bristol Property Agents Association and Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network as part of the Council's engagement with stakeholder.~~

4.6.2 The Council will take an active approach to dialogue with, and accountability to, the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery whether directly by the Authority, in partnership or by commissioning by:

- ~~→ Taking a leading role in the Children and Young People's Trust Bristol Safeguarding Board, Health and Wellbeing Board, and the Safer Bristol Board.~~
- ~~→ The Council being statutorily accountable for establishing the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Safeguarding Children's and Adults Board.~~
- ~~→ Promoting a safer city through the work of the Safer Bristol Partnership and a learning city through its participation in the Learning City Partnership.~~
- ~~→ The Council participating in the Bristol Property Board, which is chaired by the Mayor and whose aim is to achieve strategic cooperation regarding assets across the city so that participants manage their assets in a joined-up way.~~
- Maintaining and following the Council's Code of Good Practice on Consultation.
- Provide the citizens of Bristol with the opportunity to have their say through e-consultation, Ask Bristol and E-petitions and by participating in Citizen's Panels, or by completing a satisfaction survey where appropriate.
- Providing web casts of Full Council meetings on the Bristol City Council website in order to keep Bristol's citizens up-to-date.
- Maintaining an Equalities Forum.
- Supporting a Corporate Consultation Team and providing a Consultation Finder on the Bristol City Council website.
- All Cabinet reports containing a "Consultation" section.
- All Members being expected to offer, as best practice, surgeries, or equivalent means of providing assistance, for their constituents and key partners (eg. Police) could be involved where appropriate.
- ~~→ Supporting Neighbourhood Partnerships covering all wards to facilitate engagement with local stakeholders and to identify local priorities.~~
- ~~→ Publishing a free electronic Council newsletter on the Bristol City Council website which communicates the Council's vision and priorities.~~
- ~~→ Publishing a Council Tax booklet which is distributed annually.~~
- The Council's planning and decision making process being designed to include consultation with stakeholders and the submission of views by local people

including publishing applications on the website.

- ➔ Maintaining a comprehensive complaints/appeals procedure.
- ➔ Maintaining a Freedom of Information policy and acting upon requests in a timely manner.
- ➔ Maintaining a relationship and providing support to the Bristol Members [of the UK Youth Parliament](#).
- ➔ Participating in outreach work with ethnic groups.
- ➔ Publishing the Council's performance annually.
- ➔ Striving to ensure good information exchange within the Council and with external partners, with the provision of an internal intranet site and an external website, which is accessible to our partners and the citizens of Bristol.

4.6.3 The Council will make the best of human resources by taking an active and planned approach to meeting responsibilities of staff by:

- ➔ Maintaining comprehensive consultation arrangements with the Trade Unions.
- ➔ Having an agreed consultation procedure for managing change.
- ➔ Maintaining **and reviewing its an effective** Performance Management Development Scheme that requires all staff to participate in an annual development review.
- ~~➔ Implementing a People Programme to ensure that the right people with the right skills set are in the right jobs at the right time.~~
- ~~➔ Implementing a People Strategy with performance reported annually and highlighting under represented groups.~~
- ➔ Maintaining comprehensive and effective HR policies including an Equalities policy.
- ➔ Accessing staff opinions through staff surveys including Health at Work Surveys.
- ➔ Working in partnership with local colleges, to maximise the number of opportunities for apprenticeships within the Council.
- ➔ Creating the tools, culture and working environments to enhance the way that officers serve the people of Bristol through the Bristol Workplace Programme.
- ~~➔ Initiating Operating~~ the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). This service **which is** available to all employees provides help through a variety of ways to deal with personal **problems issues** that **might ay** have an impact on their work performance, health, and general well-being.

5 Monitoring and Review

5.1 Good corporate governance requires the active participation of both Members and employees across the Council.

In order to ensure that this Code is effectively maintained and embedded within the Council, the following monitoring review procedures will apply.

Internal Audit will have the responsibility for:

- Ensuring the Code is maintained as a living document.
- Undertaking an annual review of internal control and governance, utilising assurance statements from ~~Strategic Directors~~, the statutory officers and other appropriate senior staff
- Utilising the annual review to prepare a draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and implementing any changes to the Code identified by the AGS process.

5.2 The Audit Committee will have responsibility for providing assurance to Council in respect of:

- the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements, risk management framework and internal control environment, including overseeing:
 - risk management strategies
 - anti-fraud arrangements
 - whistleblowing strategies
 - Internal and External Audit Activities
- the effectiveness of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent it affects exposure to risk and poor internal control
- the approval of the Annual Governance Statement
- the review and approval of the annual statement of accounts, confirming the appropriate accounting policies have been followed, including the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts