

**Annual Governance Statement**

**Assurance Review**

**May 2024**

**Assurance and evidence in support of the Council's annual governance statement  
(Assessment Score 1 – 10 where 10 represents very best value)**

**Core Principal 1: A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law**

<b>Supporting Principle 1 : Behaving with Integrity</b>			
<b>The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:</b>	<b>Examples of evidence:</b>	<b>Assessment Score (1 - 10)</b>	<b>Progress in year and Plans for Improvement</b>
1 Ensuring members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Codes of conduct</li> <li>Individual sign off with regard to compliance with code</li> <li>Induction for new members and staff on standard of behaviour expected</li> <li>Performance appraisals</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – induction for new members and staff. Codes of conduct, PDA's.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – To embed the revised PDA documentation to enhance the process and to ensure they are carried out for all staff.</p>
2 Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicating shared values with members, staff, the community and partners</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Blaby District Plan (2021-24) defines values and was revised in Jan 2021, PDA's and staff recruitment have linkages to values.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – To embed the revised PDA documentation to enhance the process and to ensure they are carried out for all staff.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – To continue to reinforce the values detailed within the new Blaby District Plan: honesty, openness and treating people fairly.</p>
3 Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision making practices</li> <li>Declarations of interests made at meetings</li> <li>Conduct at meetings</li> <li>Shared values guide decision making</li> <li>Develop and maintain an effective standards committee</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Declarations of interest noted, standards committee.</p>

4 Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-fraud and corruption policies are working effectively</li> <li>• Up-to-date register of interests (members and staff)</li> <li>• Up-to-date register of gifts and hospitality</li> <li>• Whistleblowing policies are in place and protect individuals raising concerns</li> <li>• Whistleblowing policy has been made available to members of the public, employees, partners and contractors</li> <li>• Complaints policy and examples of responding to complaints about behaviour</li> <li>• Changes/improvements as a result of complaints received and acted upon</li> <li>• Members and officers code of conduct refers to a requirement to declare interests</li> <li>• Minutes show declarations of interest were sought and appropriate declarations made</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Anti-fraud & corruption policy (reviewed Feb 2024), register of interests and annual declaration of related parties. Whistleblowing policy (reviewed 2022), which staff are aware of, and have utilised. Complaints policy well established and continually reviewed, improved and reported on.
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#### Supporting Principle 2 : Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values

The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:	Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1. Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny of ethical decision making</li> <li>• Championing ethical compliance at governing body level</li> </ul>	8	<b>Evidence</b> – Values and induction process for officers and members. Ethos of the Blaby Way documented and communicated to staff and promoted to new members.
2. Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of ethical awareness training</li> </ul>	8	<b>Evidence</b> – Values and ethics audit to understand staff understanding of code of conduct.
3. Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appraisal processes take account of values and ethical behaviour</li> <li>• Staff appointments policy</li> <li>• Procurement policy</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Organisational values included within the Appraisal process. Recruitment process includes elements of Blaby values as part of assessment. Procurement policy includes ethical

			element and is a consideration in award of contracts.
4. Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed values in partnership working: Statement of business ethics communicates commitment to ethical values to external suppliers</li> <li>Ethical values feature in contracts with external service providers</li> <li>Protocols for partnership working</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Key partnerships now have robust mechanisms in place to define role and scope of partners. E.g. Community safety, Light Bulb project, Everyone Active, Building Control Partnerships and governance arrangements have been strengthened.

### Supporting Principle 3 : Respecting the rule of law

The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:	Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1. Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory provisions</li> <li>Statutory guidance is followed</li> <li>Constitution</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> - Constitution is adhered to and reviewed regularly.
2. Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job description/specifications</li> <li>Compliance with CIPFA's <i>Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government</i> (CIPFA, 2015)</li> <li>Terms of reference</li> <li>Committee support</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Job descriptions and roles of statutory officers is well defined and understood by the organisation. Structure of the SLT ensures statutory officers are included in key decision making etc. Provision of proper officer appointments on an interim basis when appropriate E.g. for interim CE position, S151 and MO positions during organisational change.
3. Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record of legal advice provided by officers</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – proper arrangements in place for legal advice and recording of advice.
4. Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring officer provisions</li> <li>Record of legal advice provided by officers</li> <li>Statutory provisions</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – proper arrangements in place for legal advice and recording of advice, monitoring officer referenced to give advice and ensure Council operates within the law at all times.

<p>5. Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective anti-fraud and corruption policies and procedures</li> <li>• Local test of assurance (where appropriate)</li> </ul>	<p>9</p>	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Whistleblowing policy (reviewed 2022), Anti-fraud &amp; corruption policy (reviewed February 2024).</p>
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## Core Principal B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Supporting Principle 1 : Openness				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual report</li> <li>• Freedom of Information Act publication scheme</li> <li>• Online council tax information</li> <li>• Authority's goals and values</li> <li>• Authority website</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Blaby District Plan, FOI requests actively responded to online Council Tax information and award winning website.
2.	Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record of decision making and supporting materials</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Decisions well documented.
3.	Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision making protocols</li> <li>• Report pro-formas</li> <li>• Record of professional advice in reaching decisions</li> <li>• Meeting reports show details of advice given</li> <li>• Discussion between members and officers on the information needs of members to support decision making</li> <li>• Agreement on the information that will be provided and timescales</li> <li>• Calendar of dates for submitting, publishing and distributing timely reports is adhered to</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Decisions well documented with supporting information and advice included. Informal Cabinet sessions that involve Members in the decision making process at an early stage. Pre-meeting briefings prior to major decisions being made by Council. E.g. Strategic Sites, ICT Partnership decisions. Forward Plan detailing report publication on a timely basis.

4.	Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community strategy</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence –</b> Informal and formal consultation carried out in accordance with the consultation strategy, using a variety of means. Consultation used to inform decision making and customer and staff satisfaction surveys carried out regularly. High level of service engagement from service users E.g. Bi-annual customer satisfaction survey including budget consultation and priorities within Blaby District Plan. Engagement with public/stakeholders regarding the formation of the new Blaby District Plan.
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Supporting Principle 2 : Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication strategy</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence –</b> Communication Strategy followed. Communication Strategy developed for individual projects if appropriate.  <b>Action –</b> Update the Communication Strategy following development of New Blaby District Plan.
2.	Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Database of stakeholders with whom the authority should engage and for what purpose and a record of an assessment of the effectiveness of any changes.</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence –</b> Partnership working across the authority continues to be strong, with recognition of this within the CSE award and Peer Review. Partnership working during the pandemic and again during flood emergency Storm Henk and Local Gas outage emergency working closely with partners in the LRF strengthening relationships.
3.	Ensuring that partnerships are based on: trust, a shared commitment to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership framework</li> <li>Partnership protocols</li> </ul>	7	<b>Evidence -</b> Key partnerships have robust mechanisms in place to define role and scope of partners. E.g.

	change, a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit			Community safety, Light Bulb project and Building Control.
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Supporting Principle 3 : Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record of public consultations</li> <li>Partnership framework</li> </ul>	10	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Council regularly consult on major changes to service e.g. budget consultation, customer satisfaction survey, refuse &amp; recycling consultation and Council Tax consultations. Council follows a Consultation policy.</p>
2.	Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications strategy</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Communication strategy followed. Officers understand the need to communicate with members and the community. The frequency of communication with the public, staff and members is frequent with electronic methods being utilised.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Build on the outcomes taken from the review of the Communications function, review the Communications Strategy and continue to strengthen the proactive promotion of the Council.</p>



3.	Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications strategy</li> <li>Joint strategic needs assessment</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Council regularly consult on major changes to service e.g. budget consultation, customer satisfaction survey, refuse &amp; recycling consultation and Council Tax consultations. Council follows a Consultation policy.</p>
4.	Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications strategy</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Communication Strategy being followed.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Update the Communication Strategy following development of New Blaby District Plan.</p>
5.	Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes for dealing with competing demands within the community, for example a consultation</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Consultation process structured to improve inclusion with varying methods used to gather views from different stakeholder groups.</p>
6.	Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports</li> <li>Joint strategic needs assessment</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Active engagement with the youth Council with Councillors taking part in debates with Youth Council – enabling them to understand views of future generations. Utilisation of relationships with academies to understand views of the younger generation, with the Youth Conference providing further engagement.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Broaden the response to the bi-annual satisfaction survey carried out in Jan 2024 by engaging with the younger generations in our district to ensure their views are understood.</p>

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

Supporting Principle 1 : Defining outcomes				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vision used as a basis for corporate and service planning</li> </ul>	8	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Blaby District Plan defines the vision for the Council, including values and priorities. Blaby District Plan developed with SLT and SM's for staff to feed into the priorities and plans along with consultation with residents. Plan and priorities are agreed by Council.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Continue to develop the long term Vision for the District and deliver the Blaby District Plan for future years.</p>
2.	Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community engagement and involvement</li> <li>Corporate and service plans</li> <li>Community strategy</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Priorities of the Blaby District Plan and consultation of stakeholders regarding the key themes within the Plan.</p>
3.	Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular reports on progress</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Monitoring and reporting of progress of initiatives with regular updates to members regarding the financial landscape. The adoption and resourcing of Project Management across the Council now helps to ensure delivery of outcomes with monitoring of progress of projects being done through programme board. Formal governance process in place for management of projects.</p>
4.	Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance trends are established and reported upon</li> <li>Risk management protocols</li> </ul>	8	<p><b>Evidence</b> – regular performance and risk management reporting.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Continue to embed the new business planning, data intelligence and</p>

				risk management process that has been implemented during 2022/23 utilising the I-Plan system.
5.	Managing service users expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An agreed set of quality standard measures for each service element and included in service plans</li> <li>Processes for dealing with competing demands within the community</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> - Budget survey and consultation with customers to help set priorities. Service plans developed with key performance indicators developed and proactive at communicating with customers re changes to service.

Supporting Principle 2 : Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital investment is structured to achieve appropriate life spans and adaptability for future use or that resources (eg land) are spent on optimising social, economic and environmental wellbeing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital programme</li> <li>Capital investment strategy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Capital programme aligned to corporate priorities and expanded to be 5 year plan. Use of assets considered to achieve the best return/outcomes for residents e.g. E.g. Decisions made regarding strategic sites to consider their potential future use to provide housing tenure needed to help address the housing needs.
2.	Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion between members and officers on the information needs of members to support decision making</li> <li>Record of decision making and supporting materials</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – MTFS information giving an up to date long term view. Member briefings to support and inform members before significant decisions are made. Budget Briefing included potential financial impact &amp; risks that the Fair Funding Review and Business Rate Review may pose for the Council.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Continue to Brief all members, regarding Council finance incorporating Fair Funding, Business Rates and financial implications of government driven waste initiatives.</p>

3.	Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record of decision making and supporting materials</li> <li>Protocols for consultation</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Consultation strategy and recording of decision making.
4.	Ensuring fair access to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protocols ensure fair access and statutory guidance is followed</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Statement of community involvement for planning. Community Network Meetings with Voluntary & Community Sector.

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

Supporting Principle 1 : Determining interventions				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion between members and officers on the information needs of members to support decision making</li> <li>• Decision making protocols</li> <li>• Option appraisals</li> <li>• Agreement of information that will be provided and timescales</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – All reports detail options considered and risks associated with decisions. Members given a pre-meeting briefing where significant decisions are to be taken.
2.	Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial strategy</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Consultation exercises undertaken where service changes are proposed to be brought in. Long term financial view considered within the formulation of the Blaby District Plan. MTFS updated annually.

Supporting Principle 2 : Planning interventions				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calendar of dates for developing and submitting plans and reports that are adhered to</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – calendar dates agreed in advance, reports published in a timely manner.
2.	Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication strategy</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Communication strategy followed.
3.	Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership framework</li> <li>Risk management protocol</li> </ul>	8	<b>Evidence</b> – Risk registers kept as part of the project management structure and are kept for major partnership arrangements such as Lightbulb.
4.	Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning protocols</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Speak to Group leaders – flexible constitution and delegated responsibility.
5.	Establishing appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KPIs have been established and approved for each service element and included in the service plan and are reported upon regularly</li> </ul>	8	<p><b>Evidence</b> – KPI's reported in I-Plan, new reporting tool for KPI's developed in I-Plan, rolled out to organisation in April 23 and continually being refined.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Embed the new business planning, data intelligence and risk management process utilising the I-Plan system to report KPI's.</p>
6.	Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports include detailed performance results and highlight areas where corrective action is necessary</li> </ul>	8	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Where applicable performance is included to give context for decisions to be made.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Embed the new business planning, data intelligence and risk management process utilising the I-Plan system to report KPI's.</p>
7.	Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence that budgets, plans and objectives are aligned</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Budgets aligned to plans to deliver the corporate priorities identified in the Blaby District Plan. Service

				Planning now aligned with Budget Planning process to ensure resources are in place,
8.	Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget guidance and protocols</li> <li>Medium term financial plan</li> <li>Corporate plans</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – MTFS, information provided with budget setting information and Commercial Strategy and action plan developed. Plans to close financial gap worked on with SLT and Cabinet members.

Supporting Principle 3 : Optimising achievement of intended outcomes				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback surveys and exit/decommissioning strategies</li> <li>Changes as a result</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – MTFS and budget formulated with strategic view of service priorities and involvement of SLT/Members.
2.	Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budgeting guidance and protocols</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Budgets owned by services with well defined budget guidance and support.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Budget setting and monitoring to be further developed to ensure that budget is tailored and trimmed with services delivered efficiently and effectively.</p>
3.	Ensuring the medium term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial strategy</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Financial summary of MTFS updated regularly as information is received that changes the funding/settlement picture significantly. Members provided with the financial context in detail during budget scrutiny meetings.

4.	Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service plans demonstrate consideration of 'social value'</li> <li>Achievement of 'social value' is monitored and reported upon</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Social Value considered when procuring services and within decisions E.g. Huncote Leisure Centre reopening/future use of grounds. Social Value agenda being developed through partnerships.
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### Core Principal E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Supporting Principle 1 : Developing the entity's capacity				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Reviewing operations, performance use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular reviews of activities, outputs and planned outcomes</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Regular reviews of structures, ways of working and performance as part of the Council Transformation Strategy.
2.	Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the authority's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilisation of research and benchmarking exercise</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Data included to inform decisions made.</p> <p><b>Action-</b> Continue to investigate the use of benchmarking information to enhance the performance framework and support decision making.</p>
3.	Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective operation of partnerships which deliver agreed outcomes</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Recognised for partnership working in CSE, Peer Review and in feedback from partners.
4.	Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce plan</li> <li>Organisational development plan</li> </ul>	7	<p><b>Evidence</b> – People Strategy, regular structural reviews and resource planning. Workforce health initiative brought in with officer mental health &amp; wellbeing being a particular priority.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Continue to develop workforce, policy updates and development and retention/recruitment initiatives, including East Mids pilot scheme being carried out by EMC.</p>



Supporting Principle 2 : Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job descriptions</li> <li>• Chief executive and leader pairings have considered how best to establish and maintain effective communication</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Regular information sharing meetings between the Leader and the CE. Frequent meetings with SLT/Cabinet to share information and discuss proposals for new projects or service changes.
2.	Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme of delegation reviewed at least annually in the light of legal and organisational changes</li> <li>• Standing orders and financial regulations which are reviewed on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Regular review of scheme of delegation and financial regulations.
3.	Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads the authority in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear statement of respective roles and responsibilities and how they will be put into practice</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Clear roles and responsibilities with CE's objectives set and monitored by Members.
4.	<p>Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to update courses/ information briefings on new legislation</li> <li>• Induction programme</li> <li>• Personal development plans for members and officers</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Continuation of member training with active member development steering group. Succession planning illustrated with senior positions being filled internally and opportunities sought for expansion/diversity of roles.</p> <p>Full induction process and ongoing member training</p> <p><b>Evidence</b> – PDA's for Officers and reviews for Members.</p> <p><b>Action</b> - To embed the revised PDA documentation to enhance the process and to ensure they are carried out for all staff.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis</li> <li>ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external</li> </ul>	<p>For example, for members this may include the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>scrutinise and challenge</li> <li>recognise when outside expert advice is required</li> <li>promote trust</li> <li>work in partnership</li> <li>lead the organisation</li> <li>act as a community leader</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Efficient systems and technology used for effective support</li> <li>Arrangements for succession planning</li> </ul>		<p><b>Evidence</b> – Training for members in preparation for Scrutiny Budget Meetings and specific training for Audit and Governance Committee Members and for those of the Planning Committee. Training provided for use of technology in communication (social media), use of electronic devices and the promotion of communication via electronic means for Members.</p>
5.	Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents' panels</li> <li>Stakeholder forum terms of reference</li> <li>Strategic partnership frameworks</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Voluntary and Community sector Qtrly meetings, resident lists to be utilised for future input for service changes etc. Use of social media/electronic means to get to wider public audience to gain views and inform residents. Using links with Youth Council and academies to obtain views of young residents.</p>
6.	Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing individual member performance on a regular basis taking account of their attendance and considering any training or development needs</li> <li>Peer reviews</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Members performance monitored, Cabinet held to account by the Leader of the Council. Regular Peer reviews.</p>
7.	Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and development plan</li> <li>Staff development plans linked to appraisals</li> <li>Implementing appropriate human resource policies and ensuring that they are working effectively</li> </ul>	8	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Staff PDA's, utilisation of capability procedures to manage performance. Training for people managers with some undergoing ILM management development training.</p> <p><b>Action</b> -. Continue to progress the programme of training for people managers across the authority including the Solace leadership</p>

				programme and brilliant manager training.
8.	Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human resource policies</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – People strategy and development of Workforce health initiative. Staff supported through exercise opportunities; external counselling provision and wellbeing opportunities such as mindfulness, menopause group, etc. Managers training regarding staff wellbeing conversations brought in to assist with mental health awareness, and the virtual nature of working. Peer Review feedback on Mental Health provision very positive.

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

Supporting Principle 1 : Managing risk				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management protocol</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Corporate Risk Management system in place with regular monitoring of corporate risks. Lower level risk management system reviewed and implemented to make risk monitoring more effective. <b>Action</b> – Utilise the new I-Plan system to record risks and ensure lower level risks are managed across the organisation.
2.	Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management strategy/ policy formally approved and adopted and reviewed and updated on a regular basis</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Risk Management Strategy in place and updated in 2023.
3.	Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management protocol</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Risk Management system in place with regular monitoring of corporate risks.

Supporting Principle 2 : Managing Performance				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance map showing all key activities have performance measures</li> <li>Benchmarking information</li> <li>Cost performance (using inputs and outputs)</li> <li>Calendar of dates for submitting, publishing and distributing timely reports that are adhered to</li> </ul>	8	<b>Evidence</b> – Performance data held on In-Plan. Calendar of dates published and reporting dates adhered to. Performance against the Blaby District Plan now monitored through project management process and programme board.  <b>Action</b> – Continue to monitor the use of the new Corporate performance framework and reporting system to

				ensure the authority has an overall view of performance. Investigate the use of benchmarking information to enhance the performance framework further.
2.	Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion between members and officers on the information needs of members to support decision making</li> <li>• Publication of agendas and minutes of meetings</li> <li>• Agreement on the information that will be needed and timescales</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence –</b> Information shared at informal cabinet, pre-meeting briefings, budget scrutiny sessions, scrutiny working groups.
3.	Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the organisation's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible (OR, for a committee system) Encouraging effective and constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives to support balanced and effective decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role and responsibility for scrutiny has been established and is clear</li> <li>• Agenda and minutes of scrutiny meetings</li> <li>• Evidence of improvements as a result of scrutiny</li> <li>• Terms of reference</li> <li>• Training for members</li> <li>• Membership</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence –</b> Scrutiny role established. Active Scrutiny working groups. Agendas and minutes published. Training ongoing.
4.	Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calendar of dates for submitting, publishing and distributing timely reports that are adhered to</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence –</b> Calendar of dates published and reporting dates adhered to
5.	Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (eg financial statements )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial standards, guidance</li> <li>• Financial regulations and standing orders</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence –</b> Alignment of all financial reporting and processes.

Supporting Principle 3 : Robust internal control				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk management strategy</li> <li>• Audit plan</li> <li>• Audit reports</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Risk management strategy, audit plan and regular audit reports.
2.	Evaluating and monitoring the authority's risk management and internal control on a regular basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk management strategy/ policy has been formally approved and adopted and is reviewed and updated on a regular basis</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Risk management strategy, reported regularly to Audit & Governance Committee, risks reviewed regularly both corporately and by Audit & Governance Committee.
3.	Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption (CIPFA, 2014)</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – compliance with the code. Anti-fraud and anti-corruption, prosecution and sanction policy reviewed in July 2020.
4.	Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual governance statement</li> <li>• Effective internal audit service is resourced and maintained</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Annual governance statement, internal audit arrangements externally reviewed in 2020 and found to be compliant. Internal audit actively involved in service improvement.
5.	Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body: provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit committee complies with best practice. See Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (CIPFA, 2013)</li> <li>• Terms of reference</li> <li>• Membership</li> <li>• Training</li> </ul>	8	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Audit &amp; Governance Committee compliance. Compliance with CIPFA Guidance for Local Authorities and Police being worked towards. E.g. review of Terms of Reference, Training and appointment of independent member.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Continuation of progress to work towards compliance of the Council's Audit &amp; Governance Committee with the CIPFA Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (CIPFA, 2022).</p>

<b>Supporting Principle 4 : Managing Data</b>				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data management framework and procedures</li> <li>• Designated data protection officer</li> <li>• Data protection policies and procedures</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Policies in place for data management and data protection. Designated data protection officer.
2.	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data sharing agreement</li> <li>• Data sharing register</li> <li>• Data processing agreements</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Data sharing agreements in place and data processing agreements where necessary.
3.	Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data quality procedures and reports</li> <li>• Data validation procedures</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Data challenged and audited as part of internal audit processes and decision making.

<b>Supporting Principle 5 : Strong public financial management</b>				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial management supports the delivery of services and transformational change as well as securing good stewardship</li> </ul>	9	<p><b>Evidence</b> – Finance officers actively involved giving business support to services, with both budget monitoring and production of business case financial information.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Provide training for budget managers to ensure they understand their responsibilities to manage their budget and can re-forecast accurately during the year.</p>
2.	Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget monitoring reports</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – regular budget monitoring and updates to Cabinet during the year.

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

Supporting Principle 1 : Implementing good practice in transparency				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website</li> <li>Annual report</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Website user friendly, regular distribution of electronic newsletters, reports written in 'plain English'.
2.	Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website</li> <li>Annual report</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Website user friendly, regular distribution of electronic newsletters, reports written in 'plain English'.

  

Supporting Principle 2 : Implementing good practices in reporting				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal annual report which includes key points raised by external scrutineers and service users' feedback on service delivery</li> <li>Annual financial statements</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Annual financial statements and reports to Audit & Governance Committee, Cabinet and Council. Regular customer satisfaction survey with published results.
2.	Ensuring members and senior management own the results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate approvals</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Members and SLT review reports and provide approval.



3.	Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (annual governance statement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual governance statement</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Annual governance statement, depth of assurance information.
4.	Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual governance statement</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Annual governance statement, application of policies where Blaby works in partnership with other organisations.
5.	Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other similar organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Format follows best practice</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Best practice followed and feedback from Peer Review put into practice.

Supporting Principle 3 : Assurance and effective accountability				
The local code should reflect the requirement of local authorities to:		Examples of evidence:	Assessment Score (1 - 10)	Progress in year and Plans for Improvement
1.	Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations have informed positive improvement</li> <li>Compliance with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2019)</li> <li>Compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Recommendations from external audit acted upon. Compliance of Internal Audit arrangements.
2.	Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations have informed positive improvement</li> </ul>	10	<b>Evidence</b> – Recommendations from internal audit acted upon with internal audit being actively referenced to assist

	governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2019)</li> </ul> Compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards		with service improvements. Compliance of Internal Audit arrangements.
3.	Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations have informed positive improvement</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Peer review action plan. CSE feedback, LGA Finance Health check action plan, external inspection of internal audit recommendations and continued improvement.
4.	Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual governance statement</li> </ul>	8	<b>Evidence</b> – Strong partnership working with governance arrangements in place E.g. Light bulb, Building control Partnership. Areas of weakness identified and improvements made.  <b>Action:</b> Implementation of decision to extract the Council from the ICT partnership to provide a complete level of assurance.
5.	Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community strategy</li> </ul>	9	<b>Evidence</b> – Work with the voluntary sector and LCC to feed into Community Strategy.