

# Thanet District Council

## Local Code of Corporate Governance

Version 4  
December 2009



# Contents

- 1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area ..... 3
- 2. Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles ..... 5
- 3. Promoting values for the Authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour..... 8
- 4. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective Scrutiny and managing risk.....10
- 5. Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective .....13
- 6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust local public accountability .....15
- Supporting Evidence .....17
- Document History .....30

Thanet District Council would like to acknowledge CIPFA / SOLACE in providing the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' framework and guidance documents

## 1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area

- **Supporting Principle:** exercise strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating the Authority's purpose and vision and its intended outcome for citizens and service users.
- **The Council is required to:** exercise strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating the Authority's purpose and vision and its intended outcome for citizens and service users.

### **We will do this through the following:**

- Corporate Plan
- Service plans
- Community Strategy
- Local area or performance agreements
- CDRP – partnership plan

- **The Council is required to:** review on a regular basis the Authority's vision for the local area and its implications for the Authority's governance arrangements

### **We will do this through the following:**

- Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Vision for Thanet
- East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee

- **The Council is required to:** ensure that partnerships are underpinned by a common vision of their work that is understood and agreed by all partners

### **We will do this through the following:**

- Partnership Framework
- Local Code of Corporate Governance
- East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee
- East Kent Joint Management Team
- Individual service collaboration agreements and supporting SLA's for all East Kent Shared Services

- **The Council is required to:** publish an annual report on a timely basis to communicate the Authority's activities and achievements, its financial position and performance

### **We will do this through the following:**

- Annual performance report
- 'Your Services – Your Council Tax' publication
- Annual financial statements
- Medium Term Financial Strategy

- **Supporting principle:** ensure that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, or in partnership or by commissioning

- **The Council is required to:** decide how the quality of service for users is to be measured and make sure that the information needed to review service quality effectively and regularly is available

**We will do this through the following:**

- Service plans
- Annual performance report
- Monthly performance monitoring
- Quarterly performance packs
- Corporate Management Team
- Corporate dashboard report

- **The Council is required to:** put in place effective arrangements to identify and deal with failure in service delivery

**We will do this through the following:**

- Customer feedback system
- Appraisal process
- Value for Money programme
- Use of Resources audits
- Performance reporting
- Performance Management Framework

- **Supporting principle:** ensure that the Authority makes best use of resources and that tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money

- **The Council is required to:** decide how value for money is to be measured and make sure that the Authority has the information needed to review value for money and performance effectively. Measure the environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions

**We will do this through the following:**

- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Value for Money (Efficiency) Strategy
- Value for Money programme
- Value for Money Programme Board terms of reference and minutes
- Performance reporting
- Annual efficiency statements
- Audit reports
- Value for Money audits

## 2. Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles

- **Supporting principle:** ensure the effective leadership throughout the Authority and being clear about Executive and Non-Executive functions and of the roles and responsibilities of the Scrutiny function
- **The Council is required to:** set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Executive and of the Executive's Members individually and the Authority's approach towards putting this into practice

**We will do this through the following:**

- Constitution
- Record of decision making and supporting materials

- **The Council is required to:** set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of other Authority Members, Members generally and of Senior Officers

**We will do this through the following:**

- Job descriptions / specifications
- Publication of Corporate Management Team pay and Member allowances
- Terms of reference
- East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee
- East Kent Joint Scrutiny Committee

- **Supporting principle:** ensure that a constructive working relationship exists between Authority Members and Officers and that the responsibilities of Members and Officers are carried out to a high standard

- **The Council is required to:** determine a Scheme of Delegation and reserve powers within the Constitution, including a formal schedule of those matters specifically reserved for collective decision of the Authority, taking account of relevant legislation, and ensure that it is monitored and updated when required

**We will do this through the following:**

- Constitution
- Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Member / Officer protocol
- Scheme of Delegation

- **The Council is required to:** make a Chief Executive or equivalent responsible and accountable to the Authority for all aspects of operational management

**We will do this through the following:**

- Constitution
- Code of Conduct
- Managers Charter
- Staff Charter
- Scheme of Delegation
- Job descriptions / specifications
- Performance management system

- **The Council is required to:** develop protocols to ensure that the Leader and Chief Executive negotiate their respective roles early in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained

**We will do this through the following:**

- Scheme of Delegation
- Member / Officer protocol

- **The Council is required to:** make a Senior Officer (the Section 151 Officer) responsible to the Authority for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal financial control

**We will do this through the following:**

- Statutory reports
- Job descriptions / specifications
- Reports to Members / Officers on financial matters
- Standing Orders
- Financial Procedure Rules
- Scheme of Delegation
- Annual review of the effectiveness of Internal Control report
- Contract with East Kent Audit Partnership
- Internal Audit Plan

- **The Council is required to:** make a Senior Officer (usually the Monitoring Officer) responsible to the Authority for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes and regulations are complied with

**We will do this through the following:**

- Monitoring Officer provision
- Job descriptions / specifications
- Scheme of Delegation
- Standing Orders

- **Supporting principle:** ensuring relationships between the Authority, its partners and the public are clear so that each knows what to expect of the other

- **The Council is required to:** develop protocols to ensure effective communication between Members and Officers in their respective roles

**We will do this through the following:**

- Member / Officer protocol

- **The Council is required to:** set out the terms and conditions for remuneration of Members and Officers and an effective structure for managing the process, including an effective remuneration panel (if applicable)

**We will do this through the following:**

- Pay and conditions policies and practices

- **The Council is required to:** ensure that effective mechanisms exist to monitor service delivery

**We will do this through the following:**

- Appraisal process
  - HR system / Clearvision
  - Service Level Agreements
  - Budget monitoring
  - National indicators
  - Local indicators
  - Corporate Plan
  - Performance reporting
- **The Council is required to:** ensure that the organisation's vision, strategic plans, priorities and targets are developed through robust mechanisms, and in consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders, and that they are clearly articulated and disseminated

**We will do this through the following:**

- Vision for Thanet
  - Corporate Plan
  - Service plans
  - Medium Term Financial Strategy
  - Prioritisation matrix
  - Performance Management Framework
  - Annual budget and Council Tax consultation
  - Public consultation
- **The Council is required to:** when working in partnership, ensure that Members are clear about their roles and responsibilities both individually and collectively in relation to the partnership and to the Authority

**We will do this through the following:**

- Partnership Framework
  - East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee
  - East Kent Joint Scrutiny Committee
- **The Council is required to:** when working in partnership:
    - ensure that there is clarity about the legal status of the partnership
    - ensure that representatives of organisations both understand and make clear to all other partners the extent of their authority to bind their organisation to partner decisions

**We will do this through the following:**

- Partnership Framework
- Partnership Register
- Collaboration agreements and supporting SLA's

### 3. Promoting values for the Authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour

- **Supporting principle:** ensuring Authority Members and Officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance
- **The Council is required to:** ensure that the Authority's leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect

**We will do this through the following:**

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Appraisal process
- Codes of Conduct
- Leadership programme

- **The Council is required to:** ensure that standards of conduct and personal behaviour expected of Members and staff, or work between Members and staff and between the Authority, its partners and the community are defined and communicated through codes of conduct and protocols

**We will do this through the following:**

- Code of Conduct
- Performance management system
- Appraisal process
- Customer feedback system
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Member / Officer protocol
- Staff Charter
- Managers Charter

- **The Council is required to:** put in place arrangements to ensure that Members and employees of the Authority are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice

**We will do this through the following:**

- Standing Orders
- Codes of Conduct
- Financial regulations
- Gifts and hospitality register
- Declaration of interest protocols

- **Supporting principle:** ensuring that organisational values are put into practice and are effective

- **The Council is required to:** develop and maintain shared values including leadership values for both the organisation and staff reflecting public expectations, and communicate these with Members, staff, the community and partners

**We will do this through the following:**

- Codes of Conduct

- Investors in People Status
  - Charter Mark Standard for Customer Service Excellence
  - Staff survey
  - Staff and Member development briefings
  - Staff conference
  - Appraisal process
  - Managers Charter
- **The Council is required to:** put in place arrangements to ensure that systems and processes are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards, and monitor their continuing effectiveness in practice

**We will do this through the following:**

- Codes of Conduct
  - Report template
  - Use of Resources assessments
  - Professional body guidance documents (eg CIPFA)
- **The Council is required to:** develop and maintain an effective Standards Committee

**We will do this through the following:**

- Terms of reference
  - Independent chair of Standards
  - Regular reporting to the Council
- **The Council is required to:** use the organisation's shared values to act as a guide for decision making and as a basis for developing positive and trusting relationships within the Authority

**We will do this through the following:**

- Internal audit check of compliance and approved procedures and policies
  - Approved procedures and policies
  - Thanet Compact
  - Kent Compact
  - Partnership Framework
- **The Council is required to:** in pursuing the vision of a partnership, agree a set of values against which decision making and actions can be judged. Such values must be demonstrated by partners' behaviour both individually and collectively

**We will do this through the following:**

- Thanet Compact
- Kent Compact
- Partnership Framework
- Individual partnerships / contractors show expected outcomes
- East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee

#### 4. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective Scrutiny and managing risk

- **Supporting principles:** being rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and listening and acting on the outcome of constructive scrutiny
  - **The Council is required to:** develop and maintain an effective Scrutiny function which encourages constructive challenge and enhances the Authority's performance overall and that of any organisation for which it is responsible

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Scrutiny Panel reports, minutes and working group papers
  - **The Council is required to:** develop and maintain open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Decision-making protocols
    - Record of decision making and supporting materials
  - **The Council is required to:** put in place arrangements to safeguard Members and employees against conflicts of interest and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Code of Conduct
    - Declaration of interest protocols
  - **The Council is required to:** develop and maintain an effective Audit Committee which is independent of the Executive and Scrutiny functions or make other appropriate arrangements for the discharge of the functions of such a committee

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Governance and Audit Committee terms of reference
    - Annual review of the effectiveness of the Governance and Audit Committee
    - Training for Committee Members
  - **The Council is required to:** ensure that effective, transparent and accessible arrangements are in place for dealing with complaints

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Customer feedback system
    - You Said, We Did
    - Report of Ombudsmen findings
- **Supporting principle:** having good quality information, advice and support to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants / needs
- **The Council is required to:** ensure that those making decisions whether for the Authority or the partnership are provided with information that is fit for the purpose –

relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications

**We will do this through the following:**

- Report template
  - Approved procedures and policies
  - Member / Officer protocol
  - Partnership Framework
- **The Council is required to:** ensure that proper professional advice on matters that have legal and financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making and used appropriately

**We will do this through the following:**

- Use of 'legal' and 'financial' implications in report
- **Supporting principle:** ensuring that an effective risk management system is in place
  - **The Council is required to:** ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the Authority, with Members and Managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their jobs

**We will do this through the following:**

- Risk Management Strategy
  - Risk Management Process
  - Up to date risk register
  - Governance Group
- **The Council is required to:** ensure that effective arrangements for whistleblowing are in place to which Officers, staff and all those contracting with or appointed by the Authority have access

**We will do this through the following:**

- Whistleblowing Policy
  - Staff Charter
- **Supporting principle:** using their legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in their area
  - **The Council is required to:** actively recognise the limits of lawful activity placed on them by, for example, the ultra vires doctrine but also strive to utilise their powers to the full benefit of their communities

**We will do this through the following:**

- Constitution
  - Monitoring Officer provision
  - Section 151 provision
  - Standing Orders
- **The Council is required to:** recognise the limits of lawful action and observe both the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on authorities by public law

**We will do this through the following:**

- Monitoring Officer provision
  
- **The Council is required to:** observe all specific legislative requirements placed upon them, as well as the requirements of general law, and in particular to integrate the key principles of administrative law - rationality, legality and natural justice - into their procedures and decision making process

**We will do this through the following:**

- Monitoring Officer provision
- Job descriptions / specifications

## 5. Developing the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective

- **Supporting principle:** making sure that Members and Officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles
  - **The Council is required to:** provide induction programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for Members and Officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Training Development Plan for Members and Officers
    - Induction programmes
    - Staff and Member development briefings
    - Job descriptions / specifications
    - Internal Communicators Network
  - **The Council is required to:** ensure that the Statutory Officers have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and that these roles are properly understood throughout the Authority

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Job descriptions / specifications
    - Continual Professional Development
    - Thanet Manager programme
    - Training needs analysis as part of appraisal
    - Service plans
- **Supporting principle:** developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance, as individuals and as a group
  - **The Council is required to:** assess the skills required by Members and Officers and make a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Training Development Plan for Members and Officers
  - **The Council is required to:** develop skills on a continuing basis to improve performance, including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and to recognise when outside expert advice is needed

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Training Development Plan for Members and Officers
  - **The Council is required to:** ensure that effective arrangements are in place for reviewing the performance of the Executive as a whole and of individual Members and agreeing an action plan which might, for example, aim to address any training or development needs

**We will do this through the following:**

- Performance management system
- Appraisal process

- **Supporting principle:** encouraging new talent for membership of the Authority so that best use can be made of individuals' skills and resources in balancing and renewal
- **The Council is required to:** ensure that effective arrangements are in place designed to encourage individuals from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the Authority

**We will do this through the following:**

- Partnership Framework
- Stakeholders' forums' terms of reference
- Area forums' roles and responsibilities
- Residents panel
- Community Portal

- **The Council is required to:** ensure that career structures are in place for Members and Officers to encourage participation and development

**We will do this through the following:**

- Leadership programme

## 6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust local public accountability

- **Supporting principle:** exercising leadership through a robust Scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships, and develop constructive accountability relationships
  - **The Council is required to:** make clear to themselves, all staff and the community to whom they are accountable and for what

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Constitution
    - East Kent Joint Scrutiny Committee
    - Terms of reference
  - **The Council is required to:** consider those institutional stakeholders to whom they are accountable and assess the effectiveness of the relationship and any changes required

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Terms of reference
  - **The Council is required to:** produce an annual report on the activity of the Scrutiny function

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Overview and Scrutiny annual report
- **Supporting principle:** taking an active and planned 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
  - **The Council is required to:** ensure clear channels of communication are in place with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, and put in place monitoring arrangements to ensure that they operate effectively

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Community Strategy
    - Corporate Plan
    - Public consultation
    - Processes for dealing with competing demands within the community
  - **The Council is required to:** hold meetings in public unless there are good reasons for confidentiality

**We will do this through the following:**

    - Public meetings
  - **The Council is required to:** ensure that arrangements are in place to enable the Authority to engage with all sections of the community effectively. These arrangements should recognise that different sections of the community have

different priorities and establish explicit processes for dealing with these competing demands

**We will do this through the following:**

- Residents panels

- **The Council is required to:** establish a clear policy on the types of issues they will meaningfully consult on or engage with the public and service users about including a feedback mechanism for those consultees to demonstrate what has changed as a result

**We will do this through the following:**

- Partnership Framework
- Communication Strategy

- **The Council is required to:** on an annual basis, publish a performance plan giving information on the Authority's vision, strategy, plans and financial statements as well as information about its outcomes, achievements and the satisfaction of service users in the previous period

**We will do this through the following:**

- Annual performance report
- Annual financial statements
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Corporate Plan

- **The Council is required to:** ensure that the Authority as a whole is open and accessible to the community, service users and its staff and ensure that it has made a commitment to openness and transparency in all its dealings, including partnerships, subject only to the need to preserve confidentiality in those specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so

**We will do this through the following:**

- Constitution
- Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Internet protocol
- Communication Strategy

- **Supporting principle:** making best use of human resources by taking an active and planned approach to meet responsibility to staff

- **The Council is required to:** develop and maintain a clear policy on how staff and their representatives are consulted and involved in decision making

**We will do this through the following:**

- Trade Union recognition agreement
- Workforce Forum
- Communication Strategy
- Employee Council terms of reference

## Supporting Evidence

The table below provides the supporting evidence for the source documents, good practices adopted and the processes that Thanet District Council has in place.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place	Comments / Plans for improvement
	Yes / No	
Annual budget and Council Tax Consultation	Yes	The Council undertook a consultation on the Summary of Accounts and also on the spending priorities for Thanet District Council.
Annual efficiency statements	Yes	National Indicator 179 measures the total net value of ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains that have impacted since the start of the 2008/09 financial year. This indicator requires biannual data collection as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• July - Actual gains achieved since 1 April 2008 up to the end of the previous financial year.</li> <li>• October - Forecast cumulative position at end of current financial year.</li> </ul>
Annual financial statements	Yes	The Statement of Accounts are approved by the Governance and Audit Committee. This meets the statutory requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations. Anticipated future requirements for the financial position of the Council is published in the annual budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy. In March 2009 the Government published a consultation paper to seek views on amending the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 to improve transparency of reporting of remunerations of Senior official in some public bodies. The outcome will be taken on board and the annual statement of accounts will include information about the remuneration of Senior Officers.
Annual Financial Strategy	Yes	The Council's Financial Strategy balances the Council's commitment to a regime of financial rigour, prudence and discipline with the need to facilitate innovation and strong financial management.
Annual performance report	Yes	At the end of each year the Council produces an annual performance report. Up to 2006 this was called the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) but it is now called the Annual Performance Report. It details our performance and achievements over the past year and sets out our goals for the coming year.
Annual review of the effectiveness of the Governance and Audit Committee	Yes	This report is based on the National Audit Office self assessment, is reported on to Governance and Audit Committee and is taken to Full Council each year in an annual report.

<b>Source documents / good practice / processes in place:</b>	<b>In place Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Plans for improvement</b>
Annual review of the effectiveness of Internal Control report	Yes	The auditors are independent to the management of the Council and have direct access to the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee if required. They provide a regular update to the Committee at each of the quarterly meetings, and attend any special meetings that may be convened during the year.
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy	Yes	An anti-fraud and corruption policy is in place and has been communicated to the Authority. This document was reviewed in September 2007 and it is planned that it will be reviewed on a regular basis. This is also highlighted through the induction programme and staff charter.
Appraisal process	Yes	The appraisal system is designed to ensure that everyone knows what they are required to do and how this helps us achieve our goals, as well as how performance will be assessed.
Approved procedures and policies	Yes	There are numerous approved procedures and policies in place throughout the Council. The Council has in place a Publication scheme, which facilitates the proactive release of this type of information and plays a crucial role in supporting and providing greater openness and transparency across the public sector.
Area forums' roles and responsibilities	Yes	The Thanet Compact was developed jointly by Thanet District Council and its statutory and voluntary and community sector partners to improve the way the two sectors work together. The codes of practice, developed through consultation, contain undertakings by both sectors on how they will work together more effectively.
Audit reports	Yes	These can be viewed through the agenda for Governance and Audit Committee. For each Audit review, management agrees a report, and where appropriate, an action plan detailed proposed action and implementation dates relating to each recommendation.
Budget monitoring	Yes	Regular meetings are held between budget holders and accountancy, which is then reported to Corporate Management Team.
CDRP – partnership plan	Yes	Annual plan setting out priorities for tackling anti-social behaviour based on strategic assessment and resident consultation.
Charter Mark Standard for Customer Service Excellence	Yes	Charter mark status was awarded in May 2008 for a term of 3 years. The Council was assessed by the Cabinet Office against a strict set of customer service criteria. We are looking to extend obtaining Charter Mark Standards throughout the Authority.

<b>Source documents / good practice / processes in place:</b>	<b>In place Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Plans for improvement</b>
Code of Conduct	Yes	There are Member and Officer Codes of Conduct in place within the Constitution which are reviewed regularly.
Communication Strategy	Yes	The Council has an internal and external communications strategy in place which are due to be reviewed from November 2009.
Internal Communicators Network	Yes	Representatives from across the Council meet on a bi-monthly basis to discuss any internal communications issues. The Group act as ambassadors to promote new initiatives, policies and campaigns.
Community Portal	Yes	The council has a Community Portal of approximately 400 local groups and organisations. These groups represent a number of harder to reach people within the community, e.g disability groups, older/younger people, ethnic minorities etc.
Community Strategy	Yes	A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Kent, was adopted by the Council in October 2009.
Constitution	Yes	The Constitution is regularly reviewed and updated, with the next planned update due in 2008/09.
Continual Professional Development	Yes	Maintenance of CPD records for the Section 151 Officer in line with their professional body.
Contract with East Kent Audit Partnership	Yes	Outlines the level of service to be obtained by Internal Audit.
Corporate dashboard report	Yes	The Corporate Dashboard report goes to Corporate Management Team on a monthly basis and reports against key performance indicators in 3 categories – outputs and outcomes for the customer, internal performance and efficiency and financial / activity indicators. It also reports on the progress of the top 10 Corporate Plan projects.
Corporate Management Team	Yes	This group meets on a fortnightly basis to agree policy and deals with decision making. Outside presenters also attend to present on particular topics relevant to the Council.
Corporate Plan	Yes	The current Corporate Plan was agreed by Cabinet (14 June 2007) and Council (25 June 2007). A refresh of the Corporate Plan was agreed by Cabinet on the 12 February 2009 and Council on the 26 February 2009. A review is taking place towards the end of 2009 and will be reported to Cabinet on 11 February 2010 and the 25 February 2010 meeting of Council.

<b>Source documents / good practice / processes in place:</b>	<b>In place Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Plans for improvement</b>
Customer feedback system	Yes	Thanet District Council wants to provide the best service it can to the Community and the Customer Feedback process has been in place since August 2007. The internal process has been reviewed and went live on 1 October 2008, which includes complaints, compliments and comments. This has been expanded with effect from the 1 October 2009 to include Member contact. Service improvements are taking place as a direct result of customer feedback received and are published on the Web and Members Portal.
Decision-making protocols	Yes	Decision making process is detailed within the Council's Constitution.
Declaration of interest protocols	Yes	There are formal protocols in place for both Members and Officers available on request.
East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee	Yes	The first EKJAC held on the 25 June 2008 agreed the procedure rules and terms of reference, operating arrangements and administrative processes and also proposed arrangements for the EK Joint Scrutiny Committee looking at shared services. The operating arrangements allow the strategic aims of each participating authority to be achieved without compromising any other party.
East Kent Joint Management Team	Yes	In order to progress actions from the East Kent Joint Actions Committee, a Joint Management Team has been established.
East Kent Joint Scrutiny Committee	Yes	<p>The East Kent Joint Scrutiny Committee meets;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To monitor, review and scrutinise the actions and decisions of the East Kent (Joint Arrangements) Committee;</li> <li>• To make recommendations for re-consideration of any decisions made or actions taken and to make recommendations for improvement and/or changes in responsibilities and functions of the East Kent (Joint Arrangements) Committee;</li> <li>• To prepare reports and recommendations to the parties on the performance and delivery of shared services provided by the East Kent (Joint Arrangements) Committee;</li> <li>• To propose an annual budget for the East Kent (Joint Scrutiny) Committee in accordance with the requirements of the parties;</li> <li>• To prepare an annual report to the parties on the performance of these arrangements;</li> </ul> <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To facilitate the exchange of information about the work of the East Kent (Joint Scrutiny) Committee</li> </ul>

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
		and to share information and outcomes from reviews.
Employee Council terms of reference	Yes	Agreed by Management and Unison, and contained within the Trade Union recognition agreement as published on TOM.
Financial Procedure Rules	Yes	Financial Procedure Rules are detailed within the Council's Constitution.
Financial regulations	Yes	Related Party Transaction returns can be viewed within the Financial Statement.
Gifts and hospitality register	Yes	A Gifts and Hospitality Register is in place with Democratic Services for Members and Officers. This is available for viewing within Democratic Services.
Governance and Audit Committee terms of reference	Yes	The Terms of Reference for the Governance and Audit Committee were revised in line with CIPFA guidance and are reviewed on a regular basis.
Governance Group	Yes	The Governance Group subsumed the Corporate Risk Management Group in November 2007 and meet on a quarterly basis.
HR System / Clearvision	Yes	The Council was better placed to provide timely, accurate data on its workforce following the implementation of the HR system. Monthly reports provided to CMT covering staff / establishment / overtime / consultants / agency / sickness / disciplinaries / grievances.
Independent chair of Standards	Yes	The Standards Committee promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted Members. The Committee is chaired by an independent Member.
Individual service collaboration agreements and supporting SLA's for all East Kent Shared Services	Yes	First agreed for the East Kent Audit Partnership, more recently for East Kent HR Partnership. These set out the service level expectations.
Individual partnerships / contractors show expected outcomes	Yes	The Council is introducing a Partnership Register by the end of 2008 to collect all relevant partnership details and enable reporting on performance.
Induction programmes	Yes	Quarterly inductions are run for all new starters. This process has recently been reviewed and a booklet produced to support the individuals induction.
Internal Audit check of compliance and approved procedures and policies	Yes	The East Kent Audit Partnership report on a regular basis to the Governance and Audit Committee. This includes quarterly reports and an annual report.
Internal Audit Plan	Yes	To undertake a regular appraisal of the effectiveness of internal control.

<b>Source documents / good practice / processes in place:</b>	<b>In place Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Plans for improvement</b>
Internet protocol	Yes	The Council encourages the use of electronic communication via the Internet and email wherever possible. In accordance with its Code of Practice, it will look to enable its transactions to be undertaken electronically.
Investors in People Status	Yes	Status originally granted in March 2005. In 2008 the Council successfully retained Investors in People Status – reflecting that learning and development is high on the corporate agenda. Assessors specifically acknowledge that the objectives of the organisation are communicated to all levels of staff and people have a clear understanding of how their objectives cascade down.
Job descriptions / specifications	Yes	Job descriptions are in place for all staff including the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer, all of which have been reviewed as part of the Senior Management structural changes which are published on the Internet. An agreed job description template and guidance is in place for the Council.
Kent Compact	Yes	The Thanet Compact is implemented within the District and is working well and moving forward at a good pace. But as well as this, we also remain involved in the Kent Partners Compact and attend their committee meetings to be able to share best practice.
Leadership programme	Yes	Senior management and leadership training and development opportunities are available through working with Kent County Council.
Local area or performance agreements	Yes	Thanet District Council has signed up to the Kent Agreement 2 for Kent and is working with the Kent Partnership to deliver its contribution to the Agreement.
Local Code of Corporate Governance	Yes	The Local Code of Corporate Governance has been prepared in line with CIPFA guidelines. It is reviewed on an annual basis and approved by Governance and Audit Committee.
Local indicators	Yes	Local indicators are captured and monitored through the performance management system.
Managers Charter	Yes	The Managers Charter has been in place since 2008, and details the competencies / behaviour expected of all Managers in carrying out their duties.
Medium Term Financial Strategy	Yes	The Council has in place a Medium Term Financial Strategy 2009-2012, and is developing one for the period 2010 to 2015.
Member / Officer protocol	Yes	Protocol on Member / Officer relations in place within the Constitution.
Monitoring Officer provision	Yes	Officer's responsibilities in place within the Constitution.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Monthly performance monitoring	Yes	Monthly performance monitoring is undertaken looking at local and national PI's, also showing some cross cutting indicators by service, for the corporate management team to monitor and review.
National indicators	Yes	National indicators are captured and monitored through the performance management system.
Overview and Scrutiny annual report	Yes	Thanet's Overview and Scrutiny Panel (OSP) will make an annual report to the Annual Meeting of Council. This report summarises the key achievements of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel during the previous year and indicates the Panels' suggested priorities for forthcoming year.
Partnership Framework	Yes	The Partnership Framework demonstrates the governance arrangements that we are committed to as a Council and allows our partners and the public to see the key principles and standards that we aim to achieve.
Partnership Register	Yes	The Partnership Register captures pertinent information for each partnership including which Corporate Plan theme it is linked to, what type of partnership (strategic or operational), the purpose of the partnership, the organisations involved, insurance considerations and if group accounts are required.
Pay and conditions policies and practices	Yes	In November 2008 a restructure of senior management was implemented. The new structure moved to a Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, five Directors and one Head of Service. The Council used an independent review body to recommend appropriate salary levels which considered job size and general market position in this region for similar posts. Recommendations were approved through the General Purposes Committee.
Performance Management Framework	Yes	The Performance Management Framework is available to view through the Council's intranet site and was reviewed and reported to the March 2009 Governance and Audit Committee meeting alongside the Data Quality Framework, and will be reviewed on an annual basis.
Performance management system	Yes	The Council's new performance management system is in place. Corporate performance reports have been produced since the end of July 2009 and service reports will be monitored from November 2009.
Performance reporting	Yes	Monthly performance monitoring of local and national PI's is undertaken and monthly performance packs produced for each service. A corporate performance pack is produced each quarter.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Prioritisation matrix	Yes	This tool was developed by the Audit Commission and adopted by the Council, to generate strategic options in relation to the Council's functions and services.
Processes for dealing with competing demands within the community	Yes	The Council undertook a consultation on the Summary of Accounts and also on the spending priorities for Thanet District Council.
Professional body guidance documents (eg CIPFA)	Yes	Where documents are required to be in line with guidance documents this is undertaken. There are various professional bodies across the Authority and these can be viewed upon request.
Publication of Corporate Management Team pay and Member allowances	Yes	The Council published information about the salaries and expenses of the Chief Executive and other Members of the Corporate Management Team. The job purpose and principle duties and accountabilities of all Corporate Management Team and statutory appointments are also published. Member allowances are also published in accordance with Regulation 15(3) of the Local Authorities (Member Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 in respect of basic, special responsibility, co-optees', travelling and subsistence and dependant carers' allowances.
Public consultation	Yes	<p>A full programme of consultation is undertaken by Thanet District Council to ensure that our customers, local residents, partners and staff have an opportunity to have their say on the planning, delivery and improvement of our services.</p> <p>All consultation is identified from objectives set out in the Service Plans and links directly to Thanet District Council's Corporate Plan and Vision.</p> <p>The council carries out a regular programme of consultation each year with its residents. This is then used to measure levels of satisfaction year on year. Some consultations are full community wide campaigns ensuring the council engages with a wide audience across the whole of Thanet. Other consultations are targeted specifically to certain groups/council customers.</p> <p><b>Consultations completed so far:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of accounts</li> <li>• Thanet Vision</li> <li>• Youth Survey</li> </ul>

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gateway customer satisfaction</li> <li>• Clinical Waste satisfaction</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultations on-going:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDF: Core Strategy</li> <li>• Asset Management</li> <li>• Crime and Safety</li> <li>• Clean streets</li> <li>• SPD (Strategic planning)</li> <li>• Annual budget and Council Tax</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultations still to be carried out this year:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cliftonville conservation area</li> <li>• Night time flying</li> <li>• Refresh of residents' panel</li> <li>• General satisfaction with key council services</li> <li>• Joint working arrangements for Housing</li> </ul>
Public meetings	Yes	Detailed within the Constitution - Members of the public and press may only be excluded either in accordance with the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution or Rule 28 (Disturbance by Public). In the case of Planning Committee, for important cases, extra rooms are made available with a live televised link.
Quarterly performance packs	Yes	A corporate performance pack is produced for quarters 1 - 3 and the Annual Performance report for quarter 4. These monitor the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan.
Record of decision making and supporting materials	Yes	Thanet Council's Democratic Services Unit is responsible for maintaining the minutes of Council and other committee meetings as a true record of past decisions.
Regular reporting to the Council	Yes	Thanet District Council holds meetings on a regular basis which are minuted as a true record of proceedings.
Report of Ombudsmen findings	Yes	An annual report is presented to Corporate Management Team on the findings of Ombudsmen complaints.
Reports to Members / Officers on financial matters	Yes	Finance Services report on a regular basis to CMT and Cabinet on financial matters, including significant variances which are clearly identified in these reports.
Report template	Yes	A report template is in place for Thanet District Council which requests the author to consider legal, governance and financial implications.

<b>Source documents / good practice / processes in place:</b>	<b>In place Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Plans for improvement</b>
Residents panels	Yes	Community Matters is a consultative panel of around 1000 residents, which aims to give local people a chance to have their say about life in the District and about local public services. Thanet District Council set up and runs the panel. The Residents Panel has been running for four years so will be refreshed this year in line with best practice. This is to ensure that its Members are still statistically representative of Thanet and to give more residents the opportunity to get involved. (A core group of 100-200 Members from the existing panel will be kept on as an 'experts panel').
Risk Management Process	Yes	The Council has a Risk Management process in place which is reviewed on an annual basis and ratified by the Governance and Audit Committee.
Risk Management Strategy	Yes	The Council first approved its Risk Management Strategy in 2004 and since 2006 it has been reviewed annually.
Scheme of Delegation	Yes	Scheme of Officer Delegation is in place within the Constitution which is reviewed annually.
Scrutiny Panel reports, minutes and working group papers	Yes	Thanet Council's Democratic Services Unit is responsible for maintaining the minutes of Council and other Committee meetings as a true record of past decisions.
Section 151 provision	Yes	Detailed within the Officers responsibilities in the Constitution.
Service Level Agreements	Yes	In June / July 2009 Cabinet and Council agreed to delegate HR (including Training, Health and Safety and Payroll) to EKJAC. HR is now provided by the East Kent HR Partnership and Payroll will be provided by Kent County Council from February 2010. Collaboration agreement / SLA's have been agreed. A project group and strategic board is being developed. Thanet has retained the role of the Corporate Resources Manager to act in a client management and commissioning role to set, monitor and review the service standards provided by the shared service.
Service plans	Yes	Service Plans are in place, they are reviewed annually in line with the Corporate Plan refresh and budget setting process. The Service Planning process has been reviewed for 2010/11 and service aims, actions and performance indicators will be captured and monitored through the performance system.
Staff and Member development briefings	Yes	Staff development sessions take place on a monthly basis, with Member sessions every quarter. In addition to this, training is delivered to Members of the Governance and Audit Committee on finance, risk and governance issues.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Staff Charter	Yes	The Staff Charter articulates the relationship between Thanet District Council as an employer and its employees.
Staff conference	Yes	An annual staff conference takes place, which is informed in part by the Workforce Forum and details future corporate issues and reflects on the achievements of staff during the previous year.
Staff survey	Yes	A staff survey is currently undertaken bi-annually. This is moving to an annual process in lines with best practice.
Stakeholders' forums' terms of reference	Yes	An initial meeting of the Equalities Forum has taken place and the possibility of other equalities groups is being pursued.
Standing Orders	Yes	Prescribed and other Standing Orders detailed in the Constitution.
Statutory reports	Yes	Statutory reports can be viewed through the Council's agenda and minutes page.
Terms of reference	Yes	The terms of reference for all Committees are detailed within the Constitution.
Thanet Compact	Yes	The Compact provides a framework for improving working relations between local public and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations to strengthen relationships between partners for mutual advantage by establishing codes of practice that set out what partners can expect from each other. By following the codes and working within the "spirit" of the Compact, partner relations will change for the better and it will improve how partners engage, behave and work together at individual, organisational and partnership level.
Thanet Manager programme	Yes	Thanet Manager is a unique leadership course which commenced in 2006. People undertook the course achieving either diplomas or CMI certificates in management and recently received a regional National Training Award. The course has resulted in a number of benefits to the Council, including better communication with colleagues and residents, more efficient handling of workloads and projects, and greater understanding of the requirements and responsibilities of other services and departments.
Trade Union recognition agreement	Yes	This agreement recognises GMB and Unison for the purpose of collective bargaining, and has been approved by CMT. The Council complies with legislation on collective and individual consultation.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Training Development Plan for Members and Officers	Yes	<p>Member development sessions are programmed on a quarterly basis to ensure issues such as equalities, child protection and other governance processes are communicated as necessary to Members. A wide range of other Member development activities are undertaken, including a number of recent and planned sessions on ethical standards and the Code of Conduct. Also training takes place with the Governance and Audit Committee on a regular basis.</p> <p>The development needs of officers is undertaken as part of the appraisal process and of Senior Officers in relation to their strategic roles which have been identified and the Learning and Development Strategy 2007-2011 outlines activities to be implemented</p>
Up to date risk register	Yes	<p>The Council has been using the JCAD Risk system since November 2004. This system enables officers to take responsibility for risks and control measures assigned to them and review these on a regular basis. Periodic workshops are held to refresh Managers understanding of risk management and to challenge / update the corporate risk register.</p>
Use of 'legal' and 'financial' implications in report	Yes	<p>The Council has a report template in place, and also guidance notes to help with the report writing process. There is a process in place for the Finance and Legal Departments demonstrate that they have been consulted upon and have signed off the report. Such consultation is mandatory for all executive decisions.</p>
Use of Resources assessments	Yes	<p>The outcomes from the Use of Resources assessments have been used to target areas of improvement.</p>
Value for Money (Efficiency) Strategy	Yes	<p>Each year a Value for Money (Efficiency) Strategy is approved that outlines the steps that will be taken over the medium term to maximise the gains realisable from efficiency measures, and to provide evidence of the Council's performance in achieving Value for Money. Such an approach will strengthen the Council's corporate processes for managing its resources and achieving value for money that will bring benefits to the cost and quality of the services it delivers.</p>
Value for Money audits	Yes	<p>In addition to key control audits the East Kent Audit Partnership have been carrying out Value for Money audits.</p>
Value for Money programme	Yes	<p>A programme of value for money reviews is in place that the Council is working to, and this is monitored through the Value for Money Programme Board, then taken to the Scrutiny Working Party.</p>

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Value for Money Programme Board terms of reference and minutes	Yes	The Value for Money Programme Board meet on a regular basis to monitor the review programme and also the results of the reviews undertaken. Terms of reference for this group are in place and minutes taken for each meeting.
Vision for Thanet	Yes	The Vision for Thanet document was adopted by Council in July 2009. This document sets out future plans for what Thanet will look and be like in 2030. It was consulted on widely with TDC staff and Members, the residents' panel, TDC partners and stakeholders including Kent County Council, Police, NHS, Manston Airport, Highways Agency and Transeuropa. Details of the consultation were covered in a full page spread in spring 2009 edition of Thanet Matters (delivered to 64,000 properties) and was published on the front page of TDC's website throughout the consultation period and the consultation pages featured an online survey for residents/partners to complete.
Whistleblowing Policy	Yes	Council have approved an updated Code which has an annual review process of this document is in place. The Code is also proactively communicated to staff, Members and those contracting with the Council.
Workforce Forum	Yes	This Group provides the mechanism for staff consultation within the Council.
You Said, We Did	Yes	Service improvements are taking place as a direct result of customer feedback received and are published on the Web and Members Portal.
Your Services – Your Council Tax publication	Yes	A collaborative document produced by district councils, including Thanet, which also featured information from the Fire Service and Police on Council Tax spend.

## Document History

Version	Date	Agreed by	Minute ref
V1	10 Nov 2004	Cabinet	CR/74
	20 Jan 2005	Standards	75
	17 Feb 2005	Council	84
V2	5 Nov 2007	Governance Group	GG/07-08/4
	12 Dec 2007	Governance and Audit Committee	R189
	31 Jan 2008	Cabinet	C16
	21 Feb 2008	Council	86
V3	10 Nov 2008	Governance Group	Gov05 (10/11/08)
	9 Dec 2008	Governance and Audit Committee	R191
	12 Mar 2009	Cabinet	54
	23 Apr 2009	Council	30
V4	16 Nov 2009	Governance Group	Gov07
	8 Dec 2009	Governance and Audit Committee	51.