

Thanet District Council

Local Code of Corporate Governance

Version 6
December 2011



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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:** develop and promote the authority's purpose and vision.

We will do this through the following:

- Thanet Vision 2030
- Thanet Strategy
- Corporate Plan
- Service plans
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Thanet Community Safety Plan
- Information Exchange

- **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
- Thanet Vision 2030
- Thanet Strategy
- Corporate Plan
- 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
- State of the District report
- 'Your Services – Your Council Tax' publication
- Statement of Accounts
- Medium Term Financial Plan

- **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
- Senior Management Team
- Performance presentations to Performance Board
- Star Chamber
- Performance Board

- **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
- Improvement Forum
- Performance reporting
- Performance Management Framework
- Performance Board

- **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 Plan
- Value for Money (Efficiency) Strategy
- Improvement Forum
- Improvement Board
- Performance reporting
- 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 Senior Management Team pay and member allowances
 - Committee 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
 - Senior Management Team/Cabinet
 - **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
 - Codes of Conduct
 - Core values and priorities
 - Scheme of Delegation
 - Job descriptions / specifications
 - Performance management system
 - Register of Interests
 - Whistleblowing Code
 - Gifts and hospitality register

- **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:

- Section 151 provision
- 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 the council's internal audit arrangements 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
- East Kent HR Partnership HR system / i-Trent
- East Kent HR Partnership Service Level Agreements
- Budget monitoring
- Single Data List (previously 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:

- Thanet Vision 2030
- Thanet Strategy
- Corporate Plan
- Service plans
- Star Chamber
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Performance Management Framework
- Annual budget and Council Tax consultation
- Public consultation and engagement
- Policy Board

- **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 Code
- Appraisal process
- Codes of Conduct
- Talent management programme
- Governance Board

- **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:

- Codes of Conduct
- Performance management system
- Appraisal process
- Customer feedback system
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Member / officer protocol
- Core values and priorities
- Improvement Plan

- **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
 - Improvement Plan
 - Staff consultations
 - Staff and member development briefings
 - Staff conference
 - Appraisal process
 - Core values and priorities
- **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
 - Professional body guidance documents (eg CIPFA)
 - Policy Board
- **The council is required to:** develop and maintain an effective Standards Committee

We will do this through the following:

- Committee 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:

 - Codes 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 and Annual Report
 - Training Development Plan for members and officers
 - **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 Board

- **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 Code
- Core values and priorities

- **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
 - Talent management programme
 - Personal Development Plans
 - 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
- Member role descriptions
- Training Development Plan for members and officers

- **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
- Equality Impact Assessments

- **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:

- Talent management programme
- Change management 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
 - 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:

 - Committee 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:

 - Sustainable Community Strategy
 - Corporate Plan
 - Public consultation and engagement
 - Processes for dealing with competing demands within the community
 - Thanet Community Safety Partnership Open Forums
 - **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
 - Community forums
 - Equality Impact Assessments
 - Thanet Community Safety Partnership Open Forums
 - Community Database
- **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
 - Community Database
- **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
 - Statement of Accounts
 - Medium Term Financial Plan
 - 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
 - Publication Scheme
 - Freedom of Information process
- **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
- Improvement 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 Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Annual Budget and Council Tax Consultation	Yes	Each year the council undertakes a consultation on the spending priorities for Thanet District Council.
Annual performance report	Yes	At the end of each year the council produces an annual performance report that details key performance and achievements over the past year.
Annual review of the effectiveness of the council's Internal Audit arrangements 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. The review of the effectiveness of the council's internal audit arrangements is important in order to add credence to the assurances gained for the Annual Governance Statement.
Annual review of the effectiveness of the Governance and Audit Committee and Annual Report	Yes	This report summarises the achievements of the Governance and Audit Committee against its terms of reference and details the impact that it has made on the overall system of internal control in operation for that period. The outcome is reported on to Governance and Audit Committee and is taken to Full Council each year in an annual report.
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy	Yes	An Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy is in place and has been communicated to the authority and is reviewed on a regular basis. This is also highlighted through the induction programme.
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 third sector partners to improve the way the two sectors work together. It was refreshed in 2010 following the General Election to incorporate the Big Society ethos. The Compact contains commitments and undertakings by both sectors on how they will work together more effectively. The Thanet Compact is now facilitated by Thanet Voluntary Community Sector Forum (TVCSF).

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
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 detailing proposed action(s) and implementation dates relating to each recommendation.
Budget monitoring	Yes	Adequate arrangements are in place to ensure budget managers are kept informed of their budget responsibilities.
Change management programme	Yes	<p>In support of the significant organisational change, East Kent HR Partnership organised a Change Programme.</p> <p>The half day programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support people in understanding the impact of change and to provide some tools for managing personal change and supporting others, and • support leaders and managers of people in understanding the impact of change, to define the role of the people manager and to provide tools for managing personal change and supporting the team.
Codes of Conduct	Yes	There are Member and Officer Codes of Conduct in place within the Constitution which are reviewed regularly.
Committee terms of reference	Yes	The terms of reference for all Committees are detailed within the Constitution.
Communication Strategy	Yes	The council has a Communications Strategy in place which was approved by Corporate Management Team.
Community Database	Yes	The council has a Community Database of approximately 1,000 local groups, organisations and clubs who are communicated with on a regular basis. This database is managed by the Community Development Team, and contains a wide variety of interest groups and organisations including a number of harder to reach and more vulnerable groups e.g. young/old people, disability groups, ethnic minorities.
Community Forums	Yes	The council has regular representation at a number of local fora, these include the Senior Citizens Forum, the Thanet Disability Forum, Engage Youth Forum etc. These groups are generally externally co-ordinated and represent a number of the more vulnerable community groups. Officers attend to provide a channel of communication between these groups and the council. Feedback is then used to help improve the service the council provides to specific groups in the community and to ensure that they have a voice in council consultations and campaigns.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Community Portal	Yes	The council has a Community Portal of approximately 400 local groups and organisations. This portal is self managed so members are able to update any details or information about the group they represent and to promote specific activities or events. As above these groups represent a number of more vulnerable people within the community.
Constitution	Yes	The Constitution is regularly reviewed and updated.
Continual Professional Development	Yes	Maintenance of CPD records for officers in line with their professional body.
Contract with East Kent Audit Partnership	Yes	Outlines the level of service to be provided by Internal Audit.
Core values and priorities	Yes	<p>Prioritising the council's efforts to ensure that resources are directed to those areas that can make the biggest difference, the focus will be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperity: Attracting employment, especially by supporting tourism and the green economy • Place: Keeping Thanet beautiful by making the place clean, green and a healthy place to be • People: Working together to make Thanet safe and improve the quality of life for all • Performance: Delivering services we are proud of; that make a difference and provide value for money for our residents <p>The council will conduct its business in accordance with the following core values:</p> <p>We will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair • Respectful and considerate • Focussed on quality • Interested in listening to your views • Measured and thoughtful • Committed to do the right thing, the right way at the right time
Corporate Plan	Yes	<p>The council's Interim Corporate Plan will come to an end in March 2012. Work has already begun in preparing a new plan to take its place. It is anticipated that this will be a rolling plan (rather than a fixed term 4 year plan) enabling it to tie in more closely to the budget setting process.</p> <p>The new Corporate Plan will be influenced by a variety of pieces of work. These include the recently produced State of the District report which sets out in depth some of the key facts and figures about Thanet and its people and shows how the district compares to other areas.</p>

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Customer feedback system	Yes	Thanet District Council wants to provide the best service it can to the community and has a Customer Feedback process in place, which includes complaints, compliments, service requests, member contact and comments. 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 HR Partnership HR System / i-Trent	No	There are currently system development progress delays due to issues encountered.
East Kent HR Partnership Service Level Agreements	Yes	The HR function is provided by the East Kent HR Partnership and Payroll is provided by Kent County Council. Collaboration agreements / SLA's have been agreed. A project group and strategic board are in place. Within the corporate restructure Thanet has the role of Contracts and Partnerships Relationship Manager to act in a client management and commissioning role to set, monitor and review the service standards provided by the shared service.
East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee (EKJAC)	Yes	EKJAC has agreed 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 Arrangements 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"> • To monitor, review and scrutinise the actions and decisions of the East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee; • 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; • To prepare reports and recommendations to the parties on the performance and delivery of shared services provided by the East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee; • To propose an annual budget for the East Kent Joint

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
		<p>Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the requirements of the parties;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prepare an annual report to the parties on the performance of these arrangements; and • To facilitate the exchange of information about the work of the East Kent Joint Scrutiny Committee and to share information and outcomes from reviews.
Employee Council terms of reference	Yes	The council has a Trade Union Recognition Agreement, agreed by Management, Unison and GMB. The Employee Council, the recognised collective bargaining unit, meets on a regular basis and remains a key forum for discussing issues and maintaining effective employer/union relationships.
Equality Impact Assessments	Yes	The council is currently reviewing its approach to Equalities to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
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.
Freedom of Information process	Yes	Thanet Council routinely publishes a great deal of information and the management process for FOI requests includes a check to ensure information is published if possible. Information may be able to be found through the council's Publication Scheme or elsewhere on the website. However, if the information that is wanted cannot be found a request can be made through the 'Freedom of Information' process.
Gifts and Hospitality Register	Yes	A Gifts and Hospitality Register is in place with Democratic Services for members and officers.
Governance and Audit Committee terms of reference	Yes	The terms of reference for the Governance and Audit Committee are prepared in line with CIPFA guidance and are reviewed on a regular basis.
Governance Board	Yes	The Governance Board meet on a six weekly basis. The purpose of the Board is to support the council by monitoring and reviewing the risk, control and governance processes which have been established and address any upcoming processes as required.
Improvement Board	Yes	SMT Board that provides a regular opportunity to consider areas of improvement in council services and corporate processes and to consider recommendations for implementation.
Improvement Forum	Yes	The Improvement Forum will shortly be superseded by a new corporate wide initiative to encourage staff to think differently about how they work and submit improvement ideas through team meetings, on-line and physical suggestion boxes and informal networking meetings on

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
		specific topics. This new approach will be supported by a dedicated area on the Intranet which will also have updates on innovative projects around the council as well as an expertise exchange function in a later phase.
Improvement Plan	Yes	The Improvements Plan looks at the behaviours and values for the council and how we embed these in the culture, and also reflect them in policies and procedures.
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 partnerships / contractors show expected outcomes	Yes	The council is reviewing the Partnership Register which collects all relevant partnership details. It also has in place a contracts register which includes contracts above a certain minimum value, currently £75k over the contract duration.
Individual service collaboration agreements and supporting SLA's for all East Kent Shared Services	Yes	These set out the service level expectations for all shared services.
Induction programmes	Yes	This process has been reviewed and a booklet produced to support the individuals induction.
Information Exchange	Yes	SMT meeting to discuss emerging issues, matters of importance and urgent decisions.
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 controls in place.
Internal Communicators Network	No	The Group is under review as part of the new Internal Communications Strategy.
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	In September 2011 the council underwent an internal review which will enable us to create an action plan in order to achieve the standard. In the meantime the council retains that status for two years and will then be re-assessed.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Job descriptions / specifications	Yes	Job descriptions are in place for all staff including the Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) and Monitoring 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. The Kent Compact are currently undergoing a refresh in line with the national Compact refresh following the May 2010 elections.
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.
Medium Term Financial Plan	Yes	The council has in place a Medium Term Financial Plan for the period 2011 to 2016, which sets out the council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and presents indicative budgets and Council Tax levels for the medium term.
Member / officer protocol	Yes	Protocol on member / officer relations in place within the Constitution.
Member role descriptions	Yes	Member role descriptions have been approved by Council and now form part of the council's constitutional arrangements.
Monitoring Officer provision	Yes	Officer's responsibilities in place within the Constitution.
Monthly performance monitoring	Yes	Monthly performance monitoring is undertaken looking at local PI's, key action plans and projects. A monthly update is provided by each service to the Performance Board.
Overview and Scrutiny annual report	Yes	The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (OSP) 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 the forthcoming year.
Partnership Framework	Yes	The Partnership Framework is currently under review but will demonstrate 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.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Partnership Register	Yes	The Partnership Register is being reviewed but will capture pertinent information for each partnership including which Corporate Plan objective 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	The senior management structure is currently made up of a Chief Executive and five Service Managers. 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 Board	Yes	SMT Board that develops the council's business plans and undertakes performance management to assess progress against plans and identifies and commits to appropriate remedial action.
Performance Management Framework	Yes	The Performance Management Framework is available to view through the council's intranet site alongside the Data Quality Framework. Both documents are reviewed on a regular basis.
Performance management system	Yes	The council's performance management system is used to collate the vast majority of data required for the Performance Board presentations.
Performance presentations to Performance Board	Yes	Every month each SMT member presents a set of slides to the Performance Board on the performance of their service. Presentations alternate on a monthly basis. In the first month they cover general performance. In the second month they cover financial performance.
Performance reporting	Yes	Monthly performance monitoring of management indicators, progress against projects and action plans is in place through the Performance Board. A corporate performance pack is produced each quarter for Cabinet.
Personal Development Plans	Yes	As part of the appraisal process all officers have a Personal Development Plan which is then discussed at performance reviews.
Policy Board	Yes	SMT Board that shapes and sets the policy framework and operating arrangements for the council.
Processes for dealing with competing demands within the community	Yes	The council undertook a consultation on the spending priorities for Thanet District Council.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Professional body guidance documents (eg CIPFA)	Yes	There are various professional bodies across the authority and these can be viewed upon request.
Public consultation and engagement	Yes	<p>The council regularly communicates, engages and consults on the services it provides 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. Each consultation is carried out in accordance with the council's corporate consultation guide and is fully evaluated on completion.</p> <p>The council carries out a regular programme of consultation each year with its residents which is used to identify priorities for the council to measure satisfaction. As well as this regular programme of consultation, the council also carries out ad-hoc consultation in response to one off campaigns or initiatives.</p> <p>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>Consultations completed so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 4 Directives HMO • Air Quality Monitoring area extension • How the council communicates with residents • Gateway customer satisfaction (carried out every 6 months) <p>Consultations on-going:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margate Football Club proposals • Asset Management consultations • Community Safety Open Forums • Gateway customer satisfaction (carried out every 6 months) <p>Consultations still to be carried out this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Night time flying • Extension to Cliftonville Conservation Area • Corporate Plan • Housing Strategy

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
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.
Publication of Senior Management Team pay and member allowances	Yes	The council publishes information about the salaries and expenses of the Chief Executive and other members of the Senior Management Team. The job purpose and principle duties and accountabilities of all Senior 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.
Publication Scheme	Yes	<p>The Publication Scheme sets out the classes of information which Thanet District Council publishes, or intends to publish, which has been approved by the Information Commissioner. The Publication Scheme lists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to get hold of information, • Indicates if there is a charge for information. <p>The Publication Scheme is regularly reviewed and updated as new items are published. More information is added as we understand better what information is wanted.</p>
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.
Register of Interests	Yes	There is a process in place for members and officers to declare an interest which could bring about a conflict with the council's interests.
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 Senior Management Team on the findings of Ombudsmen complaints and is published on the council's website.
Report template	Yes	A report template is in place for Thanet District Council which requests the author to consider legal, governance and financial implications.
Reports to members / officers on financial matters	Yes	Financial Services report on a regular basis to SMT and Cabinet on financial matters, including significant variances which are clearly identified in these reports.

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Residents' panels	Yes	Community Matters is a consultative panel of Thanet 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 sets up and runs the panel. The former Residents' Panel has run for five years and is currently being refreshed in line with best practice. This is to ensure that its members are still as statistically representative of Thanet and to give more residents the opportunity to get involved. A core group of 150 members from the former panel have agreed to 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	A 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.
Senior Management Team	Yes	From May 2011 the Senior Management Team meetings were changed. SMT meet every Tuesday, the first part of the meeting is dedicated to 'Information Exchange / Urgent Business' and is then followed by an SMT Board which meet on a rotational basis. The Boards are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Board • Improvement Board • Performance Board • Policy Board
Senior Management Team / Cabinet	Yes	Provides a regular opportunity to discuss emerging issues, matters of importance and urgent decisions with Cabinet Members.
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 is being reviewed for 2011/12 and service aims, actions and performance indicators will be captured and monitored through the performance system.
Single Data List (previously National indicators)	Yes	There is no longer a national indicator set (it was removed in March 2011). A minority of indicators from this set were carried forward to the Single Data List for local government. Unless identified specifically by services as being useful management indicators, the

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
		items on the single data list are not used by TDC for performance management purposes. The list is purely used to help us identify the returns we need to make to central government.
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.
Staff conference	No	Following consultation with staff, the current format for the annual staff conference has been discontinued. A new approach is now under review as part of the Internal Communications Strategy.
Staff consultations	Yes	<p>Staff are consulted on specific issues, projects and initiatives on an on-going basis. Consultations are generally carried out by an online survey or staff poll (on TOM) although paper copies of each survey are always available on request and are promoted to those staff without access to computers. Consultations include regular surveys as well as one off surveys. Major public consultations are also promoted to TDC staff as part of a regular update in the staff information sessions.</p> <p>A staff survey is currently undertaken annually which will be delivered by the East Kent HR Partnership.</p>
Stakeholders' forums' terms of reference	Yes	The council has revised it's framework and membership for progressing equalities, which has been agreed by the Senior Management Team.
Standing Orders	Yes	Prescribed and other Standing Orders are detailed in the Constitution.
Star Chamber	Yes	<p>Star Chamber sessions were held in July-September 2011 where service managers were asked to justify their service. They were asked about every part of their spending, where service cuts could be made and whether their service could be delivered in a different way.</p> <p>An action plan has been developed from the Star Chamber meetings and managers will be required to implement the actions that they have been allocated.</p>
State of the District report	Yes	<p>A 'State of the District' report has been compiled which summarises recent data for key indicators of social wellbeing in Thanet, comparing the most recently available data with other districts and county averages.</p> <p>The information in the report requires updating and we aim to add other new data sources into the report. We are hoping to develop a single approach to publishing the</p>

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
		results of the report on the Thanet website within the next year.
Statement of Accounts	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 are published in the annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan.
Statutory reports	Yes	Statutory reports can be viewed through the council's agenda and minutes page.
Sustainable Community Strategy	Yes	A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Kent, was adopted by the council.
Talent management programme	No	The council has commissioned the EK HR Partnership to provide a talent management programme for Senior Management. This will be delivered during 2012/13.
Thanet Compact	Yes	<p>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.</p> <p>The Thanet Compact was developed jointly by Thanet District Council and its statutory and third sector partners to improve the way the two sectors work together. It was refreshed in 2010 following the General Election to incorporate the Big Society ethos. The Compact contains commitments and undertakings by both sectors on how they will work together more effectively. The Thanet Compact is now facilitated by Thanet Voluntary Community Sector Forum (TVCSF).</p>
Thanet Community Safety Partnership Open Forums	Yes	<p>Thanet Community Safety Partnership have a statutory duty to consult with local people on crime, anti-social behaviour and disorder issues.</p> <p>In April 2011 the partnerships engagement plan was changed with Partners and Communities Together Panels (PACT) being replaced by one quarterly open forum headed by senior managers, along with four regional neighbourhood panels.</p> <p>Every panel has a police lead and a council officer lead and at all of the four panels elected members also attend. Representation from other partners such as Kent</p>

Source documents / good practice / processes in place:	In place Yes / No	Comments / Plans for improvement
Use of 'legal' and 'financial' implications in report	Yes	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.
Value for Money (Efficiency) Strategy	Yes	A Value for Money (Efficiency) Strategy has been 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.
Value for Money audits	Yes	In addition to key control audits the East Kent Audit Partnership have been carrying out Value for Money audits.
Whistleblowing Code	Yes	The council has a Whistleblowing Code in place that is proactively communicated to staff, members and those contracting with 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.
V5	7 Dec 2010	Governance Group	Gov04
	13 Jan 2011	Governance and Audit Committee	117.
V6	8 Nov 2011	Governance Board	6.
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