



# **Annual Governance Statement Governance 2018/19**

**Hull City Council**

Version 1.2

May 2019

Proposed review: April 2020

## **1. Scope of Responsibility**

Hull City Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards; and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council has adopted a Code of Corporate Governance (the Code), which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework: *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016 Edition)*. This statement explains how the Council has complied with the Code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, regulation 6(1), which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an Annual Governance Statement.

The Council has completed the annual review of the Code for 2018/19. This was approved by the Audit Committee on 29 October 2018 and a copy of the Code is on our website at [www.hull.gov.uk](http://www.hull.gov.uk).

## **2. The Purpose of the Governance Framework**

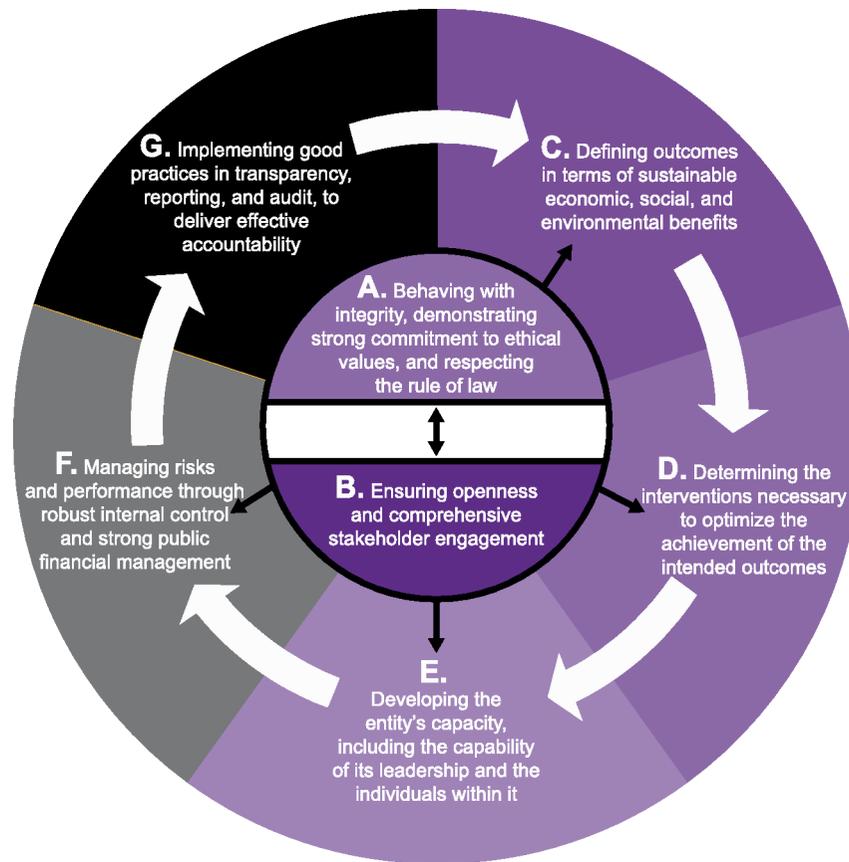
The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads its communities. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable and acceptable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to achievement of Council policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The governance framework has been in place within Hull City Council for the year ended 31 March 2019 and up to the date of the approval of the Statement of Accounts.

### 3. The Governance Framework

The Council's governance framework is consistent with the seven core principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework.



For each governance principle we have identified the sources of assurance and the governance mechanisms in place.

## Assurance Cycle

### Understand

**What are we seeking to receive assurances on?**

- Delivery against the City Plan, the Corporate Plan and Service Plans whilst observing the governance framework
- Delivery of sustainable economic, social & environmental benefits
- Design and effectiveness of internal controls, risk management and counter fraud arrangements
- Strong commitment to ethical values
- Compliance with laws, regulation, the Council's constitution, internal strategies, policies and procedures
- Key governance tools are fit for purpose, for e.g. budget monitoring, performance and risk management
- Direction of travel of any previously identified governance issues
- Budget results, performance results and Value for Money

### Plan

**What sources of assurance do we require?**

- Management assurances in respect of compliance with laws and regulations, corporate strategies, policies, plans and arrangements e.g. Constitution, Financial Monitoring and Reporting, Performance Monitoring and Reporting, Risk Management
- Statutory Officers
- Key partner assurances in respect of their governance arrangements
- Internal Audit Plan, Reports and Opinion
- Non-Executive Committees e.g. Audit Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Commissions
- External Bodies and Inspectorates e.g. External Audit, Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, Ombudsman etc.
- Schools

### Do

**How we will arrange ourselves to receive adequate assurances.**

- Corporate Strategy Team
- Assistant Directors
- Council
- Cabinet
- Cabinet Sub-Committees:
  - Executive Commissioning Committee
  - Executive Committee in Common with NHS Hull CCG
  - Trustee Committee
- Regulatory Committees (Planning and Licensing)
- Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Governance Committees: (Audit and Appointments)
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Humber Leaders Board
- Partnership/Delivery Boards,
  - The Place Based Board
  - Business Leadership Board
- Project Boards

### Review

**How we know that we are effective.**

- Review sources of assurance identified at the Planning Phase
- Ensure sources of assurance have delivered against their plans at the necessary quality
- Review Code of Corporate Governance for compliance with best practice
- Review internal reports that provide further insight such as: financial monitoring, performance monitoring, risk management, internal audit, Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Audit Committee reports.
- Review interim and annual external reports/letters from External Auditor, Ofsted, CQC and other inspection regimes
- Annual Review of the Business Plans of In house Companies
- Accountable Body role for the Humber LEP through formal decision records
- Constitutional Review
- Highlight areas of weakness

**Principle A - Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.**

Sub principles	Demonstrated by	
Behaving with integrity	<p>The Council’s leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect. Appropriate policies and processes are in place to embed the principles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitution</li> <li>• Councillors’ Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Code of Conduct for Employees</li> <li>• Protocol for Councillor and Officer relationships</li> <li>• Corporate Equality Policy</li> <li>• Register of Interests</li> <li>• Gifts and Hospitality Policy</li> <li>• Role of the Monitoring Officer and Independent Person in reviewing Member behaviour.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Examples of good governance:-</u></p> <p>All relevant codes and policies are periodically reviewed and there are established processes in place to respond to breaches. These include effective disciplinary, grievance, anti-fraud, complaints and whistleblowing procedures.</p> <p>The Council has completed a staff opinion survey which asked questions around Council Priorities, behaviours relating to equalities and learning opportunities.</p>
Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values	<p>The following corporate values are in place for both the council and its staff; and they are embedded in codes of conduct for members and staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Open and honest communication.</i></li> <li>• <i>Putting people and communities at the heart of everything we do.</i></li> <li>• <i>Ensuring people are treated equally and difference is valued.</i></li> <li>• <i>Valuing and investing in people as the Council’s key resource.</i></li> <li>• <i>Encouraging local democracy and public accountability.</i></li> <li>• <i>Being responsive to changing aspirations, priorities and opportunities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Striving for excellence.</i></li> <li>• <i>Concentrating on outcomes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Contributing to and taking an interest in all new initiatives within the city.</i></li> </ul>	<p>There is a well-established pre-decision scrutiny process including input of Legal and Finance officers, to ensure the Council’s Key Decisions are consulted upon and made in accordance with the decision making principles within the Constitution and the rule of law.</p>
Respecting the rule of law	<p>The Council has an agreed Constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure these are within the law, efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.</p>	

**Principle B - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement**

Sub principles	Demonstrated by	
Openness	<p>A culture of transparency, openness and honesty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom of Information Act publication scheme</li> <li>• Compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code</li> <li>• Report Writer’s Guide</li> </ul>	<p><u>Examples of good governance:-</u></p> <p>The articulated framework provides a model of good governance.</p>
Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	<p>The Council has an established structural framework for managing engagement with institutional stakeholders<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>Executive Members: The Executives of the Council and the NHS Hull CCG have delegated powers in relation to Health and Social Care to Executive sub-committees to enable decisions to be made in Common between the organisations at joint meetings.</p> <p>Cross-organisational strategic leadership: The Health and Wellbeing Board brings together democratic and officer strategic leadership across the Health and Social Care sectors in the City, to develop a shared strategic vision. The Safeguarding Boards and the Better Care Plan report into the Board.</p> <p>Chief Officers: The Chief Officers of the Public Sector and Voluntary Sector bodies in the city have established a Place Based Board for the city within the framework of the National Health Sustainable Transformation Plan to through which a shared outcomes framework and shared strategic plans are developed.</p> <p>The Council and partner agencies are developing joint workforce development plans for key services in Adult Social Care and Children’s and Family Services within this framework.</p> <p>Private Sector: The City has a Business Leadership Board through which the public sector in the city engages with the private sector in the city to help establish a single cohesive vision for the future of the city. This engagement led to the development of the City Plan.</p>	<p>The Council has a dedicated Information Governance Group which, amongst other things actively monitors performance on Freedom of Information requests.</p> <p>The Council publishes its decisions and supporting information through its CMIS website as soon as they are made and has an established scrutiny challenge process to ensure that the information presented is open and transparent.</p> <p>The Council publishes through its website the governance documents in relation to its role within partner organisations.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Appendix B. Partnership Framework

Sub principles	Demonstrated by	
	<p>Sub-Region: Across the Humberside region a Joint Committee of Executive Leaders, the Humber Leaders Board, which provides the democratic accountability for the development of the Humberside Local Enterprise Partnership</p> <p>Trades Unions: The Council and Trades Unions operate within an agreed Industrial Relations Framework led by an Industrials Relations Joint Council upon which elected members, officers and employee representatives meet.</p> <p>Leisure and Culture: The Council is represented on the Active Humber County Sports Partnership and the Board of Absolutely Cultured.</p> <p>Schools: the Council has an established Hull Schools Forum and is developing a partnership with Multi Academy Trusts operating in the city.</p>	<p>The Council oversees its stakeholder and citizen engagement frameworks, through the Place Based Board.</p> <p>It has recognised a need to ensure there is adequate engagement with Multi Academy Trusts, developing industries and the wider health community.</p> <p>The Council has an Industrial relations framework for consultation, information and negotiation with trade unions.</p>
<p>Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively</p>	<p>The Council ensures that clear channels of communication are in place with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, for example:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People’s Panel</li> <li>• Enterprise Panel</li> <li>• Customer Feedback Policy</li> <li>• Petitions scheme</li> <li>• Tenant participation</li> <li>• Ward Forums and Area Committees</li> <li>• Council’s website</li> <li>• Young People’s Parliament and Youth Council</li> <li>• Voluntary and Community Sector.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council has a Citizen’s Account which has been procured to facilitate a city wide cross organisational offer.</p>

**Principle C - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits**

Sub principles	Demonstrated by	
Defining outcomes	<p>Focusing on the purpose of the Council and on outcomes for the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hull City Plan</li> <li>• Hull Place Strategy</li> <li>• Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Customer insight analysis</li> <li>• Equality analysis and impact assessments</li> <li>• Service plans</li> <li>• Performance framework</li> </ul>	<p><u>Examples of good governance:-</u></p> <p>There are processes in place for these plans, and performance review mechanisms for them to be updated and priorities reviewed on a regular basis.</p> <p>All recent evidence demonstrates the City is achieving a sustainable economy. The focus is now on inclusive growth to ensure that all sections of society receive the benefits.</p>
Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Plan update</li> <li>• Service objectives</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>• Environmental policy statement</li> <li>• Environment management system</li> <li>• Policy development guidance notes</li> <li>• Capital programme</li> <li>• Commissioning and Procurement Policy</li> <li>• Adopted Local Plan</li> <li>• Living Wage/anti-poverty agenda.</li> <li>• Social wellbeing via public health, re quality jobs, clean air etc.</li> <li>• Focus on inclusive growth.</li> <li>• Environmental team undertakes statutory environmental health checks.</li> <li>• Commitment to sustainable procurement and fair trade.</li> <li>• Smart City Strategy</li> <li>• Climate Emergency Declaration</li> </ul>	<p>The Council approved the updated City Plan and the Council's Corporate Plan within the development of the budget and policy framework at the meeting of Council in January 2019.</p> <p>Regular finance, performance and risk management reports on the overall success and challenges across the Council are provided to the Executive and Scrutiny Committees.</p>

**Principle D - Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes**

Sub principles	Demonstrated by	
<p>Determining and planning interventions</p>	<p>Published reports which communicate the Council’s activities, achievements, financial position and performance. Regular monitoring of service and financial performance during the year which determines when action is required. Interventions required are identified through these reports, as well as external sources such as scanning for new legislation and successful initiatives by our peer authorities, partners and other organisations:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service and budget monitoring Reports</li> <li>• Financial Statements</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement</li> <li>• Annual Audit Report</li> <li>• Quarterly service reviews of key risks</li> <li>• Quarterly Internal Audit reports</li> <li>• Service performance reports and programme management reports for major change programmes</li> </ul> <p>Reports from external inspectorates</p>	<p><u>Examples of good governance:-</u></p> <p>All of the expected reports are produced, analysed and acted upon.</p> <p>Corporate Peer Review undertaken in June 2018, and Adult Social Care peer review undertaken February 2018, both with positive outcomes.</p> <p>External inspections are usually positive, (see Section 7) so provide assurance about service delivery and governance:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unqualified (‘clean’) external audit opinions on the Council’s accounts and arrangements for achieving value for money.</li> </ul>
<p>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes</p>	<p>Community outcomes as defined in the City Plan, underpinned by the direction and shaping of council services and projects, to promote and achieve those outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering Economic Growth - Energy City, Destination Hull</li> <li>• Delivering Fair Growth - a place of community and opportunity for all</li> </ul> <p>This is supported by the Corporate Plan objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver economic growth that works for all</li> <li>• Create inclusive, resilient and safe communities</li> <li>• Deliver organisational excellence by working in partnership</li> </ul> <p>Effective Scrutiny arrangements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Government Ombudsman reports in line with or better than peer authorities.</li> <li>• Clear action plans are in place and tracked at the minority of sites that do not achieve <i>good</i> or better outcomes during external inspections.</li> <li>• Positive outcome to a 5 yearly mandatory review of the Council’s Internal Audit service, undertaken in March 2018.</li> </ul>

**Principle E - Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it**

Sub principles	Demonstrated by	
<p>Developing the entity’s capacity</p>	<p>Clear vision, strategy and direction, underpinned by capable leadership and management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships</li> <li>• Transformation Programme</li> <li>• Service Planning</li> <li>• Workforce Strategy</li> <li>• Industrial Relations Policy and framework</li> </ul>	<p><u>Examples of good governance:-</u></p> <p>A permanent Transformation Team has been in place since 2017 to assist services with major change and financial savings projects.</p> <p>There is a clear industrial relations mechanism in place.</p>
<p>Developing the capability of the entity’s leadership and other individuals</p>	<p>Recruitment and retention of high performing staff and providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member induction and development Programme</li> <li>• Cross party Committee to review and monitor Member training requirements</li> <li>• Competency Framework</li> <li>• Recruitment and selection policy</li> <li>• Employee development policy including appraisals and regular 1:1 meetings with line management</li> <li>• Prioritisation of corporate training budget</li> <li>• Availability of e-learning products aimed at building capacity and capability</li> <li>• Workforce metrics supplied to managers via Chameleon desktop portal</li> <li>• Investors in People accreditation and delivery of action plan</li> <li>• Apprenticeships</li> </ul>	<p>Member induction has been reviewed and also validated by internal audit.</p> <p>The Council has commenced a senior leadership development programme, Hull with Ambition, to ensure that the Corporate Plan is supported by Agile leadership. The Apprentice Levy is being utilised to support leadership development. IIP re-assessment will be due in December 2019, progress on the action plan is positive with the corporate plan and leadership programme being two of the main actions to be delivered.</p> <p>Relevant policies and frameworks are reviewed on appropriate timescales.</p>

**Principle F - Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management**

Sub principles	Demonstrated by	
Managing risk	Service risk management processes and periodic review of council strategic risks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management Strategy</li> <li>• Risks are specified in all executive reports and decision records</li> <li>• Health and Safety policy framework and Management Board, including a dedicated Health &amp; Safety team to support services and audit compliance.</li> </ul>	<u>Examples of good governance:-</u> Risk assurance processes have been reviewed and a new recording system was rolled out in 2017/18. This has been further embedded and Risk and Governance workshops were introduced in 2018/19 to consider the assurances in place and better articulate strategic risks.
Managing performance	Corporate performance is regularly monitored and reported to the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. Detailed reports on the key transformation programmes, Adult Social Care, and Children, Young People and Family Services are also considered on a regular basis.	
Robust internal control	Preventative controls in place include segregation of duties, approval/authorisation processes, security of assets, reconciliations and audits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Procedure Rules</li> <li>• Contract Procedure Rules</li> <li>• Finance, Legal and HR comments in executive reports and decision records</li> <li>• Internal Audit reports</li> </ul>	Significant progress in clearing high risk actions to address gaps in the internal control framework which previously impacted on the internal audit opinion. This progress, which has been sustained during 2017/18 and 2018/19, is tracked and reported to the Audit Committee.
Managing data	Robust Information Governance standards and training to all staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with Data Protection Act and GDPR provisions</li> <li>• Records Management Policy</li> <li>• Public Sector Network (PSN) accreditation and Humber Information Sharing Charter to facilitate safe and lawful access to business critical data held by other public sector organisations.</li> <li>• Monthly review of information security incidents/near misses.</li> </ul>	There is a Senior Information Risk Officer of sufficient standing in the authority, who chairs an Information Governance Group that monitors and develops high standards on managing data.
Strong public financial management	Monthly budget monitoring reports, audited annual statement of accounts, accountable budget owners. Anti-Fraud and Corruption policy framework, 'whistleblowing' policy and procedures. Compliance with CIPFA Statements on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer and the Role of the Head of Internal Audit.	The Council has progressively brought forward its annual accounts process in recent years to achieve a tighter statutory deadline from 2017/18.

**Principle G - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability**

Sub principles	Demonstrated by	
Implementing good practice in transparency	Compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code  Robust monitoring of performance in relation to Freedom of Information (Fol) and Subject Access Requests (SARs)	<u>Examples of good governance:-</u>  Performance in relation to Fol and SARs is robustly monitored by the Information Governance Group.
Implementing good practices in reporting	Comprehensive consultation process for published reports ensuring Members and senior management own the results reported. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report Writer’s Guide</li> </ul>	The requirements in the Transparency Code are met through the publication of information on the CMIS pages of the Council’s website.
Assurance and effective accountability	Ensuring that recommendations for corrective actions made by external audit and internal audit are acted upon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal Audit update reports including reporting of progress with the implementation of previously agreed action plans.</li> <li>• Annual Audit Letter</li> </ul>	There is an established process for audit action plans to be tracked. This involves services recording the progress, including sources of evidence, which is then validated by the auditors.

#### **4. Review of Effectiveness**

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The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The Council has adopted the following methodology to review the governance framework for the purposes of this Statement.

##### **Management Assurance**

- A review of the adequacy of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance which entails;
  - an exercise which identifies the latest CIPFA/SOLACE guidance and compares this to the Council's Code, identifying any material differences.
  - an exercise to review the weight of evidence of compliance with the Council's Code e.g. the existence of various key policies/procedures and evidence of compliance with these.
- A review of Risk Management reporting.
- A review of the Head of Audit & Fraud's Annual Internal Audit Report.
- A review of Internal Audit report findings and recommendations.
- A review of the fraud and special investigations completed during the year by Audit & Fraud.
- Consideration of issues arising from Risk and Governance workshops.
- An examination of key minutes.

##### **Performance Management**

- A review of performance management reporting and outcomes.
- A review of financial management reporting and outturn.

### **External Review Assurance (further details in Section 7)**

- An examination of the various reports received during the year from the external auditor
- An examination of external inspection reports, including those carried out by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission
- A review of complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman
- Peer Challenge and other reviews

### **Other Sources**

- An examination of the work of the Audit Committee
- An examination of the Audit Committee minutes and reports including the monitoring of the implementation of any action plan to address improvements to governance arrangements that may have been identified during the previous year's review of corporate governance.
- An examination of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees minutes and Review Panel reports
- An examination of Council and Cabinet minutes
- An examination of Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) returns.

## **5. Conclusion of Review of Effectiveness**

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We have been advised on the implications of the result of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework by the Audit Committee, and that (with the exceptions noted in section 6), the arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

Matt Jukes  
Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)

Cllr Steve Brady  
Leader of the Council

## 6. Significant Governance Issues and Action Plan

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No significant issues have been identified from this review.

The previous review, had identified two issues, which have now been cleared:-

1. The need for the Council to produce a Corporate Plan, to define more clearly the Council's own contribution to the wider City Plan and link this to its service plans and performance framework.

Action: Corporate Plan approved January 2019.

2. Further work required to close gaps in the Transparency information on the Council's website.

Action: The information is now available and any residual gaps are not considered significant.

## 7. External Reviews

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### External Auditor

The external auditor confirmed unqualified ('clean') audit opinions on the 2017/18 accounts and the Council's arrangements for securing value of money (VFM). The same is anticipated in respect of the 2018/19 accounts and VFM arrangements.

### Care Quality Commission (CQC)

CQC Inspections were undertaken to compare actual practice with national standards at four establishments and projects:-

- In June 2018 inspectors rated the Shared Lives project as *good* overall.
- In April 2018, inspectors rated 220 Preston Road as *requires improvement*. This was due to issues relating to the building, which are now in hand. The inspectors issued *good* ratings on criteria relating to care provided at the unit.
- During the previous year, the CQC issued reports on three further projects/establishments: each was rated as *good*.

Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)

Ofsted inspected two maintained schools during the year. In January 2019 they rated St Andrews CE Primary School as *good* and in February 2019 they rated Cavendish Primary School as *inadequate*. The Council has supported Cavendish to strengthen its governance arrangements pending its transfer to an Academy, which is **scheduled to happen on 01 July 2019**.

Inspectors also reviewed Community Learning and Skills. This was rated as *requires improvement* in November 2018, although the service to apprentices was rated as good. Actions are being taken to address the improvements identified.

In addition, work has continued in relation to improvements following Ofsted inspections during the previous year.

A Focussed Visit of front door arrangements in February 2018 confirmed that no child was at immediate risk and that we had an accurate self-assessment, a positive note of stable and experienced workforce, and increasing management grip. The Ofsted Annual Conversation which took place in June 2018 acknowledged planned actions taken and progress made towards improved performance.

Following the findings of an Ofsted/CQC Inspection of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) arrangements in October 2017, the Local Area was required to submit and publish a Written Statement of Action outlining how it would address the recommendations from the report. Progress on improvement actions across SEND and safeguarding was subsequently monitored through the Children's Improvement Board chaired by the Chief Executive and a re-inspection is anticipated soon.

**In December 2018 a Peer Review of Looked after Children's Services was undertaken. The areas of focus were: decision making for children becoming looked after and children remaining in care; effective planning and assessment processes and the quality of plans and planning for the future; timeliness, drift and delay; enablers for planning and outcomes; scrutiny and corporate parenting and vulnerable groups including children at risk from sexual exploitation and missing from education.**

**The reviewers identified that progress is being made in our improvement journey and that senior leaders know children's services well. Areas identified for improvement included the need to address a culture of high support and low challenge; to ensure the voice of the child is at the heart of plans and that timeliness drift and delay continues to be addressed through a range of activity, including a new QA framework. Following the review feedback a Peer Review Improvement Plan has been developed which will be overseen by the Early Support and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee and CST.**

Ofsted has also undertaken an Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) and the report from this work is currently pending. This is expected to identify areas for improvement, which will be addressed in due course through the Children's Services Improvement Board.

#### Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)

The LGO considers complaints about council services that remain unresolved after being considered through internal procedures. They publish an annual letter reporting on the number of complaints in various categories. For the most serious cases they also issue Formal Maladministration Reports, which the Council is required to discuss in public. The letter received during 2018/19 continued to show only a trivial number of cases, none of which led to a formal report.

#### Peer Review

The Council invited the Local Government Association to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge in June 2018. Peer Challenge provides an independent check on the effectiveness of the arrangements for: place and priority setting; place leadership; financial planning and viability; organisational leadership and governance; and capacity to deliver. The report gave a very positive recognition of areas where we are already doing well and also, importantly, highlighted some areas where what we are doing needs strengthening or improving. The Council has responded to the key recommendations and further work is in progress. The recommendations included: confirming the City and Corporate Plans, reviewing partnership governance arrangements, production of a workforce strategy and the development of a revised marketing plan for the city,

#### Other Reviews

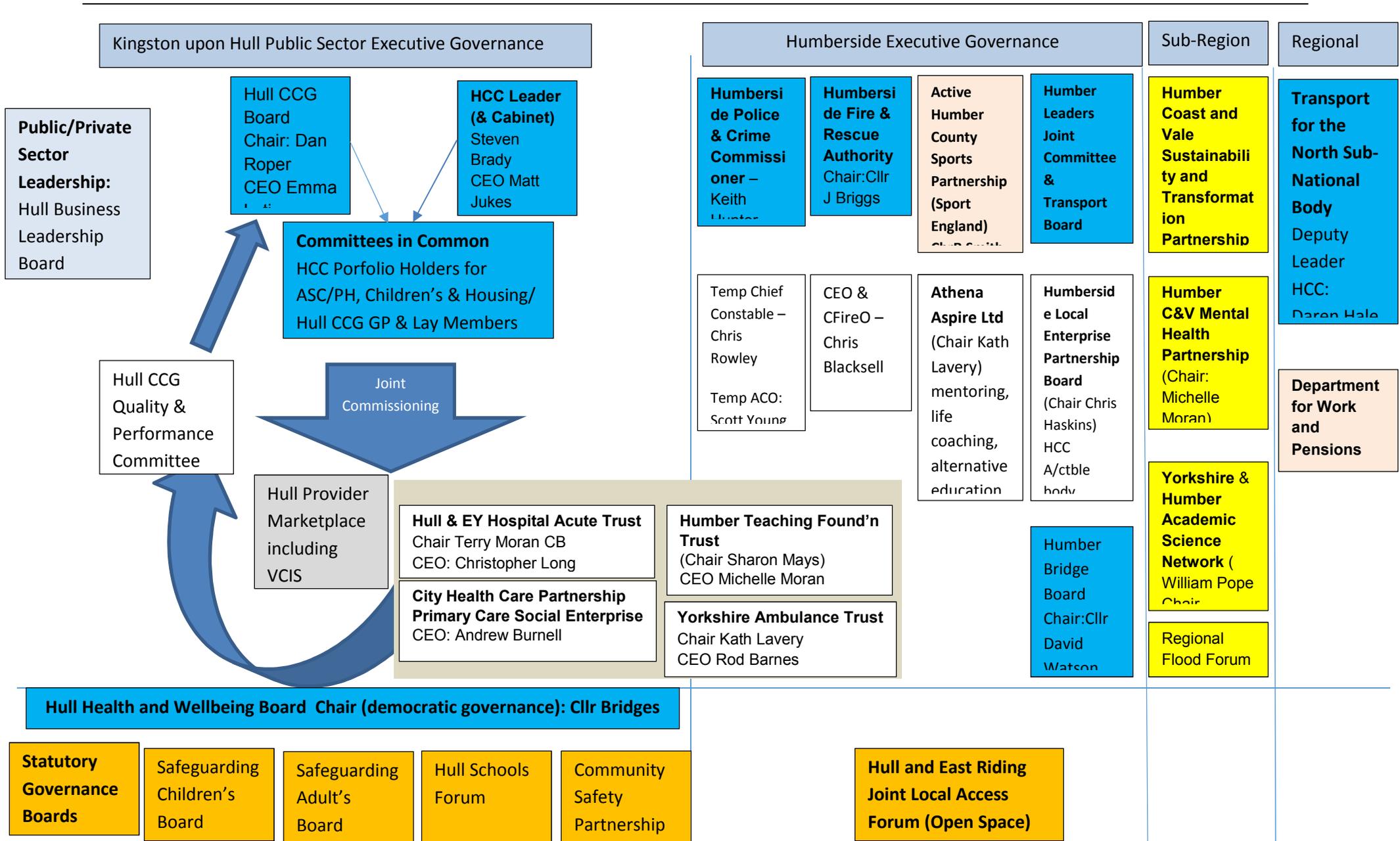
A five-yearly mandatory review of Internal Audit was undertaken at the end of 2017/18. This provided assurance that audit practices are consistent with mandatory professional standards. An action plan covering minor exceptions and service developments is being reported through the Audit Committee and the majority of recommendations have been actioned. The most significant outstanding issue relates to assurances in connection with wholly owned companies that deliver Council services under 'Teckal' contracts but which are not necessarily subject to the same auditing arrangements as other services.

**APPENDIX A**

**ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK**

<b>Corporate Arrangements</b>				
Constitution				
Policies				
Procedures				
Strategies & Plans				
Financial Monitoring & Reporting	Performance Monitoring & Reporting		Risk Management	
<b>Senior Managers &amp; Partners</b>				
Corporate Strategy Team		Directors		
Assistant Directors Team		Assistant Directors		
Place Based Board	Wholly owned companies and other strategic partners		Schools Forum	
<b>Audit &amp; Governance</b>				
Opinion on governance, risk management & controls		Monitoring Officer		
<b>Non-Executive Committees</b>				
Audit Committee		Overview & Scrutiny		
<b>External Bodies</b>				
External Auditors	Inspectorates	Ombudsman	Professional bodies	Other external bodies

**APPENDIX B: PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORKS**



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**Hull Place Based Board Delivery STP Board; Chair HCC CEO, Deputy CCG CEO  
(Membership: Public Sector Bodies operating in Hull Plus Vol Sector)**

Smart Digital City Sub-Board    Edge of Care Project Board    Beverley Road Project Board

**Wider Delivery Boards**

CYP and Families Board    Learning and Skills Strategy Board    LAC Joint Operational Group

MARAC Streering Group    Drug & Alcohol Strategy Group    Headstart Partnership Group

Domestic Abuse Forum    Council/University Partnership Delivery Board

**Representation and Liaison Bodies**

Healthwatch Hull    City Learning Partnership (Council/Multi Academy Trusts)    Learning Disability Partnership

Hull Housing Tenants Forum    Hull Voluntary and Community Sector Liaison Group

Humber ICT Leaders Board    Humber Nature Partnership

Humber Local Resilience Forum    Living with Water Partnership

**Connected Humber (Private/Public Smart city Group)**    **Humber Landlords Association**