MANAGING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE COUNCIL

Corporate Performance Statement

- Document Version Control

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1. Purpose

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council is committed to effective, lawful, transparent and accountable corporate governance. This statement explains how the Council plans, monitors, reviews and reports its collective performance, and how learning is used to support continuous improvement and better outcomes for the communities it serves.

2. Scope

This statement applies to the Council acting as a corporate body. It covers governance, strategic planning, financial management, risk and internal control, committee effectiveness, workforce capacity, community engagement, service delivery and public reporting. Individual employee performance is managed separately under the Council's Managing Staff Performance Policy and Appraisal Policy.

3. Corporate Performance Principles

The Council will assess and improve its performance using the following principles:

- Lawfulness, integrity, openness and accountability in decision-making.
- Clear priorities and measurable objectives linked to community needs and available resources.
- Proportionate governance, risk management and internal controls.
- Constructive scrutiny and collective responsibility by councillors.
- Appropriate professional advice, officer capacity and learning and development.
- Meaningful engagement with residents, partners and stakeholders.
- Regular review, evidence-based improvement and transparent reporting.

4. Leadership and Responsibilities

4.1 Full Council

Full Council retains overall responsibility for the Council's strategic direction and corporate performance. It approves the Council's key plans, budget, governance framework and material policy changes, and considers reports on progress, risk, audit and improvement.

4.2 Chair and Councillors

The Chair supports effective meetings and collective consideration of Council business. All councillors share responsibility for informed decision-making, constructive challenge, compliance with the member Code of Conduct, completion of relevant training and monitoring delivery against agreed priorities.

4.3 Committees

Committees will operate within approved terms of reference and delegated authority. Each committee should review progress within its remit, consider relevant risks and resources, and report decisions or recommendations in accordance with the Council's governance arrangements. The committee structure and delegations will be recorded in the Council's current governance documents rather than fixed in this statement.

4.4 Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

The Clerk is the Council's principal adviser and is responsible for supporting lawful administration and implementation of Council decisions. The Responsible Financial Officer is responsible for the Council's financial administration in accordance with the approved Financial Regulations. Allocation of these roles will be confirmed through current contracts, resolutions and governance records.

5. Strategic and Business Planning

The Council will maintain an agreed strategic or business plan setting out its priorities, intended outcomes and principal actions. The plan should align with the electoral cycle where appropriate, while remaining capable of review when local needs, legislation, resources or external circumstances change.

For each significant priority, the Council should identify:

- the intended outcome and key actions;
- the responsible committee, lead body or officer;
- the required budget and other resources;
- appropriate milestones or performance measures;
- principal risks, dependencies and mitigation; and
- the frequency and route for progress reporting.

6. Annual Corporate Performance Cycle

The Council will operate a proportionate annual performance cycle:

- Plan: confirm priorities, budget, objectives, risks and measures for the year.
- Deliver: implement approved actions through the Council, committees, officers, contractors and partners.
- Monitor: receive periodic reports on delivery, finance, risks, audit actions and significant issues.
- Review: assess what has been achieved, identify slippage or changing circumstances and agree corrective action.
- Report: publish an accessible Annual Report or equivalent account of progress and priorities.
- Improve: carry forward lessons, outstanding actions and development needs into the next planning cycle.

7. Governance and Decision-Making

The Council will maintain and review its Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegation, committee terms of reference and policy schedule. Reviews will be undertaken at the frequency specified in the relevant document or sooner where legislation, guidance, audit findings or operational experience indicate that change is needed.

Decisions must be supported by sufficient information to enable councillors to understand the purpose, legal or policy basis, financial implications, risks, equality or accessibility considerations, environmental implications where relevant, and the recommended action.

8. Financial Management, Risk and Assurance

The Council will maintain sound arrangements for budgeting, budget monitoring, financial control, risk management, asset management and insurance. The Council will consider reports from internal and external audit, together with recommendations or action plans arising from assurance work.

Audit findings and agreed improvement actions will be recorded, assigned, monitored and reported to the appropriate decision-making body until completed or formally closed.

9. Workforce Capacity and Development

The Council will seek to maintain sufficient officer capacity, appropriate role clarity and access to professional advice to deliver its functions. Staff and councillor learning needs will be identified through appraisal, governance review, changes in responsibilities, audit findings and the Council's strategic priorities. Approved training will be recorded and evaluated where appropriate.

10. Community Engagement and Partnerships

The Council will use proportionate methods to understand the priorities and experiences of the communities of Great Chart, Singleton and Chilmington. These may include surveys, consultations, public meetings, events, digital engagement, correspondence and liaison with community organisations and public bodies.

Engagement findings should be summarised and considered when relevant decisions, plans or service improvements are developed. Where the Council cannot act on feedback, the reason should be explained where practicable.

11. Performance Information and Reporting

Performance reporting should be proportionate to the Council's size and activities. Reports may include a balanced combination of quantitative measures and qualitative evidence. Examples include delivery milestones, budget position, project status, service activity, resident feedback, complaints themes, audit actions, risk movements and progress against the business plan.

Information used for monitoring should be clear, accurate, timely and capable of being understood by councillors and the public. Personal or confidential information must not be included in public reports unless there is a lawful and necessary basis.

12. Annual Report and Transparency

The Council will publish an Annual Report or equivalent summary explaining its principal activities, progress against agreed priorities, significant achievements, challenges and future focus. Statutory and governance information will be published in accordance with the Council's applicable transparency and publication requirements.

13. Review and Continuous Improvement

At least annually, the Council will consider its overall corporate performance and identify any actions required to improve governance, service delivery, engagement, capacity or value for money. The review may draw on performance reports, audit findings, risk information, resident feedback, complaints, staff and councillor learning, and outcomes from external assessment or benchmarking.

The Local Council Award Scheme may be used as an optional improvement and benchmarking framework. Participation or the level sought will be determined separately by the Council.

14. Related Documents

- Ambition Plan, Business Plan or Corporate Plan
- Annual Budget and Medium-Term Financial Planning
- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- Scheme of Delegation and Committee Terms of Reference
- Risk Management arrangements and Statement of Internal Control
- Policy and Procedure Review Schedule
- Community Engagement Strategy
- Training and Learning Development Policy
- Managing Staff Performance Policy and Appraisal Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection and Document Retention policies
- Annual Governance and Accountability Return and audit reports

15. Review and Approval

This statement will be reviewed every two years, or earlier where a significant change in legislation, guidance, Council structure, strategic priorities or governance arrangements makes this necessary. Material amendments will be presented to Full Council for approval.

Before adoption, the Council should verify all current factual statements, including the allocation of the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer roles, the Council's eligibility to exercise the General Power of Competence, its committee structure, staffing establishment, policy-review timetable and any external accreditation.

Adopted by Full Council:

Chair's signature:

Date: