

## APPENDIX

# ARE YOU PRACTICING GOOD GOVERNANCE?

### INDIVIDUALS

Are you practicing good governance? To practice good governance you need a sound understanding of good governance and you need to act in a way that will promote a culture of good governance within your council.

### COUNCILS

Is your council practicing good governance? For a council to practice good governance there needs to be a culture of good governance, processes that support good governance, processes to identify where good governance is lacking and motivation to improve governance.

## PRACTICING GOOD GOVERNANCE AS AN INDIVIDUAL

The following checklist<sup>21</sup> is designed to help you evaluate your understanding of good governance and assess whether your behaviour aligns with good governance practices. If you answer 'no' to any of the following questions, you could refer to resources available on page 4 and 5 to help you improve your governance capacity.

MAINTAINING HIGH ETHICAL STANDARDS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I am familiar with, endorse and comply with relevant legislation, the council's code of conduct and council policies.					
I act in the best interests of the community.					
I lead by example.					
My decisions and actions are transparent and accountable.					

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ROLE AND THE ROLE OF OTHERS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I understand the role of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> council</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mayor</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Deputy Mayor</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> General Manager</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minister responsible for local government</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local Government Division</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Director of Local Government</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local Government Association of Tasmania</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Council administration.</li> </ul>					
I attend all council meetings and relevant committee meetings (except where I have a valid reason not to).					

<sup>21</sup> The self-assessments have been adapted from the City of Joondalup's Governance Framework.

<b>BUILDING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS</b>	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I have a respectful relationship with my colleagues and stakeholders.					
I listen and give due consideration to the views of others.					
I do not engage in bullying and harassment.					

<b>EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MONITORING PERFORMANCE</b>	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I actively participate in strategic planning.					
I listen to the views of the community when I engage in strategic planning.					
I understand the importance of integrated strategic and financial asset management plans.					

<b>ROBUST RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I understand the importance of risk management and I understand the risk management process.					
I am familiar with my council's risk management policy.					

FAIR AND TRANSPARENT DECISION MAKING	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I engage with the community to help inform my decision making.					
I follow the five-step decision making process.					
I am aware of and manage my conflicts of interest.					

LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I am aware of my obligations under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and other relevant Acts of Parliament.					

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND LAND-USE PLANNING	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I understand the role of councils as planning authorities.					
I understand my role as a member of a planning authority.					
I understand the importance of the links between strategic planning and land-use planning.					

## Setting the scene for continuous improvement

As a mayor, you have additional responsibilities which, when carried out effectively, can contribute to good governance. Use this checklist to help you understand whether you act in a way that promotes good governance.

GOVERNANCE PRACTICES UNIQUE TO MAYORS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I act as a leader of the community.					
I am a fair and responsible spokesperson for the council.					
I understand the importance of my relationship with the general manager, and I work hard to ensure a seamless link between elected members and the administration.					
I promote good governance by and within the council.					
I understand my role as principal officer under section 32 of the <i>Integrity Commission Act 2009</i> .					
I ensure that all councillors have the opportunity to be heard and speak without interruption at council meetings.					
During council meetings, I ensure that debate stays focussed and I help to clarify any misunderstandings.					
I ensure that meetings are chaired, and matters are discussed and debated in a structured and effective way.					
I effectively manage any poor behaviour that arises at council meetings, including bullying and harassment.					
I provide fair summaries of debate and help elected members come to a decision.					
I make sure that the council addresses all of the appropriate strategic issues.					
I make sure there is sufficient time to discuss the important issues on the agenda.					

## PRACTICING GOOD GOVERNANCE AS A COUNCIL

The following checklist<sup>22</sup> will give you a basic understanding of whether your council has the culture and processes to support good governance.

MAINTAINING HIGH ETHICAL STANDARDS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Elected members display integrity and impartiality in their decision making.					
The council acts in the best interests of the community.					
Elected members lead by example.					
The council actively promotes transparency and accountability.					
Elected members respect the council's code of conduct.					
The council reviews the code of conduct within three months of an ordinary election (as required by the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> ).					

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ROLE AND THE ROLE OF OTHERS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Elected members understand their role, and the roles of the Mayor and the General Manager.					
Elected members come to meetings well prepared and participate effectively in debate and discussions.					
The council is not drawn into operational management matters.					
The council is effective in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the General Manager.					

<sup>22</sup> The self-assessments have been adapted from the City of Joondalup's Governance Framework.

<b>BUILDING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>NOT SURE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>
The council communicates effectively with its community.					
The Mayor liaises effectively with the General Manager.					
The relationship between the Mayor and elected members is effective in enabling the council to fulfil its duties and responsibilities.					
The relationship between the council and the General Manager is effective in enabling the council to fulfil its duties and responsibilities.					
Elected members are respectful towards one another, members of the community and the council administration.					
The council has a protocol in place to guide engagement between elected members and the administration.					

<b>EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MONITORING PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>NOT SURE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>
The council has been effective in setting the overall direction of the council area.					
The council is effective in considering and determining all major policy issues.					
The council monitors appropriate financial and non-financial performance indicators.					
The council regularly inputs into strategy development and review.					
Council meetings address the key issues facing the community.					

<b>ROBUST RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>NOT SURE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>
The council has a risk management policy.					
The council has a clear understanding of business risk.					
The council balances risk and opportunity as part of the policy development and decision making processes.					
The council identifies, analyses, evaluates, treats, monitors and communicates risks in a way that will maximise the potential to achieve goals and objectives, and minimise the potential for harm or loss.					

<b>FAIR AND TRANSPARENT DECISION MAKING</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>NOT SURE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>
There are clear expectations around setting the meeting agenda, circulating papers, and decision making protocols.					
The council gives due consideration to advice provided by the administration.					
Elected members are committed to the principle of natural justice.					
Elected members make decisions that are in the best interest of the community.					
The council engages in robust debate at council meetings.					
Elected members manage their conflicts of interest.					
The council uses closed meetings appropriately.					
The council has a community engagement policy.					

LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Elected members are aware of their responsibilities under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and other relevant Acts of Parliament.					
The council monitors compliance with legislative requirements.					
The council has a register of delegations.					

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The council consciously manages its performance and pursues continuous improvement.					
The council has an elected member training and development policy.					
Elected members' training and development activities are reported in the annual report.					
The council's audit committee plays a key role in ensuring that the council's activities meet requirements.					

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Elected members understand the different roles they play as community representatives and members of a planning authority.					
Elected members understand the role of the council as a planning authority.					
The council aligns its land-use planning with the strategic plan.					

These checklists are just a starting point.

**There are a number of ways that you and your elected member colleagues can assess your council's governance performance to develop a more detailed understanding:**

- ❑ Internal review – An internal review might involve reports (prepared by the council administration) that assess council performance across the range of governance components and are considered by elected members at a workshop or meeting. This would be a useful step in starting to develop a picture of the effectiveness of your council's governance culture and processes.
- ❑ Governance audit by an external consultant – Your council may wish to engage the services of an external consultant to provide an objective perspective on governance arrangements.
- ❑ Benchmarking/best practice partnerships – Your council may be interested in working in partnership with a similar council to compare practices and identify opportunities to improve processes.
- ❑ Community surveys – Your council may consider developing a community survey to understand what the community thinks of its council's governance.
- ❑ Feedback – Your council may be able to identify shortcomings in governance practices through feedback received from residents who lodge complaints, negative press, or findings from audit committees.

Assessing your council's governance processes can help to build an understanding of where there may be opportunities to improve. Improving governance within councils is a simple continuous improvement process. Councils should take time to assess their governance performance, identify opportunities to improve, develop a strategy to implement improvements, implement the strategy and reassess governance performance.

Refer to page 4 of the Guide for a list of resources that may be useful to your council as you enhance your governance performance.

