

Sample Ethical Framework – Principles and Values for Priority Setting

A. Who we are

- Financially responsible:
 - We must live within our means: the Council must ensure that the decisions it takes demonstrate appropriate use of public funds and value for money, based on the needs of the population it serves. This includes the Council Cube outcome of becoming self-financing.
- Rational decision-making:
 - The Council has a responsibility to make fair and rational decisions about how it allocates its resources to meet the needs of the population and remain within the law.
 - We will make informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and risk management. ¹
- Accountability:
 - We are accountable to each other, to residents, the electorate and to partners; we will be able justify all our decisions and will also hold each other to account.
- Consistent:
 - At all levels and across the Council, the principles underpinning priority-setting and its federated vehicles should be consistent.
- Respect:
 - We have respect for the human rights, dignity and autonomy of each individual and will support people to make choices and take charge of their own lives
- Fairness and equity:
 - The Council ensures that the decisions it makes are fair and equitable to the community, residents and tax payers in our county. We aim to be fair to everyone and allocate our resources fairly: balancing competing claims on resources, according to need and strategic fit, while putting the most vulnerable first.
- Engaging:
 - We engage with local people and other stakeholders, pro-actively seeking the views and input on key decisions, working in partnership to make improvements and to ensure robust, local public accountability.
 - We are actively committed to effectively consulting with all of these groups, and honestly and faithfully incorporating their views and opinions into the decision-

¹ Northamptonshire County Council Code of Corporate Governance (2010)

making process, to ensure that decision-makers have access to all views and opinions expressed during consultation or engagement activities.

- Listening:
 - We are open to feedback and input from service users, frontline staff, providers and voluntary and community services organisations.

B. Outcomes

- Benefit to the community and/or consumers & service users:
 - We will seek to increase wellbeing for our residents, consumers and service users by keeping them safe and meeting their needs, but not necessarily by responding to their demands. We recognise that not all needs can be met.
- Effectiveness:
 - We will ensure that services we deliver or commission are effective. They will be based on evidence or sound theory, which shows a logical connection to the desired outcome(s). We will evaluate programmes and services to ensure that they deliver the desired outcomes and reach the right people.
- Prevention:
 - We will focus on prevention and early intervention to reduce risks, improve wellbeing and increase independence from the Council and other public services. The ultimate approach to prevention is to start when people are young and support them in all ways to keep safe, thrive and grow into adulthood ready for life.

C. Statutory obligations

- We will meet our statutory obligations using the most effective, cost-effective and efficient methods in the context of our Council Plan Outcomes.

D. Needs of our communities and individuals

- We will seek to understand and forecast the needs of communities, in order to plan effectively and be confident that services we commission address actual needs.
- We will manage demand, both with specific demand management plans and by managing expectations.