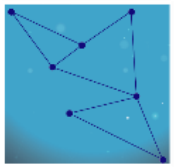
The Code of Good Governance

Governance Health Check



Developing
Governance
Group

11 November 2026

Preface

Charities occupy a unique position in society. They exist to deliver public benefit rather than private gain, helping where other services or support may be unavailable and assisting those most in need.

In return, they are supported in a range of ways. People go to extraordinary lengths to raise and donate money to their chosen charity. Volunteers – including charity trustees - give their time, skills and knowledge to assist good causes. The wider public give their trust and confidence.

Given that position, charities, are expected to uphold particularly high standards of conduct, governance and stewardship. Charity trustees have a responsibility not only to comply with legal requirements but also to act in a manner that protects and promotes public trust and confidence in their charity and in the wider charity sector.

That is why it is so important that every trustee develops a practical understanding of their duties and recognise the trust that has been placed in them by beneficiaries, supporters and the wider public.

That is where tools, such as this revised governance health check, are invaluable. It can help trustees apply the key principles of the Code of Good Governance, identify ways to demonstrate those principles in practice and recognise areas where further development or improvement may be needed.

This not only encourages but actively facilitates better governance and accountability on an ongoing basis. And, in turn, that translates into building the public's trust and confidence in the work and running of your charity.

At the Commission, we understand the importance of having the right tools to help your organisation develop through ongoing assessments and learning.

That is why, together with my fellow Commissioners, I welcome the publication of this revised good governance health check by the Developing Governance Group. I strongly encourage management committees and Boards to make the most of the practical help and guidance it provides.

Gerard McCurdy
Chief Charity Commissioner, Charity Commission for Northern Ireland

Good Governance – A Health Check

Introduction

The Code of Good Governance sets out five principles and practices of good governance for voluntary and community organisations. The 3rd Edition of the Code was launched in November 2021 by the Developing Governance Group following consultation with the voluntary and community sector. While it is not mandatory, it has been widely accepted as the set of standards for governance practice in the sector.

This Governance Health Check is a self-assessment tool which has also been devised by the Developing Governance Group as a practical resource to assist committees / boards to work towards adhering to the principles of the Code. It should help committees / boards of any size to demonstrate good governance practices to their stakeholders, beneficiaries and funders alike. This latest edition has been revised to take recognition of regularity changes and ways of working.

Using the Governance Health Check

Throughout the Health Check the questions refer to the 'board', this is intended to mean the committee, management or executive committee, board of directors or trustees or any other name given to the governing body of the organisation.

Although it should not be overly burdensome, it is strongly recommended that an appropriate amount of time is set aside for the board to use this tool. For example, a whole meeting could be dedicated to completing the questionnaire. It would also be beneficial to appoint at least one board member to lead the process of ensuring that actions are carried forward including organising any training identified.

When the Health Check is being filled out, board members should be mindful that it is an internal document for their organisation and should not feel inhibited about answering the questions honestly. The aim of the questionnaire is to help boards to review their governance arrangements, check that they have appropriate systems in place for both the legal requirements and development of best practice and identifying areas where they could improve. The Health Check is a best practice tool - it is not mandatory.

It uses a scale as a self-assessment tool. When you are completing it, it is important to consider what evidence you have to help you determine where you are on the scale as outlined below:

- **Fully Met**: You are confident that the procedure is actively in place and you have the evidence to support it
- **Part Met**: You partly carry out the practice or the practice needs adapting or improving and you have some evidence to support it
- **Not Met:** You do not carry out the practice and you have little or no evidence

You can then list the practices in the column entitled 'our evidence'. A list of examples under the 'suggested evidence' section has been included to be used as a prompt. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list as it is recognised that different organisations, depending on their activities and beneficiaries, will be subject to various regulations and will therefore need to provide additional evidence to certain questions. You may find that a small number of questions are not relevant to your organisation, for example, if you have no employees then the questions which relate to employment will not be applicable. For these you can simply write 'not application or n/a' in the evidence box and explain why.

Once areas requiring improvement have been identified, the 'actions' box at the end of the questions under each principle should be filled out. Additional online guidance and a range of practical resources are linked into each of the five governance principles, and their associated recommended practice, which should assist the board to implement the identified actions.

The Developing Governance Group encourages organisations that use the Code and the Governance Health Check to state this in their annual report and explain what improvements have been made as a result.

The Code of Good Governance is also available in hard copy. If your board members would like to have their own pocket-sized version, then please contact NICVA, Volunteer Now or any member of the Developing Governance Group to arrange collection.

The 5 Principles of the Code of Good Governance

- Understanding its function in delivering organisational purpose.
- Working as an effective team.
- Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk.
- Acting with integrity.
- Being open and accountable.

Principle 1: Understanding its function in delivering organisational purpose

The members of the board are equally responsible in law for governance. They are collectively responsible for ensuring that the organisation remains faithful to its purpose.

Delivering organisational purpose	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Ensuring organisational purposes and rules set out in the governing document remain relevant and valid - DIY Committee Guide					
Are the activities of the organisation in line with the objects / purposes / geographical area in your governing document?					Up to date governing document Review services offered Operational plan Minutes, resolutions
Have you reviewed your governing document in the last three years?					Minutes of board meetings Minutes of general meetings Special resolutions Date of adoption on document
Have you reviewed your organisation's policies as appropriate and as required?					Policy log with policy review dates
Have you complied with all the governance arrangements in your governing document?					Appointment of directors Number of directors Who can be members Quorum for meetings Number of meetings Notice period for meetings Permissions for electronic meetings

Delivering organisational purpose	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Setting up and upholding the vision, values and reputation of the organisation - DIY Committee Guide					
Are the board members aware of the mission, vision and values of the organisation?					Mission statement Vision and values statement Objects / purposes relevant and valid
Understanding and fulfilling its legal duties - DIY Committee Guide					
Is the role of your board clearly defined?					Written role descriptions Induction pack
Do board members understand their legal responsibilities in relation to their role?					Legal Duties in Charity Trust and/ or Company law Charity Commission trustee declaration Governance training records
Do you have access to the governing document and all the relevant policies of the organisation?					Induction pack Governance section on an online platform / cloud storage
If charitable, have you checked if you are required to register as a charity with the Charity Commission?					Charity Register on CCNI website CCNI guidance on exemption from charity registration

elivering organisational purpose	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
If you are a sports organisation, have you considered if registering as a charity or a CASC is appropriate?					HMRC CASC list Charity Register or Combined list on CCNI website Companies house Public benefit requirement
Ensuring the stewardship of assets - DIY Committee Guide					
If you have premises and other physical or digital assets, are they used and maintained effectively?					Maintenance log Fire safety procedures Security procedures Planning for renewal Asset register Intellectual Property Insurance Leases Tenancy agreements DIY
If your organisation has Reserves, are they invested properly and prudently managed?					Investment policy Professional advice obtained High interest savings account
Ensuring appropriate organisational structures are in place - DIY Committee Guide					
Is the legal structure and internal organisational structures appropriate for your needs today?					Incorporation if relevant Appropriate level of managers

Delivering organisational purpose	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Understanding the organisation's operating environment - DIY Committee Guide					
Are your board members aware of the organisation's operating environment?					Awareness of need NISRA indices Relevant government policies Community audit
Developing and agreeing a long-term strategy - DIY Committee Guide					
Does your organisation have a written plan for what it wants to achieve including strategies for sustainability?					Strategic plan Business plans Fundraising strategy Succession planning
Are there procedures in place to help your board regularly monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the organisation's work?					Ongoing monitoring and evaluation Impact statement / reports
Reviewing and overseeing the work of the organisation in the interests of its beneficiaries and/or members - DIY Guide					
Is your board clear about who the beneficiaries and stakeholders are?					Governing document Service users / Participants Register of Members Funders Statutory bodies

Actions required to adhere to Principle 1

Required Actions	By whom	By When
Go to Principle 1: Understanding its function in delivering organisational purpose on Principle 1 - DIY Committee Guide for templates and other resources to help you implement your actions.		

Principle 2 - Working as an effective team

The board will ensure that it has an effective balance of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to deliver organisational purpose

Working as an effective team	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Structuring meetings effectively including preparation, frequency, recording and communication - DIY Committee Guide					
Are board and sub-committee meetings well-structured, effective and properly run?					Appropriate agenda in advance Annual Meeting Schedule Quorums met / Held regularly Regular reports and other info Regular full attendance Permissions for online meetings Conflict of Interest Code of Conduct
Does the board make timely, informed, and clearly recorded decisions?					Decision rationale Risk consideration Minutes include actions and decisions
Are meetings fully accessible and inclusive (format, timing, digital)?					Accessible formats Accessible venue Fully accessible digital/hybrid, inclusive participation evidence.
Are your board members' accessibility needs assessed and acted upon on a regular basis?					All Trustees asked about their accessibility needs

Working as an effective team	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Ensuring that all board members, including office bearers, understand and fulfil their respective roles - DIY Committee Guide					
Does the board encourage constructive challenges and open discussions?					Evidence of debate, constructive challenge culture Minutes Feedback review meeting
Has your board got clear role descriptions for all board members?					Role descriptions for the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and for board members
Has your board received appropriate information and guidance in relation to governance?					Induction pack Governance training Regular policy updates Mentoring
Does the board understand how its role differs from the operational responsibilities delegated to staff?					Delegation process eg scheme of delegation Reserved matters for the board
Providing all board members with opportunities for training and development according to their needs - DIY Committee Guide					
Are governance training needs assessed and opportunities communicated and/or provided?					A training needs analyses / annual review Skills audit Governance training / events / seminars / conferences

Working as an effective team	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Periodically reviewing their individual contribution and performance as a team - DIY Committee Guide					
Does your board review its own performance on an annual basis?					Board members survey/appraisal Skills gap analyses Review days or sessions Governance Health Check Action plans, follow-up reviews
Finding, recruiting and retiring board members to meet the organisation's changing needs in line with the governing document, taking into account skills, experience and diversity - DIY Committee Guide					
Do you ensure that your board has an appropriate balance of skills, diversity and experience, to meet the needs of the org?					Skills audit list of skills required Access to experts needed Procedures for election Succession Planning Policy Diversity data
Does the board have a succession plan for key roles?					Succession plans office bearers / senior managers Terms of office log System for handover Digital shared documents
Providing suitable induction for new board members - DIY Committee Guide					
Does your board provide suitable induction for board members?					Induction Checklist Contact info of Board and subcommittee members

Working as an effective team	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Accessing external advice when necessary - DIY Committee Guide					
Does your board access external advice when necessary?					Umbrella bodies Sector support organisations Regulators LRA, Equality Commission Professional advice
Developing and maintaining a positive working relationship within the board and with volunteers and staff - DIY Committee Guide					
What does your board do to develop a positive working relationship within the board and with volunteers and staff?					Code of conduct Feedback Pen profiles of Trustees in induction pack Staff invited to present at meetings Attend organisation events Engage at fundraising events Refreshment break at meetings
Ensuring that all members are able to participate fully at meetings and carry out their challenge function in an open and constructive way - DIY Committee Guide					
Does the board effectively use digital tools for governance and accessibility?					Board portals AI policy AI license Hybrid meeting tools

Working as an effective team	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Are board members able to commit sufficient time and engage effectively?					Attendance records Preparation evidence Expectations communicated in advance
Does the board encourage constructive challenges and open discussions?					Evidence of debate, constructive challenge culture Minutes Feedback review meeting

Actions required to adhere to Principle 2

Required Actions	By whom	By When
Go to Principle 2: Working as an effective team on www.diycommitteeguide.org/ for templates and other resources to help you implement your actions.		

Principle 3 - Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk

The board has ultimate responsibility for setting the vision and strategy and overseeing the activities of the organisation. While the board may delegate some of its functions to paid staff, boards must regularly review internal controls, risks, performance, policies and procedures.

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Developing and monitoring organisational plans and budgets - DIY Committee Guide					
Does your organisation have an annual work plan?					Operational plan Work plans Service level agreements
Does your board approve the annual budget for the organisation before the financial year begins?					Board minutes Annual budget for financial year Project budgets included Cashflow Forecast
Evaluating results and assessing impact - DIY Committee Guide					
How does your organisation evaluate results and assess the impact of its activities?					Feedback from users/participants Register of users/attendees Monitoring returns to funder Reporting to the board Impact reporting / outcome report Appropriate monitoring system Staff and/or volunteer reports Consultation with stakeholders Minutes of meetings

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Ensuring proper arrangements/agreements are in place for partnership working and service delivery - DIY Committee Guide					
Do you have formal agreements in place for external contractors and/ or third parties?					Signed Contracts Partnership Agreements Service Level Agreements Terms of reference Memorandum of understanding
Understanding and complying with all legal, contractual and regulatory requirements that apply to it - DIY Committee Guide					
Do you adhere to the legal and compliance obligations of the organisation?					Governing Document Letters of offer / contracts Insurance Contracts of employment Leasing agreements Electoral law List of relevant legislation Register of policies and procedures
If your charity has a trading subsidiary, is it being run at arm's length from the organisation?					Loan agreements / Memorandum of understanding / Resource sharing agreement / Invoicing for services / Separate board meetings / AGM Reporting to the parent charity Governing document reflects parent body control

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
If registered as such, does your organisation adhere to Charity or CASC administration and reporting requirements					Annual returns Trustees annual report File accounts and reports Update charity register Stationery requirements Board Minutes Register of Trustees Declaration of Interests
If incorporated, does your organisation adhere to company law administration and reporting requirements?					Update company register with directors' details, Persons of Significant Control, ID verification File accounts, special resolutions, confirmation statement Articles of Association Register of Members AGM Disclosure of company information on stationery, emails and websites
If registered as a Community Interest Company (CIC), do you comply with CIC regulatory requirements?					Update CIC regulator Update company register Annual Report Board Minutes Evidence of Community Benefit and Asset Lock Evidence

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Have you updated the charity register and / or company register with details of new / retiring board members?					Charity Register Company Register Board / AGM Minutes Trustee Appointment forms and declarations Board length of service
Are registers of voting members kept up to date?					Register of Members Database
Do you ensure compliance with health and safety legislation and through your policies fulfil your duty of care obligation to employees, volunteers, service users and the public?					Health and Safety policy, notices Fire and Health & Safety risk assessments Accident and incidents book Insurance policies First Aid PAT testing COSHH Mandatory Training eg manual handling food safety, Compliance with Environmental Health Regulations Safeguarding training

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Do you understand data protection legislation, and can your organisation demonstrate compliance with the data protection principles?					Personal data register Data protection policy Data sharing agreements (where appropriate) Privacy notice Data Protection Officer if required Record consent, where required ICO registration Staff / volunteer training Breach reporting procedures Record retention policy Complaints Policy Compliance with DUAA AI policy
Are you looking after the data that you hold?					Information register Acceptable use of ICT policy Records management policies Monitoring and evaluation of records security Appoint a Data Protection officer Personal emails not used by staff Cybersecurity on risk register Data retention schedule Data Protection Policy Document Control Cyber Essentials AI policy

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Do you adhere to fundraising and gambling legislation as well as good practice considerations when raising money?					Code of Fundraising Practice Rules for street collections Rules for door-to-door collections CCNI fundraising guidance Cash handling procedures Society lottery registered with Council Gambling Code of Practice (lotteries)
Have you stipulated what your fundraising is for?					Funds must be used only for what is stated on the promotion Code of Fundraising Practice Charity Commission guidance
Are you engaged in fundraising activities that could be considered as taxable trading?					Take account of guidance on charity trading such as HMRC guidance or CC35 guidance
Do you have procedures in place for fundraising being carried out 'on your behalf' or 'in aid of your organisation'? How do you monitor this?					Code of Fundraising Practice Fundraising policy / strategy Risk assessment Insurance policy Cash handling procedures Fundraising contract / agreement Guidelines for volunteers Monitor social media

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Understanding and complying with all legal, contractual and regulatory requirements that apply to it - DIY Committee Guide					
Have you got appropriate financial systems in place?					Financial procedures policy Procurement procedures Budgets Cash book / Cheque journal Ledger / computerised accounts Cash flow forecast Purchase order book Petty cash Segregation of duties Required cheque signatories and Online banking dual authorisation Bank reconciliations Cash handling procedures Credit control/Debt management Bank Mandates Risk Register Reserves policy Online fundraising platforms
Have you updated the bank mandate with details of new and retired board members as required by your bank?					Bank Mandate forms Bank portal on website

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Implementing appropriate up to date internal financial and management controls - DIY Committee Guide					
Is your organisation complying with tax law?					Registered with HMRC as an employer, PAYE National Insurance Contributions Registered for VAT if required Corporation tax for non-charities Gift aid claims
If using freelancers, consultants or casual labour, have you checked that they would not be regarded as employees?					HMRC checklist and tool
Is financial reporting to your board clear, transparent, readily understood by all board members at each meeting?					Agenda of meetings Treasurer input Management accounts Cashflow forecast Income and Expenditure sheet Budget variance reporting Adequate guidance / mentoring Scrutiny by all board members Board Minutes Delegated authority

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Does your board receive the right financial information, projections and advice to be able to make appropriate financial decisions for your organisation?					Appropriate financial reporting Reserves Appropriate resources Funding diversification Annual budget Cashflow projections Reporting against projections Budget reporting Management accounts Expert external advice Investment policy
Are your accounts prepared according to the relevant legislation?					Comply with relevant thresholds Receipts & Payments or Accruals Charities SORP Trustees'/Directors' annual report Independent Examination or Audit report
Are your annual accounts externally examined by an independent person if required?					Full audit or Independent Examiner's report Signed annual accounts Letter of appointment Procurement of auditors / Appointment of Examiner AGM minutes

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Regularly identifying and reviewing the major risks to which the organisation is exposed including systems to manage those risks - DIY Committee Guide					
Does the board consider and manage risks (uncertainties, threats), both short-term and long-term, in all aspects of the organisation's work?					Risk policy Risk assessments carried out Risk register monitored regularly Complaints Safeguarding incidents Reporting of risk management Training Minutes of meetings
Have you clear plans in place for when something goes wrong?					Communications policy Contingency plans Emergency procedures Business continuity plan Serious incident report to CCNI
Do you review your approach to cybersecurity and ensure that your systems are robust and protected?					Use of AI policy Cyber security policy ICT acceptable use policy Social Media Policy/Hybrid working policy

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Ensuring that delegation to committees, staff and volunteers (as applicable) works effectively and the use of delegated authority is properly documented and supervised - DIY Committee Guide					
Does the board set out and communicate the functions of sub-committees, officers, staff and anyone performing duties on its behalf?					Organisation chart Terms of reference Role descriptions Job descriptions Minutes Policies and reporting processes Induction Governance manual Training Scheme of delegation Governing Document
Does the board regularly monitor and review the effectiveness and make-up of sub-committees?					Minutes of meetings and sub-committee meetings Reports Evidence of decisions taken in line within agreed parameters Terms of reference Review membership of sub-committee Skills analysis of board / sub-committees Succession planning

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Ensuring proper arrangements for the recruitment, remuneration, supervision, support and appraisal of all staff including the most senior member of staff - DIY Committee Guide					
Do you meet the legal requirements in relation to the recruitment of staff?					Terms and conditions Contract of employment Right to work in the UK Equal opportunity policy Recruitment and selection policy Diversity and inclusion policy Interview and selection records Access NI checks, if relevant
If you have employees, have you proper payroll / pension arrangements in place?					Employment contracts Regular consistent payroll PAYE Payslip records Sick pay, maternity/paternity pay National Insurance Records Pension Compliance Policy Travel and expenses policy

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Do you meet the legal requirements in relation to the management of staff?					Grievance / disciplinary policies Dismissal and redundancy Remuneration Leave entitlements (holiday, sick) Access NI checks if relevant Safeguarding legislation Pension provision Policy on Maternity, paternity, parental / carer's rights Domestic abuse policy Policy - working time regulations Records of working hours/breaks Equality monitoring Flexible working policy Health & safety policy, procedures Trade Union recognition
Have you got appropriate staff management systems in place?					Up to date staff contracts Clear roles / Job descriptions Regular supervision of all staff including most senior staff Training and development Appropriate HR policies including but not limited to: Bullying and harassment; Dignity at work policy; Whistleblowing; Diversity and inclusion

Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Making proper arrangements for managing and supporting volunteers - DIY Committee Guide					
Does the board have clear procedures / guidelines to distinguish between staff and volunteer responsibility?					Governing document HR policies Volunteer policies Organisation chart Role descriptions Job descriptions
Have you got appropriate systems in place for recruitment and management of volunteers?					Volunteer policy Induction Role descriptions Agreements Volunteer expenses policy Training Support and supervision Timesheets Access NI checks

Actions required to adhere to Principle 3

Required Actions	By whom	By When
Go to Principle 3: Maintaining control, making effective decisions and managing risk Principle 3 - DIY Committee Guide **for templates and other resources to help you implement your actions.**		

Principle 4 - Acting with integrity

The board should act at all times with honesty and probity in the interests of the organisation and its beneficiaries and members. The board ensures that the organisation's performance and interaction with its stakeholders are guided by the values, ethics and culture put in place by the board.

Acting with integrity	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Act according to high ethical standards - DIY Committee Guide					
Do you have procedures in place to deal with gifts and hospitality?					Policy on gifts and hospitality Guidelines Declaration form
Does your board uphold the values of the organisation?					Mission, vision, values statement Appropriate policies Code of conduct
Has your board discussed the ethics of receiving sponsorship or funding?					Mission, vision, values Charitable purposes HMRC guidance Fundraising policy Donor management policy
Identify, understand and manage conflicts of interest and loyalty both within the board and across the organisation - DIY Committee Guide					
Does your board have a policy on payments to its members which is in line with the governing document?					Is this permitted by the governing document? Policy on payments Conflicts of interest register Out of pocket expenses policy

Acting with integrity	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Do you have procedures in place to deal with conflicts of interest including conflicts of loyalty?					Conflicts of interest policy Conflicts of interest register Standing item on agenda Governing document Minutes Connected persons definition
Maintain independence of decision making - DIY Committee Guide					
Does the board, at least annually, consider its independence from government, funders or other stakeholders?					Mission, vision and values Conflict of interest policy Register of interests Research Annual review
Adopt a suitable code of conduct - DIY Committee Guide					
Does your organisation have a policy to deal with internal conflicts within your board?					Code of conduct for the board Clear role boundaries Governing document Whistleblowing policy Legislation Reminder at meetings Governance manual

Acting with integrity	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Have a clear and effective approach to promoting equality, diversity, inclusion and good relations within the board and throughout the organisation - DIY Committee Guide					
Does your organisation know the diversity make up of its beneficiaries / service users / members and the community which it serves?					Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) audit Section 75 monitoring Equality monitoring form Awareness of publicly available data eg NISRA Data
Does your board work to promote equality, diversity and inclusion when recruiting new board members?					Targeted inclusion EDI audit EDI policy and training Monitoring make up of Board
Encourage inclusive and accessible participation of beneficiaries and members - DIY Committee Guide					
Does your organisation have a *plan* to involve potential beneficiaries within the community that you do not currently attract to your activities / services?					Community maps Collaboration with other groups NISRA data on local area Promotion of activities Accessibility needs met Understanding your local / beneficiary population

Acting with integrity	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Does your organisation work to promote equality, diversity, inclusion and good relations throughout the organisation?					Equal Opportunity / EDI policy EDI Training User / members' forum Consultation with members Staff Management
Understand and comply with its safeguarding responsibilities - DIY Committee Guide					
Does the board ensure that the organisation complies with its safeguarding responsibilities?					Review safeguarding policy Training for staff and volunteers Access NI checks if relevant Communicate policy effectively Annual Adult Safeguarding Champion Designated Officer (children) Report to board Safeguarding Trustee Domestic abuse policy
Develop and provide a safe and respectful culture for all - DIY Committee Guide					
Does the board ensure that the organisation provides a safe and respectful culture for all?					Bullying and harassment policy Whistleblowing policy Dignity at work policy Code of conduct Regular supervision for staff / volunteers. Engagement processes with staff at all levels Staff satisfaction survey EDI policy and training

Actions required to adhere to Principle 4

Required Actions	By whom	By When
Go to Principle 4: Acting with integrity Principle 4 - DIY Committee Guide **for templates and other resources to help you implement your actions.**		

Principle 5 - Being open and accountable

The board leads the organisation by being open and transparent, accountable and responsive

Being open and accountable	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Ensure open and effective communication and engagement with beneficiaries, members and stakeholders about the organisation and its work - DIY Committee Guide					
Do you listen, respond and represent the views of your beneficiaries / service users / members?					Engagement with beneficiaries Consultations Involvement of beneficiaries when trying to influence others Specific contact email / number Project / service evaluations
Does the board ensure that there is regular and effective consultation with key stakeholders?					Consultations Regular meetings and AGM Member / user feedback Monitoring and evaluation reports User forums / focus groups Stakeholder mapping
Does the board ensure that there is regular and effective communication with key stakeholders?					Information provided is timely, relevant, accurate and good quality AGM / Annual report Website / social media Member / user participation Regular meetings Community audit

Being open and accountable	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Consider organisational responsibilities to the wider community, society and the environment - DIY Committee Guide					
Is your board accountable to key stakeholders about its' own work and the governance of the organisation?					AGM and Annual report Regular meetings Partnership agreements Reports to funders Annual reporting to regulators Accessible list of board members External audit / evaluation Complaints and compliments policy
Does your board consider the environmental impact of the organisation's work?					Green / environmental policy eg recycling / waste Environmental impact assessment Environment Social Goals (ESGs) model Carbon neutral policy
Does your ***board*** consider organisational responsibilities to the wider community and society?					Community audit Consultation with community Strategic planning Minutes Buy social / Social Value Scheme NISRA data

Being open and accountable	Not Met	Part Met	Fully Met	Our evidence – Please describe below	Suggested Evidence (examples only)
Put in place arrangements to deal with complaints constructively, impartially and efficiently - DIY Committee Guide					
Do you have appropriate procedures to deal with complaints?					Complaints policy / procedures Whistleblowing policy Feedback forms
Ensure proper arrangements for the management of membership as set out in the governing document - DIY Committee Guide					
Do you follow the requirements of admitting and managing membership?					Governing document Membership policy Register of members Minutes of board or SMT
Have you got a written or digital up to date list of the voting members of your organisation?					Register of members Database Membership application forms
Demonstrate public benefit/impact in line with its organisational purposes - DIY Committee Guide					
If charitable, does your organisation fulfil the public benefit requirement?					Public benefit statement Public benefit reporting Trustees Annual Report
Does your organisation assess the impact of its work in line with its organisational purposes?					Impact reporting Needs assessment
Does your organisation consider the indirect positive and negative impact of its work?					Community / Societal Impact Assessment Board meetings

Actions required to adhere to Principle 5

Required Actions	By whom	By When
Go to Principle 5: Being open and accountable on Principle 5 - DIY Committee Guide for templates and other resources to help you implement your actions.		

Glossary of Terms

Access NI is a branch in the Department of Justice. Its role is to process applications from members of the public who require a criminal record check for employment purposes. Access NI issues 3 types of check: Basic, Standard or Enhanced

Accountability is the duty to explain the ways in which an individual or group has carried out, or caused to be carried out, the obligations placed upon them by law, a governing body or constitutional document. While the discharge of these activities/obligations may be delegated to others, the obligation to account for the actions cannot be delegated.

AI (Artificial intelligence) refers to computer systems and technologies that can analyse information, learn from data, generate content, make predictions, and support decision-making in ways that typically require human intelligence.

AI license is an agreement that grants an organisation the right to use an artificial intelligence tool or system, subject to specified terms, conditions, permissions and restrictions.

Appraisal is a formal assessment of performance over a set time frame.

Assets are everything your organisation owns that are of value, including buildings, equipment, money, investments trademarks and intelligence. Can also include intangible items such as reputation, skills and experience.

Autonomous is a self-governing, independent body which is free from external control and constraint.

Beneficiaries are the people your organisation is set up to help, those who benefit from what you do.

Board is a group of elected or appointed people who are ultimately accountable and collectively responsible for the governance and strategic direction of an organisation. Sometimes known as the Management Committee in smaller organisations.

Community audit is a survey of the needs of the local community.

Compliance is the act of taking steps to comply with relevant laws, policies, and regulations.

Conflicts of interest may arise in a situation where a board member may obtain personal benefit from a particular decision in relation to the organisation, or when a personal interest may get in the way of making decisions in the best interests of the organisation.

Culture is the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people, society, or organisation.

Cyber Security is the protection measures put in place to keep IT systems safe and secure.

Delegate is to give another person the authority to do work and / or take decisions on your behalf.

Delegated authority is the decision making power which has been given to a sub-committee or person so that they can carry out a particular task or activity. The board, however, remain accountable for the outcome of the delegated work.

Digital refers to the use of technology to store, use and communicate information electronically.

Diversity can encompass many characteristics such as: age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, economic, cultural and social background, level of educational attainment and professional background. Recognising diversity in governance is about respecting and valuing people's differences and enabling them to contribute and realise their full potential within an inclusive culture.

Effectiveness is being able to bring about the intended or expected result.

Encryption is the protection of data that is either stored or transmitted to render it unreadable without a security key so that only authorised persons can view it.

Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents; it also means that we ensure that nobody is treated less favourably than other people or being harassed on any of the prohibited equality grounds.

Equity is the absence of unfair, avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically or by other dimensions of inequality (eg sex, gender, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation).

Ethics are standards of morality and conduct of either an individual or organisation.

Good relations is to promote the growth of relations between people that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context in NI, and seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms.

Governance is about leadership and ensuring that an organisation is effectively and properly run. It has been defined as "the systems and processes concerned with ensuring the overall direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability of an organisation."

Governing document is the written set of rules governing an organisation eg a constitution, trust deed or articles of association.

ICO is the Information Commissioner's Office which is the data protection regulator.

ICT (information and communication technologies) refers to technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications, similar to IT (information technology) but with the focus primarily on communication technologies.

Integrity is used to describe soundness of moral character; this is demonstrated through adherence to moral and ethical principles.

Monitoring is collecting and recording information in a routine and systematic way to check progress against plans and enable evaluation.

Not-for-profit organisations may be better described as not-for-personal-profit as these organisations may make a surplus in line with their Objects but they don't distribute this among the members but rather use it to further the purposes of the organisation.

Objects this clause (sometimes called purposes) which expresses the aims of the organisation is laid out in the governing document. It also describes who is going to benefit from the work of the organisation and in which geographical area.

Probity is the quality of having strong moral principles, honesty and decency.

Procurement is the process of buying/acquiring goods or services.

Prudence is exercising care, caution, and good judgement as well as wisdom in looking ahead.

Public Benefit is one of the key components of what makes a purpose charitable. A benefit must flow from the charity's purpose; be capable of being demonstrated and be beneficial, not harmful to the public, or to a section of the public and it must not provide a private benefit to individuals unless the benefit is incidental.

Purposes is the statement of what your organisation has been set up to achieve, set out in the governing document. It should reflect the organisation's broad aims, rather than the day-to-day activities. Also known as objects, objectives or aims.

Quorum is the minimum number of voting members that must be present in order to proceed with a meeting. Quorums for general meetings and committee meetings are usually stated in the governing document.

Risk management is the analysis and management of risk. It involves the identification and assessment of risk, the decision whether to accept, guard against, prevent or insure against the occurrence and the process of implementing such decisions.

Safe culture means that anyone who interacts with the organisation should be treated with dignity and fairness and feel that they are in a safe and supportive environment which promotes and respects the rights of all.

Safeguarding means ensuring there are measures in place to prevent harm to staff, volunteers, beneficiaries and anyone who comes into contact with your organisation. It also means responding appropriately where harm has occurred to an individual. While safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, trustees need to provide leadership on culture, policy and procedures which promote and respect the rights of children and adults.

Solvent means having enough money to pay all the debts owed to other people or organisations.

Stakeholder is anyone with a significant interest in the effectiveness of an organisation eg members, trustees, beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, funders, suppliers, regulators.

Subject access request is the term under data protection regulations which gives a person the right to access the personal data that an organisation holds on them.

Values are the principles and beliefs which the organisation seeks to apply, both in setting its mission and aims, and in its day-to-day operations.

Vision is what the world will look like if the organisation is successful in achieving its mission.

Voluntary and community sector is made up of organisations which are governed by voluntary boards. These non-statutory, autonomous, not-for-profit organisations are usually constituted formally and may or may not be charitable. They include sports, religious, societies and social enterprises, as well as any organisation registered as a Charity, Community Amateur Sports Club, (CASC) or Community Interest Company (CIC).

Volunteering is defined as the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside (or in addition to) one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.

Online Governance Resource - www.diycommitteeguide.org

- a useful resource of practical help and support mapped to the principles of the Code of Good Governance.
- a signposting directory which includes links to all Developing Governance Group members including the training and support they offer.

Pocket sized Codes of Good Governance

Copies of the revised Code of Good Governance booklets can be collected from any of the Developing Governance Group members or by contacting the Secretariat which is provided by NICVA on 028 9087 7777 or Volunteer Now on 028 9023 2020

The Developing Governance Group

The Developing Governance Group is made up of the following sector support organisations:

> Advice NI, Age NI, Community Arts Partnership, Early Years – the organisation for young children, NICVA, NI Sports Forum, Rural Community Network, Sport NI, Supporting Communities, Volunteer Now, Youth Action and Youth Work Alliance.

Many of the member organisations of the Developing Governance Group will be able to provide practical assistance with subscribing to the Code through their governance work. NICVA and Volunteer Now jointly provide secretariat to the Developing Governance Group.

Disclaimer

Reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure information in this publication is accurate. However, it is not intended to be a definitive guide to assessing your governance structures and practices; it is designed to provide guidance in good faith without accepting liability. The onus is on each committee/board to take forward actions identified. If relevant, we recommend you take appropriate professional advice or guidance before taking any action on the matters covered herein.