Governance and Control Transformation Maturity Index

The index below sets out the typical **Governance and Control characteristics** demonstrated by councils at each stage of their transformation maturity.

It is split into five levels (Level 1 being lowest and Level 5 being the highest).

A fuller definition of the typical characteristics of councils at each level is set out at the end of this document.

The following **Governance and Control capabilities** are covered.

- Understanding and implementing governance
- Prioritisation
- Applying appropriate delivery methodology
- Portfolio, programme and project management
- Business case development
- Risk management
- Requirement definition
- Dependency management
- Resource management
- Benefit management
- Delivery assurance

	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**
Understand and implement governance	Limited, or no, governance is in place, with the success of projects and transformation activities largely reliant on key individuals rather than systemised ways of working or governance controls. Services can start and stop projects as they wish with the only guardrails relating to budgetary controls and service capacity.	Service level governance is defined and in place, with some systematic control of projects within one or more service areas. Roles and responsibilities are clear and multi-disciplinary teams may be in place. Standard ways of working exist, however the wider impacts across the council are unlikely to be mapped or understood fully.	A council-wide governance and control framework is in place. Change is managed through integrated governance of people, process, technology and finance. Roles and responsibilities are clear. Prioritisation aligns to strategic goals. Decision making is transparent. Progress is monitored.	Level three has been met. In addition, accurate near real time data is used to drive reporting, forecasting, and progress insights enabling effective decision making. Governance is transparent, including ethical considerations and impact assessments. Governance incorporates continuous learning including feedback gathered from key stakeholders.	Level four has been met. In addition, continuous improvement is fully embedded with ongoing assurance of and inputs into the governance model itself linked to the achievement of outcomes to optimise delivery and control over time.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Prioritisation	Limited prioritisation is in place. While activities may be linked to the council's overall objectives, relative prioritisation based on impact and benefit is not undertaken.	Services prioritise activities within their own areas, often as part of service planning. There are some links upwards to the Corporate Plan. There may be some dialogue in relation to corporate resources and sequencing.	A single, integrated, and transparent prioritisation approach is in place across the council, clearly linked back to strategic objectives. The council prioritises activities that best impact outcomes. Prioritisation is supported by cross cutting governance and a 'whole council' approach.	Level 3 has been achieved. In addition, prioritisation considers effort, cost and deliverability versus impact. There are regular reviews of priorities to ensure continued strategic alignment and responsiveness to internal and external changes to the operating context.	Level 4 has been achieved. In addition, prioritisation considers dependencies between projects and programmes. Critical path analysis takes place at portfolio level to drive optimal sequencing of prioritised activity.

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Apply appropriate delivery methodology	No consideration is given to delivery methodology. Or the organisation has a rigid and singular approach to delivery methodology and applies the same structure to every initiative, irrespective of whether it best supports the desired outcome.	Services and individual projects consider and apply relevant delivery methodology to achieve their aims, but there is no consistent framework or toolkit of methodologies to choose from across the council. Teams across different service areas can end up 'talking different languages' or being resistant to adapting their own approaches.	The council recognises that a level of flexibility is needed and uses multiple methodologies, with clear guardrails to ensure consistency of the overall delivery framework and related standards. Council wide standards and practices for Waterfall and Agile delivery are in place and integrated across a single framework, supported by relevant templates, processes and technologies.	Level three has been met. In addition, the Council seeks to continually improve and mature its delivery practice by sharing lessons learned widely and by seeking to rotate and / or upskill personnel between project types to build capacity and understanding. Metrics are used to track the success of projects so that decisions about the optimal methods to use have an evidence base.	Level four has been achieved. In addition, the Council seeks to improve its practice on an ongoing basis by considering innovation in development of its delivery framework, including considering use of emerging technologies such as AI.

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Portfolio, programme and project management	There is no portfolio management in place, with prioritisation, resourcing and sequencing limited to individual service areas. There are no systemised controls. Individual projects run entirely independently of one another, with changes made reactively if overlaps are identified during delivery.	Service level project management is in place. Some professional resources may be used. Wider sequencing across the council is not in place. There may be evidence of resource constraints or overlaps, particularly where there is reliance on enabling resources such as ICT, Change, Communications.	A single, integrated, and transparent approach is in place across the council with a whole council view of the overall change portfolio. Change activity is sequenced to maximise use of resources against desired council wide outcomes. The council can select the most appropriate delivery methodology (e.g. Agile, Waterfall) to support the intended outcome.	Level 3 has been achieved. In addition, with wider horizon scanning in place to enable adaptation of the portfolio, or the sequencing of it in line with internal and external factors.	Level 4 has been achieved. In addition, ongoing critical path analysis takes place at portfolio level to drive optimal sequencing of prioritised activity to drive efficient transformation delivery.

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Business case development	Business cases are not routinely created ahead of transformation activities taking place.	Individual services and projects create business cases for specific pieces of work, but not necessarily reflecting the priority objectives of the organisation. Business cases may be partial and not fully validated.	A framework exists for the creation of business cases council wide. There is an expectation that transformation initiatives will have a business case that clearly sets out expected benefits, informed by data. Business cases are a key element of the control framework, used to understand and baseline expected benefits throughout the project or programme lifecycle.	Level three has been met. In addition, business cases are continually updated as new information comes to light, with regular reviews to ensure the original premise of the work and alignment to organisational objectives remains valid.	Level four has been met. In addition, past successes and learning from prior transformation work and from external knowledge is considered in the development of future business cases.

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Risk management	Risk management is reactive and only as effective as the individual managing the work. There is no codified framework in place to optimise the conditions for success.	A risk management framework is in place, specific to the project or service area, but fully embedded as part of the council's overall risk management process to enable upward escalation and an understanding of overall risk appetite. Risk logs may be in place, but there is no overall risk assessment of the change portfolio, neither multi variate nor compound risks are considered.	There is an established risk management framework in place council-wide, providing effective line of sight of all risks, including those relating to transformation. Risk appetite is agreed and communicated. There are standard policies/processes in place for risk management and risk owners are proactive. Risk definitions, mitigations and escalations are effective.	Level three has been achieved. In addition, statistical data and / or assurance is used to assess risk and to understand the effect of mitigating risk controls. Risks and their mitigations are stress tested to ensure that controls are effective. Risks outside of risk appetite are escalated in a timely manner and remedied effectively.	Level four has been achieved. In addition, learnings from risk mitigations and controls are shared across the organisation to enable continuous learning and iteration of the framework.

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Requirement definition	Requirements are not consistently used to inform the design of services or the procurement of solutions. Initiatives may unravel at points throughout delivery due to the lack of robust requirement foundations being in place.	Services design requirements for new services or changes to existing services in isolation. User needs may be captured and structured, but wider constraints and non-functional needs may not be well articulated. There is no joining up of requirements or standard setting to ensure that wider considerations that may impact strategic outcomes are factored in.	The council understands the needs for requirements as a foundation for design and procurement activity. Stakeholders are involved appropriately. Requirements and acceptance criteria are unambiguous. The council understands different requirement formats. Quality assurance of requirements is in place.	Level three has been met. In addition, the council is confident in its ability to select the optimal approaches to defining and capturing requirements. Relevant controls are applied depending on methodology. There is evidence of continual learning in the development of requirements including evidence of improved outcomes as a result.	Level four has been met. In addition, requirements are managed systematically using supporting tooling to manage version control, encourage collaboration and ensure traceability. There is ongoing reflection on associated metrics to support improvements to transformation initiatives over time.

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Dependency management	Dependencies are often managed reactively or are reliant on a key individual being aware enough to plan ahead.	Dependencies within individual projects and services are controlled, with the critical path mapped out and shared to ensure all stakeholders understand dependencies on it. Wider dependencies that sit in other service areas are less well understood and tend to be managed on an ad hoc or reactive basis during project delivery.	Cross project and cross organisation dependencies are considered upfront at the scoping stages of work and managed effectively beyond, across a single council framework that ensures mutual visibility, often using technology to support tracking. Changes are well managed, with impact assessments considering knock on dependency impacts to other areas.	Level three has been met. In addition, data is captured throughout the delivery lifecycle to ensure that where blockers occur due to dependencies not being well managed, learning can be shared, and the full impact of any blockers is understood to enable effective decisions to be taken.	Level four has been met. In addition, dependency and risk management are well integrated to ensure dependencies are identified early and updated regularly. Scenario planning is regularly used to consider risk materialisation and how dependencies might best be managed should risks crystalise.

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Resource management	Resources are not fully considered upfront and often managed reactively as a result. Councils at Level 1 may tend to start and stop on projects due to resource constraints that emerge during delivery. Sometimes skills are not considered as part of resource assignment and / or budget requirements not fully understood up front.	Resource assignment within individual projects and services is well controlled and considered upfront. Adequate provision is made for the core capacity, capabilities and budgetary provision needed. Resource requirements that sit in other service areas may be managed on an ad hoc or reactive basis during project delivery.	Cross project and cross organisation resource requirements are considered upfront at the business case and scoping stages of work. Adequate resource capacity, capability and budgets are assigned to deliver the target outcome. Changes to resource requirements are well managed and mitigated in advance. Resources are optimised and outputs tracked.	Level three has been met. In addition, performance metrics are used to understand relative productivity, performance, velocity, and costs to inform team improvement, learning and development, commissioning and to optimise delivery costs.	Level four has been met. In addition, proactive contingency planning is in place, with resource contingencies defined upfront so that resource gaps or over-spends are managed and controlled effectively.

	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**
Benefit management	Benefits are not fully considered upfront and often managed reactively, or lack the specific definition needed to enable tracking and realisation. Benefits tend to be loosely defined and are not typically baselined, or targeted. Ownership may sit within the project rather than with a business owner.	Benefits management within individual projects and services is well controlled and considered upfront, with baseline data and benefit targets in place, clear benefit owners and clear plans for the delivery of each specific benefit. Benefits are typically aligned to council outcomes, but benefit delivery is not optimised based on 'highest impact' across the council.	A council-wide benefits framework is in place, enabling identification, quantification, planning and realisation of benefits in a manner that aligns to the council's overall objectives. Benefits owners are assigned, roles and responsibilities are clear. Actions to deliver benefits are tracked and benefit delivery itself is monitored over a realistic timeframe.	Level three has been met. In addition, performance metrics are used to understand where benefits may be further optimised, or where they may be at risk and require mitigation to be applied.	Level four has been met. In addition, horizon scanning is in place to enable impacts because of internal or external factors to be understood and planned for as early as possible. Learning from benefits tracking is shared openly to build organisational understanding and capacity.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Delivery assurance	No quality standards are in place. Activities are delivered without a frame of reference to understand what success looks like at each stage. Quality of delivery is reliant on key individuals and is not systemised.	Quality standards are in place and tracked at service level. This may include clear success or gateway criteria at stages of delivery, or audit / assurance of the work being delivered. Typically, standards are local to the service area and are not applied council wide.	A quality assurance framework is in place and applied council wide. Quality assurance controls are agreed as standard during mobilisation and may include core controls (e.g. a visible plan and reporting against it), specific controls relating to delivery (e.g. test coverage and defect resolution) and / or external assurance.	Level three has been met. In addition, there is regular review of the metrics themselves to ensure they remain valid, and that data driven decisions can be taken.	Level four has been met. In addition, learning from the assurance process is shared widely across the organisation to enable a culture of continual learning.

Maturity level definitions

The following definitions define the general characteristics of councils at each stage of their transformation journey and should be read in combination with the specific characteristics of each capability.

Level One: Level one describes the typical capabilities and characteristics of councils who do not yet have whole organisation approaches to transformation in place. These councils are characterised by having lots of individual projects happening within services and with no joining up between them corporately.
Typically, success depends on the efforts of individuals rather than on processes and established ways of working. Coordination and communication are usually limited. Senior leaders may plan strategically but do not put the mechanisms in place to translate their vision into joined up action, often becoming disappointed or frustrated when initiatives fail.

Level Two: Councils with Level two transformation capabilities may have consistent practices in place within individual service areas or projects, or in pockets of the authority. This may include templates, standard processes, reporting and some repeatable ways of working.
Cross-functional teams, with representation outside of the service area, are often pulled together to drive project delivery, but these defined ways of working do not span the whole organisation.

Typically, at this stage there is some analysis and focus on strategic outcomes, and basic benefit capture and tracking (e.g. identifying and tracking savings). Usually there are a small number of defined roles in place including Project Management capacity.

Level two organisations are beginning their transformation journey.

Level Three: At Level Three, councils have integrated transformation capabilities and are applying standard ways of working across the whole organisation, incorporating continuous learning and best practice.
Changes are managed effectively against an integrated governance structure that spans people, process, technology and financial. Teams share information across departments and effective, co-ordinated communication is in place that sets out clear organisational vision and makes the 'golden thread' between projects and organisational outcomes clear.

Roles and responsibilities are clear, enabling employees to understand their role in transformation and to be empowered to take decisions within their remit. Staff engagement is regular and enables two-way communication and problem

solving. Change resistance is managed and Senior Leaders understand, and invest appropriately in, all the levers needed to deliver effective transformation.

Level three councils understand what good looks like and are developing their capacity and capability to support transformational change.

Level Four: Councils who reach Level 4 are strategic in their approach to transformation.

This means that they go beyond aligning ways of working and linking activity back to the Golden Thread, implementing and embedding consistent, predictable, best practice ways of working that support transformational outcomes.

Accurate, real time or near real time data analysis is consistently used to enable actionable insights that drive decision-making and track progress. Metrics are used to understand what is working, and what is not, enabling changes to be made where needed.

The organisation has confidence in its decision making and is mature enough to stop activity where value has diminished.

Change resistance in Level 4 organisations is minimised and there is a more consistent culture across service areas due to effective communication and leadership.

Level Five: Level Five represents a best practice organisation that is fully optimised and self-optimising.

It is rare for councils to reach a fully optimised transformational capability and those that do set the benchmark for the sector.

A fully optimised transformation capability is evident in optimised processes, maximum productivity and efficiency, evidence of significantly positive impact on outcomes and the use of capacity created to drive innovation.