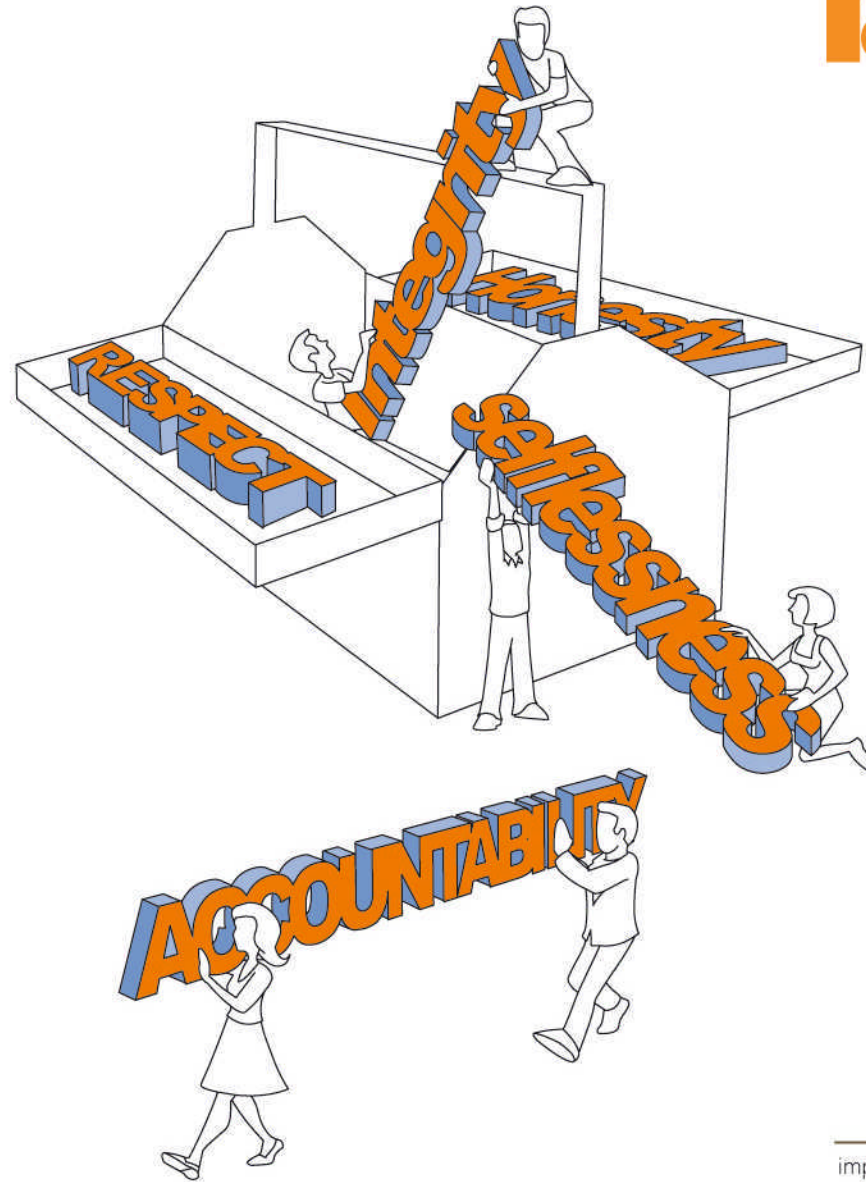


# ethical governance toolkit

context presentation



- to understand the context of standards and appropriate ethical behaviour
- to reflect on the ethical environment within your authority

- Chatham House rule
- reflect on the past, think about the future
- think council and community interest, not party or personal interest
- all contributions valued and respected
- be open-minded
- robust, but constructive challenge
- don't leave with things unsaid

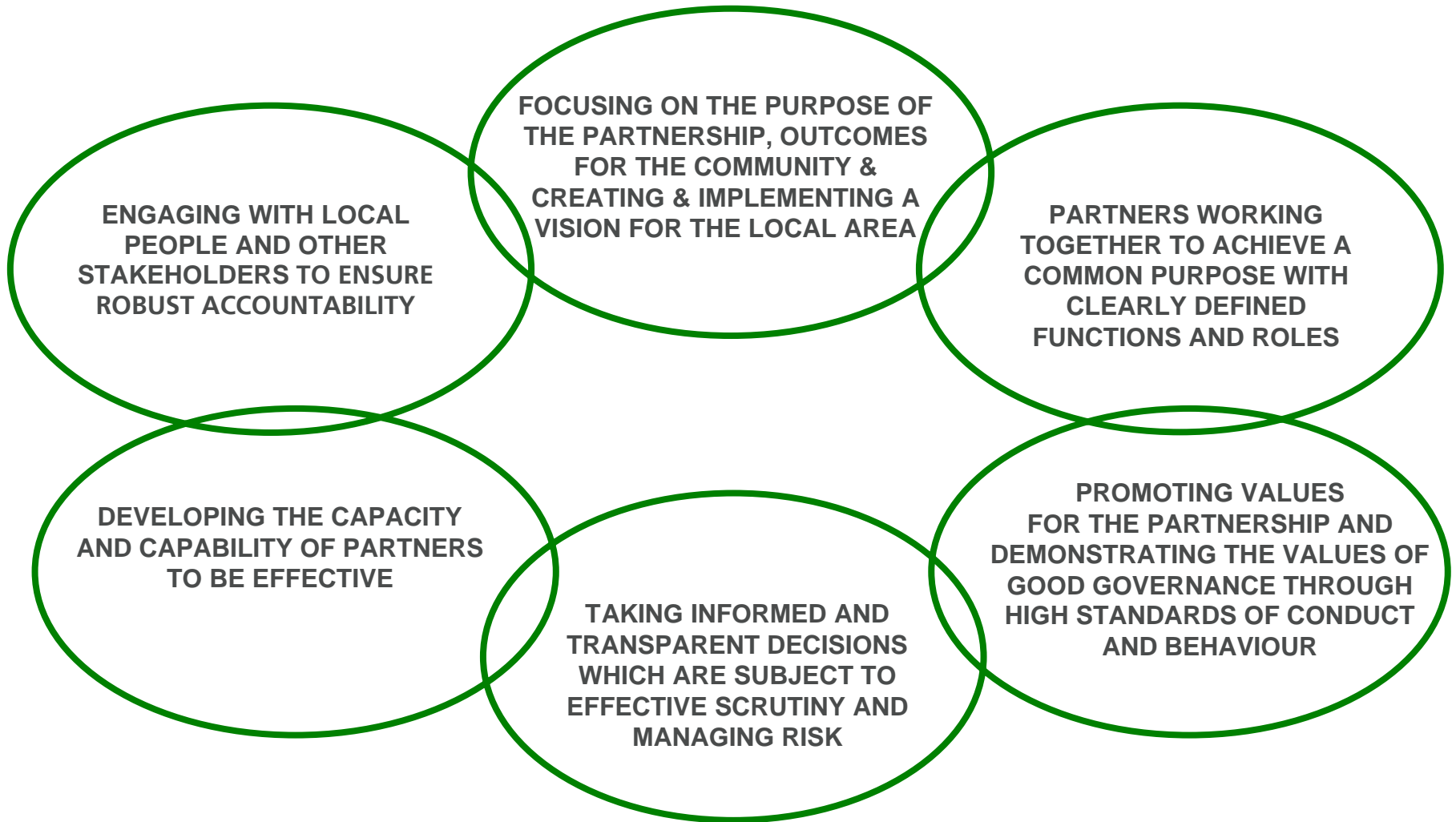
‘at the heart of good local democracy is a bond of trust between communities and the people who represent them. High standards of conduct contribute to building an ethical organisation which can establish that bond of trust’

Audit Commission

## **it is more than remaining a councillor and staying out of prison!**

it's a corporate responsibility

- but standards committee take the lead in promoting high standards
- the ethical governance toolkit can help to diagnose problems, action plan for improvement and develop skills and awareness



the terms of reference of the Committee enjoined it:

*‘to examine current concerns about standards of conduct of holders of public life... and make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements which might be required to ensure the highest standards of propriety in public life’*

Known as 1997 Nolan Committee,  
then Wicks and then Graham Committees

1. committee established the Seven Principles of Public Life and recommended that public institutions:
2. incorporate these principles into codes of conduct
3. set up systems of education and training to embed the behaviours required by the codes into the culture of the institution
4. introduce systems of external surveillance to give assurance about implementation

# 10 general principles of conduct

selflessness

honesty and integrity

objectivity

accountability

openness

personal judgement

respect for others

duty to uphold the law

stewardship

leadership

## Part III of the Local Government Act 2000

- The Model Code of Conduct
- Standards Committees
- The Standards Board for England
- Adjudication Panel for England

## Part 10 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

- Locally managed conduct framework
- Revised strategic role for the Standards Board to provide supervision, support and guidance for local authorities to ensure the effectiveness of the local standards framework

## Promote and maintain high standards of conduct

- ensuring the effectiveness of the local framework
- oversee the Code of Conduct
- carry out investigations that cannot be undertaken locally
- provide support and guidance to authorities and members regarding ethical behaviour

establishes Case Tribunals to hear:

- allegations referred to it by Ethical Standards Officers
- appeals against local determinations

- assess and review complaints about members
- hold hearings and determine cases
- advice to council on adopting a local code of conduct
- monitor the effectiveness of the code
- train, or arrange training on the code
- promote and maintain high standards of conduct of members
- help members to follow the code of conduct
- some standards committee have developed a broader role in governance issues
  - e.g. internal and external audit, officer code, whistle-blowing, overview of the constitution

or rather

**‘ public service ethics are a prerequisite to, and underpin, public trust, and are a keystone of good governance.’**

O.E.C.D.

good ethical governance combines the

- ‘hard’ factors – robust systems and processes
- with the ‘softer’ characteristics of effective standards of behaviour

this involves elements of:

- **leadership**
- **communication**
- **roles and relationships**
- **accountability**
- **management of standards**
- **team working and co-operation**

**an Audit Commission review of major investigations found an**

‘evident relationship between corporate governance and service quality. Poor governance arrangements set the framework within which organisational systems and processes failed to detect or anticipate serious service failures’

- poor quality or absence of leadership
- poor decision making and decision-making processes
- inadequate systems and processes, such as performance management
- lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities and activities
- poor working relationships and dysfunctional behaviours
- insular organisational culture and poor focus on community and user needs
- inadequate contingency plans or risk management strategies

The Committee on Standards in Public Life has recommended the use of the ethical governance health check covering:

- principles
- codes
- culture
- external review

‘ confidence in local democracy is a cornerstone of our way of life. It can only be achieved when elected and co-opted members of local authorities are seen to live up to the high standards the public has a right to expect from them.’

The Standards Board for England

- leadership
- communication
- roles and relationships
- accountability
- management of standards
- team working and co-operation