

Assurance Statement on Governance Arrangements

Below are details of the arrangements that are in place to support governance arrangements within the Authority. The Authority has reviewed each of the Core Principles as outlined in the document 'Delivering Good Governance' CIPFA/Solace 2012, together with the supporting principles and evidence of good practice within the Authority.

Core Principle	Supporting Principles	Examples of evidence
<p>1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area</p>	<p>Exercising strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating the Council's vision and its intended outcome for residents and service users.</p>	<p>The 'Our North Tyneside Plan '2016-2019' (the Plan) is in place across the Authority and identifies the priorities for the next 4 years. It covers the big things that need to change and be improved. It is delivered through a partnership between the Council, local people, communities, businesses and local voluntary and public sector organisations. A Target Operating Model (TOM) is in place which states how the Authority will align itself to deliver services. The TOM addresses the financial pressures that the Authority is facing whilst enabling the Authority to continue to deliver the Our North Tyneside Plan and the Creating a Brighter Future priorities.</p> <p>There is a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) in place. The JSNA provides an overarching assessment of the health and wellbeing needs of our local community across the wider health and social care economy.</p>

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<p>1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area</p>	<p>Exercising strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating the Council's vision and its intended outcome for residents and service users.</p>	<p>The JSNA provides a picture of health and care needs for the local community; looks at the health of the population and the behaviours which affect health; looks at social issues that have an impact on people's health and wellbeing, such as education, poverty and employment and shows health inequalities.</p> <p>The JSNA is driven by the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and is the basis for developing the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy. The PNA identifies the health needs of the local population including issues around access to services, inequities in health experience and other inequalities experienced by specific groups in the population.</p> <p>Service Plans are developed to provide the link between the Council's strategic priorities set out in the Plan and what happens on a day to day basis across the Council. Service Plans link to the themes in the Plan and set out milestones which demonstrate these.</p> <p>As part of the Council's engagement process local residents, community groups and the business sector are consulted. The Council engaged on proposals for the 'Our North Tyneside' Council Plan and the Council budget from 11 December 2015 to 24 January 2016.</p>

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<p>1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area</p>	<p>Exercising strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating the Council's vision and its intended outcome for residents and service users.</p>	<p>Face to face events were held for: the North Tyneside Strategic Partnership members, Staff Panel, residents, young people, older people, businesses and people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act. In addition people could give views via the Council website.</p> <p>Engagement opportunities were published online, via social media, in the press and at Council locations. The feedback from the budget engagement process provided information for the Elected Mayor and Cabinet at the budget consideration meeting held in January 2016.</p>

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<p>1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area</p>	<p>Ensuring that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, or in partnership or by commissioning</p>	<p>Robust monitoring processes are in place for both the Plan and Service Plan milestones. Performance scorecards have been developed for each service area and these are reported to the Authority's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on a monthly basis.</p> <p>The JSNA and PNA bring together a wide range of information about the current and future health and well-being needs of the local population that can be used to plan and ensure that we are able to meet the needs of local communities in the future.</p> <p>The JSNA is one of the major influences in directing our commissioning priorities and planning service developments.</p>

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<p>1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area</p>	<p>Ensuring that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, or in partnership or by commissioning</p>	<p>Performance by services delivered through partnerships is reviewed on a monthly basis in collaboration with the relevant partner and in accordance with the agreed governance arrangements. Both the Capita and ENGIE Partnerships and the Kier Joint Venture (JV) have robust governance structures in place as follows: client lead meetings, operational sub groups (Capita and ENGIE), client group, operational partnership board and strategic partnership board.</p> <p>The Technical Partnership Annual Service Plan has been aligned with the Council's Creating a Brighter Future Programme.</p> <p>Budget monitoring takes place on a monthly basis with service managers for each service area. A timetable of the budget monitoring process is drawn up. Budget monitoring is also regularly reported to the Authority's Senior Leadership Team and to individual service management team meetings. Budget monitoring reports are presented to both Cabinet and Finance Sub-Committee.</p>

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<p>1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area</p>	<p>Ensuring that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, or in partnership or by commissioning</p>	<p>Corporate performance management is utilised to identify good and poor performance in specific areas. A monthly performance report is discussed and challenged at the Authority's Senior Leadership Team, also discussions are held with individual Cabinet Members.</p> <p>Agreed Internal Audit service recommendations are a prime source of intelligence for continuous service improvement. They are performance managed by each service and regularly reported to the Audit Committee, which has helped improve the Authority's governance arrangements. The reports presented to the Audit Committee detail the key outcomes from Internal Audit reports.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Service seeks client feedback at all stages of an audit – from setting the terms of reference through to issuing the conclusion of each audit assignment.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction feedback and stakeholder reviews are used to help develop service improvements.</p>

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<p>1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area</p>	<p>Ensuring that the Council makes best use of resources and that taxpayers and service users receive excellent value for money.</p>	<p>SLT convenes monthly as the Programme Board for the Creating a Brighter Future Change Programme. They consider progress reports from Project Leads and provide strategic guidance and direction. SLT monitor and control risk, issues and quality, and report progress to informal Cabinet.</p> <p>Robust budget monitoring processes are in place. Each service area has regular/monthly budget monitoring meetings with Finance staff.</p> <p>As part of the annual audit, External Audit provide a conclusion on whether the Authority has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. For 2014/15 the Authority was deemed as having in place proper arrangements.</p> <p>The Authority continues to support the Audit Committee which is chaired by an independent person and also has an independent deputy chair. The Committee improves corporate governance arrangements by enabling independent assurance over the Authority's financial reporting process.</p> <p>Finance support is provided to all service areas as part of the Financial Planning and Budget, as well as ongoing challenges from Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee and its sub-committees during the year.</p>

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1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area	Ensuring that the Council makes best use of resources and that taxpayers and service users receive excellent value for money.	The Strategic Property Group provides strategic leadership on all matters relating to the Authority's property portfolio. The Authority also has a gateway system for all capital investment decisions in place with the Investment Programme Board playing a major role in this process.

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<p>2. Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles</p>	<p>Ensuring effective leadership throughout the Council and being clear about executive and non executive functions and of the roles and responsibilities of the scrutiny function.</p>	<p>The Constitution sets out the roles and functions of Members and Officers to ensure that decisions are taken efficiently and transparently and those who make decisions are accountable to local people.</p> <p>Senior managers are involved in the scrutiny function of the Authority through attendance at Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee and its Sub-Committees such as Finance Sub-Committee.</p> <p>Heads of Service have regular 1-2-1s with their portfolio Cabinet member.</p> <p>Working with Members' training has taken place during 2015/16. This training was delivered by both Officers and Members. This training has also been offered to the Authority's partners, ENGIE and Capita as they deliver services on behalf of the Authority.</p>

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<p>2. Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles</p>	<p>Ensuring effective leadership throughout the Council and being clear about executive and non executive functions and of the roles and responsibilities of the scrutiny function.</p>	<p>Managers hold regular 1-2-1 meetings and team meetings with staff within their service areas.</p> <p>The Authority continues to deliver the L21C (Leaders for the 21st Century Programme) which aims to support managers in delivering the Authority's priorities through: enhancing our current leadership capability and capacity (helping us to do our current job more effectively); enhancing our capability and capacity for future roles (developing key skills, knowledge and confidence to address future demands/challenges placed upon us and developing leadership potential with a group of individuals across the council for future demands/challenges).</p> <p>The Authority's senior management team attend quarterly leadership forums led by the Chief Executive.</p> <p>All operational, team leaders and supervisors attend bi-yearly corporate manager's briefings led by the Chief Executive.</p>

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<p>2. Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles</p>	<p>Ensuring effective leadership throughout the Council and being clear about executive and non executive functions and of the roles and responsibilities of the scrutiny function.</p>	<p>The competency framework has been reviewed to ensure it continues to be fit for purpose and is aligned to the Creating a Brighter Future Programme and Target Operating Model principles. The document sets out clearly what behaviours, knowledge and skills are expected from the workforce across six core competency areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. engaging people ii. delivering on our promises iii. delivering customer outcomes iv. enabling change v. aspiring to be better vi. working together. <p>These six core competencies cut across all four bands of our workforce: Employees; Operational Managers, Team Leaders and Specialists (grade 10 plus); Senior Management Team and lastly the Senior Leadership Team.</p> <p>A Releasing The Potential of the Workforce Programme is in place to develop leadership potential across the Authority.</p> <p>Ward briefings for Members.</p>

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<p>2.Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles</p>	<p>Ensuring relationships between the Council, its partners and the public are clear so that each know what to expect of the other.</p>	<p>The Authority's Partnerships have adopted robust governance frameworks setting out the roles and functions of the Strategic and Operational Partnership Boards, and other groups within the governance arrangements.</p> <p>Corporate performance management is utilised to identify good and poor performance in specific areas. A monthly performance report is discussed and challenged at the Authority's Senior Leadership Team, also discussions are held with individual Cabinet Members.</p> <p>Customer views are sought and intelligence used to inform services.</p> <p>The Authority's Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee receive bi-monthly 'Our North Tyneside Corporate Level Performance Management Reports'.</p> <p>Cabinet Members meet with their Heads of Service on a regular basis. Service Managers attend to brief on specific items.</p> <p>The Senior Leadership Team receives progress reports which note progress against each of the Authority's priorities. These reports are submitted to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.</p>

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<p>2 Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles</p>	<p>Ensuring relationships between the Council, its partners and the public are clear so that each know what to expect of the other.</p>	<p>Authority policies are reinforced during Individual Performance Reviews with managers. Including the Employee Code of Conduct - Gifts and Hospitality. The self service Business Management System enables staff to make declarations on-line.</p> <p>A Shared Services Management Board has been established to oversee the Shared Service arrangements for Internal Audit and Risk Management Services with Northumberland County Council.</p> <p>Members, Officers and the voluntary sector work closely together on the Mayor's Welfare Reform Task Group, the Welfare Reform Project Board and the Welfare Reform Community and Voluntary Sector Group.</p>

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<p>2 Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles</p>	<p>Ensuring that constructive working relationships exist between elected Members and Officers and that the responsibilities of Authority Members and Officers are carried out to a high standard.</p>	<p>A Shared Services Management Board has been established to oversee the Shared Service arrangements for Internal Audit and Risk Management Services with Northumberland County Council.</p> <p>Members, Officers and the voluntary sector work closely together on the Mayor's Welfare Reform Task Group, the Welfare Reform Project Board and the Welfare Reform Community and Voluntary Sector Group.</p> <p>Working with Members' training continues to be delivered to Officers of the Council. This training is delivered by both Officers and Members. This training has also been offered to the Authority's Partners, ENGIE and Capita as they deliver services on behalf of the Authority.</p> <p>The Authority's Constitution includes protocols on Member/Officer relations which provide general guidance on relations with one another.</p> <p>There is also a Member Development Programme on the Code of Conduct.</p>

Core Principle	Supporting Principles	Examples of evidence
<p>3 Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour</p>	<p>Ensuring Council Members and Officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance.</p>	<p>There are regular meetings of the Standards Committee which is responsible for the promotion of ethical standards within the Authority.</p> <p>Senior Managers attend 1-2-1 meetings with their Heads of Service to assist their development.</p> <p>There is a Member Development Programme within the Authority.</p> <p>Senior Managers attend the Authority's quarterly Leadership Forum on a regular basis led by the Chief Executive.</p> <p>All operational managers, team leaders and supervisors attend a bi-yearly managers briefing led by the Chief Executive.</p> <p>The Individual Performance Review (IPR) process includes a competency framework for all staff. All staff are periodically reminded about the Code of Conduct for employees. All IPR forms reference the CBF programme.</p>

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<p>3. Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour</p>	<p>Ensuring Council Members and Officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance.</p>	<p>The Creating a Brighter Future values, Aspire, Enable and Deliver, are integrated into the Authority's Human Resources policies and procedures (recruitment and selection, induction, workforce development programmes, performance management).</p> <p>Corporate governance matters such as Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity are monitored on a regular basis by the SLT.</p>
	<p>Ensuring that organisational values are put into practice and are effective.</p>	<p>Service Plans are developed to reflect the themes in the Plan and provide the link between the Authority's strategic priorities and what happens on a daily basis across the Authority.</p> <p>The Authority has a Workforce Plan 2015-2018 which links into the Authority's corporate priorities and positively promotes equality of opportunity through workforce operations/ procedures.</p> <p>The Authority's policies are reinforced during IPRs with managers. This process ensures employees understand how individual objectives relate to priorities and objectives of the service and the Authority.</p>

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<p>4. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk</p>	<p>Being rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and listening and acting on the outcome of constructive scrutiny.</p>	<p>Officers attend, support and advise the various Committees and Sub-Committees of the Authority.</p> <p>The annual Standards Committee report is taken to Council with subsequent recommendations and decisions being reported to Cabinet.</p> <p>Financial information to support the Financial Planning and Budget process is provided from the Finance Service. The legal consequences of any decision must also be considered and recorded.</p> <p>Customer complaints are recorded on the corporate complaints system and investigated thoroughly.</p>

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<p>4 Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk</p>	<p>Having good quality information, advice and support to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs.</p>	<p>There is a rigorous clearance process for both Council and Cabinet reports. All Council and Cabinet reports contain a section on compliance with the principles of decision making. These include financial and other resources including legal, equality and diversity.</p> <p>An Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) is being introduced across the Authority which will improve our information quality and reduce our business risk.</p> <p>The Finance Service leads on the development of the Financial Planning and Budget process timetable each year.</p> <p>There is an established policy framework within North Tyneside Homes that takes into account the diverse needs of tenants and other stakeholders.</p>

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<p>4 Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk</p>	<p>Ensuring that an effective risk management system is in place.</p>	<p>The Authority has an established framework for risk management; it reflects best practice, links to our insurers and is embedded as follows.</p> <p>Risk Management is undertaken at operational, strategic and corporate level and is also a main element of managing our key projects and partnerships.</p> <p>The Authority's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) takes an active part in ensuring that strategic risks are identified and managed, taking into consideration the Authority's priorities. Those strategic risks that are exceptional in nature are managed at Corporate level and are jointly owned by the relevant member of SLT and Cabinet Member(s) with relevant portfolio responsibility.</p> <p>All level of risks (operational, strategic, project and partnership) are updated by the risk owner and reviewed on a regular basis by the relevant risk management group to ensure that they are being managed effectively. Progress is then reported where appropriate to Senior Management, relevant Board, SLT, Cabinet and the Audit Committee.</p> <p>There is a corporate whistle blowing policy in place for staff.</p> <p>All Council, Cabinet and Committee reports include a risk section.</p>

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4 Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk	Using legal powers to the full benefit of residents and communities within North Tyneside.	<p>Any legislative requirements of posts are highlighted within job roles and person specifications.</p> <p>Training needs are identified at individual performance reviews.</p> <p>Staff update their skills and knowledge through continuing professional development.</p>

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5. Developing the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective	Making sure that Members and Officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles.	<p>There is a Member Development Programme within the Authority.</p> <p>Individual Performance Reviews include the identification of workforce development needs for staff.</p> <p>Staff survey results are reviewed corporately.</p> <p>Staff update their skills and knowledge through continuing professional development.</p> <p>The Authority has a Learning and Development Framework to support the Authority's need for a highly skilled and flexible workforce. This incorporates both generic and service specific development programmes which are aligned to Council/service priorities.</p>

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<p>5 Developing the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective</p>	<p>Developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance as individuals and as a group.</p>	<p>The Individual Performance Review process identifies workforce development needs and performance matters. It ensures individual objectives relate to the priorities and objectives of their service and the Authority.</p> <p>Heads of Service hold 1-2-1 meetings with managers to assist with their development.</p> <p>‘Working with Members’ training has taken place during 2015/16. This training was delivered by both Officers and Members. This training has also been offered to the Authority’s Partners, ENGIE and Capita as they deliver services on behalf of the Authority.</p> <p>Detailed budget monitoring reports are submitted to the Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis.</p>

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<p>5 Developing the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective</p>	<p>Encouraging new talent for membership of the Authority so that best use can be made of resources in balancing continuity and renewal.</p>	<p>The Authority has a 'Releasing the Potential of the Workforce Programme' which is designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build leadership, entrepreneurial and change management expertise which will enable the Authority to ensure that it has the right skills to tackle future challenges; • Create some capacity within the workforce to be able to flex to changing demands placed on the Authority; and • Provide accelerated route of development and support for those individuals. <p>All operational managers, team leaders and supervisors attend a bi-yearly managers briefing led by the Chief Executive.</p> <p>Identification of workforce development needs at Individual Performance Reviews.</p> <p>All managers can access the Authority's leadership and management development programme, L21C.</p> <p>An apprenticeship scheme is in place at the Authority and covers areas such as ICT Engineering, Legal, Maintenance and Customer Services.</p>

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<p>6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability</p>	<p>Taking an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery whether directly by the authority, in partnership or by commissioning.</p>	<p>Every month the Elected Mayor hosts an event giving residents an opportunity to come along and talk to her and Members of the Cabinet about what is important to them, and how they think the Council is doing.</p> <p>Community Conversations are hosted by local councillors and are a way of involving the public and allowing them a way of having their say about what the Council is doing at a ward level.</p> <p>There is extensive involvement with the budget engagement process; local residents, community groups and the business sector are all consulted on the budget and Council Plan proposals.</p> <p>A yearly review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit is conducted.</p>

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<p>6 Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability</p>	<p>Making best use of resources by taking an active and planned approach to meet responsibility to staff.</p>	<p>The Authority achieved the gold award for the 'Better Health at Work Awards' which promotes a sustainable culture of health and wellbeing. This has included a review of a number of the health & safety policies and procedures. In addition the Authority has been awarded the Health & Safety 'Continuing Excellence' award.</p> <p>Regular staff surveys are completed and action plans developed.</p> <p>A Staff Panel is in place which represents the Authority's commitment to work closely with staff and listen to their views, as well as keeping them informed about what is happening in the organisation.</p> <p>A local agreements procedure on working practices is in place to monitor and analyse the differing working practices across service areas to ensure that these are not detrimental to other staff groups within the Authority.</p> <p>Engagement takes place with the Trade Unions on projects, policy and procedure reviews. There is a consultation process in place for terms and conditions changes with the Trade Unions.</p>

Core Principle	Supporting Principles	Examples of evidence
<p>6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability</p>	<p>Exercising leadership through a robust scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships and develops constructive accountability relationships.</p>	<p>The Authority's website contains information on all areas of the Authority's activities including copies of Council and Cabinet reports, details on how to contact areas of the Authority, public events and details of the finance and performance of the Authority.</p> <p>There is an established policy framework within North Tyneside Homes that takes into account the diverse needs of tenants and other stakeholders. Elements of this policy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting You First • Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Strategy • Annual Tenant Event • Service Development Groups <p>Every month the Elected Mayor hosts an event giving residents an opportunity to come along and talk to her and Members of the Cabinet about what is important to them, and how they think the Council is doing.</p> <p>Community Conversations are hosted by local councillors and are a way of involving the public and allowing them a way of having their say about what the Council is doing at a ward level.</p>

Core Principle	Supporting Principles	Examples of evidence
6 Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability	Exercising leadership through a robust scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships and develops constructive accountability relationships.	<p>The Authority's Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development arrangements aim to improve services for the people of North Tyneside by influencing decision makers. The views of residents are taken into consideration during the development of the programme of scrutiny reviews for the coming year.</p> <p>Details about consultations open to the public are published on the Authority's website together with details of how residents can ask questions and contribute to the process.</p>