



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE POLICY

Contents

	Page Number
Introduction, Structures, Contacts, Governance, Engage	3
Purpose, Scope, Specification, Structures and Processes, Risk Control	4
Service Delivery, Standards and Conduct, Community Focus	5
Challenge, Conclusion	6
Conclusion (cont....)	7

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE POLICY

Introduction

Rossendales are *'Proud to be Professional'*. The civil enforcement service is a profession open to overt criticism from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Enforcement is our core business and we are strong advocates of delivering a quality based enforcement service that is open and transparent.

We understand the importance of integrity in gaining the public's confidence in civil enforcement procedures. Rossendales are determined to uphold these core values and we are committed to having in place robust systems and processes to ensure high professional standards.

Structures

Rossendales have in place structures to deliver good corporate governance. The Board of Directors provide the leadership and vision to uphold professional standards. The Company encourages a culture of openness transparency, dignity and respect that is supported with the use of effective systems, controls and procedures. Clients are free to scrutinise our service delivery processes at any time. Our Collection and Enforcement service is highly regulated and at every stage is open to explanation and appeal.

Contacts

Rossendales deliver Collection and Enforcement services on behalf of Public sector clients throughout England and Wales. In doing so, our staff, bailiffs and agents communicate with their stakeholders including customers (debtors), employers, government agencies, court service, voluntary organisations and members of the public. We understand our actions are judged by these stakeholders and that where mistakes are made that this affects the public's perception and confidence in the process. In terms of governance, Rossendales will learn from any mistakes and will always aim to deliver a service that is fair, correct first time and proportionate.

Governance

Rossendales wish to be seen to be fully accountable by being responsible to our clients and their stakeholders. We believe we share a wider remit of social responsibility and care in the community. For Rossendales, effective governance is about quality based enforcement that is delivered in a professional and transparent manner to gain the public's trust. We realise where people's possessions and liberty are at risk that this will be a challenge however this should not be reason or excuse not to do anything.

Engage

By engaging with stakeholders, Rossendales make open our systems, processes to demonstrate they are robust, fit for purpose and transparent. Through continuous training and development, we show to the wider community that our staff and bailiffs are competent, knowledgeable and professional. We hold bailiff advice surgeries and visit money advisors to communicate our codes of conduct and procedures in an unbiased and clear way.

Rossendales consult with our clients and issue questionnaires to their customers to measure opinion on the delivery of the service. Our quality management systems are accredited with the ISO 9001:2008 standard. Where we can improve the quality of service we will do so to make the experience better for all. If we make a mistake we will admit it and learn from it by engaging with our service users and the public.

Purpose

Our systems, processes and staff are audited both internally and externally to verify actions and outcomes. Auditors are given a free reign to investigate and report in order to drive economy, efficiency and effectiveness in our business and to deliver quality outcomes.

Scope

Directors, staff, clients and stakeholders are consulted widely as part of the collaborative process. By engaging in regular audits there is opportunity to explore the potential for improvement e.g. quality standards, performance levels, service efficiencies, staff development, communication, processes, etc.

The key points which follow identify a series of control statements. It is not intended to be exhaustive but rather to reflect the core values of Rossendales. They should not be considered in isolation but as part of the reporting process.

Specification

Through specifying and measuring outputs there will be:

- A greater focus on customer needs
- More efficient and effective use of resources
- Clearer accountability of actions
- Understanding of responsibilities
- Relevant performance measures
- Culture of continuous improvement

Structures and Processes

- Rossendales have in place clear structures and processes which are clearly documented and understood by all employees, bailiffs and agents.
- Roles, responsibilities and requirements are clearly defined for its employees, bailiffs and agents.
- Directors agree strategic objectives on future policy.
- Senior managers report KPI's to the Board.
- Processes governing the ethical conduct of the business are clearly defined, understood and documented.
- Staff have access to relevant training, instruction and development.
- Rossendales keeps up to date formal written descriptions of all its employees, bailiffs and agents' roles and responsibilities, including terms of remuneration and their reviews.

Risk Control

- Rossendales maintains robust arrangements for managing its risks.
- Those involved in service delivery and planning participate proactively in each of the steps in the risk management cycle.
- Rossendales maintains effective systems of internal control.
- They have an adequate and effective internal audit performance function.
- Directors maintain effective scrutiny of risk management arrangements.
- Directors and senior managers maintain effective scrutiny of systems of internal control and performance reporting.
- Rossendales reports on the effectiveness in practice of its risk management and internal control systems.
- Rossendales maintains an objective and professional relationship with its external auditors and inspectors.

Service Delivery

- Rossendales sets sustainable contract performance targets and standards in accordance with policies to ensure quality of service delivery.
- Managers receive reliable, timely and understandable information for measuring performance.
- Managers monitor and report performance against agreed standards and targets.
- Rossendales develops comprehensive and understandable performance plans.
- Rossendales uses its strategic plans and priorities to allocate resources and to set service delivery targets.
- In delivering services to meet contract requirements, Rossendales fosters effective relationships and partnerships with clients, debtors and other stakeholders in the public/voluntary sectors.
- Rossendales monitors its service delivery arrangements to ensure they are effective in meeting governance standards and expectations.
- Rossendales responds positively to external auditors' and inspectors' findings and recommendations.
- Such findings and recommendations result in effective implementation of agreed actions.

Standards and Conduct

- Rossendales has adopted codes of conduct that explain and define the standards of behaviour that apply to its employees, bailiffs and agents.
- Codes are supported with relevant training to ensure they are properly understood by its employees, bailiffs and agents.
- Rossendales procedures and operations conform to [ethical, equality standards](#) and [vulnerability & young persons protection policy](#).
- They actively ensure procedures and operations are understood and adhered with by its employees, bailiffs and agents.
- Rossendales dealings with different persons, organisations and agencies are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest.
- They have clear and effective [whistle blowing](#) arrangements that are well known and accessible by all of its employees, bailiffs and agents.

Community Focus

- Clear and effective channels of communication exist with third party agencies and community sector organisations i.e. CAB, Welfare Rights.
- Channels of communication with external agencies are monitored to ensure they operate consistently, reliably and effectively.
- Rossendales encourages individuals and groups from the community to engage with it in understanding its work.
- Arrangements to encourage involvement are monitored to ensure that they work in practice.
- Rossendales honours its explicit commitment to openness and transparency (subject to the need to preserve confidentiality where appropriate).
- Rossendales uses robust mechanisms, including consultation with clients, their customers and community sector organisations, for developing their ethical governance strategy.
- Rossendales articulates clearly and disseminates widely the policies, procedures and priorities that support its strategy.

Challenge

- How clear are strategy, aims and objectives?
- How widely known and understood are the aims and objectives throughout the organisation and stakeholders?
- Has an independent survey been conducted to show how effective communication, information and management are in the organisation?

- Does the organisation focus on the right things?
- Direction and negotiation ~ Compliance and creativity ~ Rigidity and flexibility ~ Caution and ambition ~ Support and sanctions ~ Key priorities and responsibilities ~ Short and longer term actions
- How effective is the decision-making process?
- How effective is the training provided for staff and bailiffs to enable them to fulfil their roles properly?
- How clear are the boundaries?
- How well does the organisation's culture support open and honest discussion about performance and strategy?
- How well are staff effectively supported in scrutiny and providing challenge?
- How good is the information that is used to make decisions?
- How confident is the organisation that the quality of the data produced by its systems and processes for performance management, risk management and financial management is robust and reliable?
- How well do the views of service users and the wider public inform decisions about key strategic objectives?
- How effectively are users and stakeholders involved in decision making where appropriate?
- How clear is it when decisions are taken?
- How well are the risks attached to decisions understood?
- Are schemes of responsibility clear and widely understood?
- How effective are the internal controls to monitor performance and alert the organisation to problems?
- How effectively and honestly is performance and strategy communicated within the organisation and to service users?

Conclusion

Rossendales have already in place robust controls to ensure effective and efficient operations and compliance with laws, regulations and internal policies. They currently review practices and procedures to see what works and what does not in order to develop new strategies.

In addressing governance, Rossendales will focus on challenging and developing their core systems and processes, particularly those used to monitor and manage performance. Accountability for actions is critical to good governance for assurance and improvement.

External audit is an essential element in this process of accountability and will make recommendations about how some aspects of the company's governance can be improved. The role of audit will be to provide assurances on the adequacy and effectiveness of these systems to demonstrate corporate governance to our clients, stakeholders and the wider public. Where there are deficiencies, Rossendales will learn and take responsibility to improve the quality of its decision making.

Good governance adds value; it ensures effectiveness in an ever changing business environment. It achieves more than meeting performance targets; it balances the requirement for compliance with the benefits of being open about what the organisation does and how it does it.

Mike Shang (MANAGING DIRECTOR)

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