**Good estate governance**

This tool will help you to understand and communicate how strategic estate decisions are made in your organisation and your organisation’s levels of accountability and responsibility. To understand the principles of governance and its importance in effective estate management, you should read the relevant guidance.

Different types of school will have different governance arrangements although all governance boards have the same core functions no matter what type of school or how many schools they govern, see the [Governance Handbook 2019](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788234/governance_handbook_2019.pdf) for more information.

You will already have formal, documented governance arrangements in your organisation. This will include the governance structure, how functions are carried out, accountability and delegations.

You are likely to already have a documented approach to define this across a range of functions such as staffing, education and finance. Your governance arrangements should include estates governance so you could include estates functions in the same format.

You may already use a system of categorisation to define accountability, responsibility and delegations. It may include categories such as:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Description** |
| **Accountable (A)** | Those who would be ultimately answerable if the task was not completed correctly or thoroughly. They would be the ones who would delegate the work to those who would be responsible. |
| **Responsible (R)** | Those who would be responsible for the task and ensuring that it’s done. |
| **Supporting (S)** | Those who would provide the resource to those responsible to provide direct input into the task and help to complete it |
| **Consulted (C)** | Those who would provide input and an opinion, and be engaged in the process. |
| **Informed (I)** | Those who would be kept up to date with the progress of the task. |

The delegations and decision making table is for illustrative purposes only, using the categories above. You should adapt the grey shaded areas for your own governance arrangements, structure and the style and format of documentation that you already use, as follows:

* Levels of decision making: examples have been included but you will need to amend to reflect your particular circumstances and governance levels.
* Estate functions: examples have been included to reflect the [fundamental strategic elements](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools/the-fundamentals-of-good-estate-management) in the good estate management for schools guidance. You should amend to suit your key strategic estates related functions.
* Categorisation: examples have been given as an illustration only. You should consider where accountability and responsibility sit for each function, how decisions are made in your organisation and categorise accordingly.

Whilst the focus of this tool is on strategic estate functions, you should also set out clear roles and responsibilities for other operational estates functions and activities across your organisation as part of your [asset management planning](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools/strategic-estate-management#creating-an-asset-management-plan).

**Illustration of delegations/levels of decision making for key strategic estates functions**

**Level of decision making**

(these are examples only, you should adapt them to suit your organisation)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Estate function**  (these are examples only, you should adapt them for your organisation) | **Trustees *(could include charity or school trustees)*** | **Executive/ senior leadership team** | **Local governing body *(or relevant committee)*** | **Headteacher or staff** | **Local authority/ diocesan board** |
| Developing medium to long term strategic estates documents and plans (eg Estate vision, strategy and asset management plan) | A\* | R\* | C\* | S\* | C\* |
| Making strategic decisions about the estate (eg to acquire or dispose of land and buildings) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Managing the performance of the estate and ensuring it delivers value for money (eg as part of accountability for financial performance) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Setting a medium term budget for the estate (eg as part of your 3-5 year overall budget planning process) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Planning for emergencies and business continuity (eg ensuring the estate is integral in organisational emergency planning) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Instituting a health and safety policy for the estate and defining responsibilities across the organisation (eg ensuring the estate is integral in organisational health and safety policies) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ensuring that all buildings are safe, secure and comply with statutory requirements (eg managing and monitoring the safe use and operation of the estate) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Producing and implementing a properly funded maintenance plan (eg as part of organisational budget planning process) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Approving capital projects, building works and bids for capital funding (eg formal sign off for different levels of investment) |  |  |  |  |  |

\* These are illustrative designations only – you should insert your own delegations to reflect the way your organisation works.