

**AUDIT COMMITTEE - Table of Outstanding Issues (September 2019) – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTIONS**

Governance Issue	Action	Current Position / Update
<p><b>Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</b></p> <p>The Council continues to deliver the ten year approach to budgeting, aimed at maximising savings opportunities whilst delivering growth in underlying income to deliver a balanced budget over a ten year forecast.</p> <p>Risks exist to the plan should savings not be achieved and income generation schemes not materialise while using non-recurrent reserves to addressing budget gaps is not sustainable should austerity continue.</p>	<p>Continue to develop the long term forecast with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the robustness of assumptions used in financial planning/forecasting.</li> <li>• Prioritising resources whilst maintaining services wherever possible.</li> <li>• Undertaking targeted reviews of significant areas for cost pressures</li> <li>• Continuing to identify opportunities for savings, with the development of a 4 year plan for delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Delivery of a balanced budget in 2020/21 in-line with the forecast.</p>	<p>An updated financial forecast was presented to Cabinet on 13 September 2019 reflecting revised assumptions on items such as inflation, cost pressures and savings targets.</p> <p>The delivery of annual surpluses over the life of the forecast are still anticipated to be achieved.</p> <p>To isolate the on-going revenue forecast from potential one-off costs associated with the maintenance of Council Assets, an initial fund of £1.134m was agreed by Cabinet on 13 September to support costs that may emerge over the remaining years of the forecast. This will be complimented by a corporate review of the Council's operational assets to prioritise spending from this fund over the next few years.</p> <p>A savings plan is currently being developed which will be presented to members over the second half of 2019/20.</p>
<p><b>Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes</b></p> <p>By strengthening the linkages between the Corporate Plan priorities and the Council's investment plans.</p>	<p>To identify and maintain an ongoing corporate investment plan (including the capital programme) supporting delivery of the Council's priorities including the development of relevant strategies as necessary.</p>	<p>As part of agreeing a revised corporate plan and associated priorities over the remainder of 2019/20, an investment plan will be developed alongside it to maintain a direct link to the financial forecast.</p> <p>Cabinet agreed at its meeting on 13 September, a draft Corporate Plan for consultation.</p>

<p><b>Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement</b></p> <p>Supporting the delivery of key housing and development projects and priorities through open and transparent decision making (including informal briefings). Demonstrating effective use of the council's resources throughout continuation of the project development. This will include robust governance arrangements including risk management, funding, skills and capacity.</p>	<p>Consultation on a draft Housing Strategy and approval of a business/action plan setting out delivery, funding and performance of key housing and development building projects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Jaywick Sands;</li> <li>• Garden Communities; and</li> <li>• Other relevant sites across the district.</li> </ul> <p>Additional specific statutory consultation on the Local Plan and future development of the Garden Communities project.</p>	<p>A Housing Strategy for public consultation was agreed by Cabinet on 19 July 2019. The outcome of the consultation will be reported back to Cabinet later in the year before the Strategy is reviewed for recommending to Full Council.</p> <p>Full Council agreed at its meeting on 6 August, that the additional evidence and new Sustainability Appraisal required in support of Section 1 of the Local Plan would be subject to public consultation. The six-week period for consultation ends on 30 September and the responses received will be submitted to the Inspector as part of his re-examination of Section 1.</p> <p>The development of the Garden Communities project will be set out in future reports with any associated consultation undertaken as necessary</p>
<p><b>Developing the entity's capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it</b></p> <p>Ensuring compliance of the Council's governance arrangements through project board reviews and delivery of transformation projects, through the monitoring of key policies.</p>	<p>For the relevant project board or lead officers to identify sufficient resources to demonstrate and monitor compliance with the Council's policies and procedures (forming the Governance framework) during delivery and embedding the final arrangements.</p> <p>To complete the roll out of the revised business planning and project management approach.</p> <p>Launch the Cabinet report writing through modern.gov using the new template and processes.</p>	<p>A Project Board has now been established with its first meeting in August where it reviewed two key projects. The Project Board will continue to take a key role in supporting the development of projects / business cases, which will include a review of key outcomes / deliverables once the project has been fully implemented.</p> <p>A revised business planning and project management approach continues to be rolled out across the Council with awareness / Q&amp;A sessions arranged at upcoming departmental manager's meetings and senior manager's forums.</p> <p>Due to an on-going officer absence it has not been possible to progress the launch of Cabinet report writing through modern.gov but it is envisaged that this will be commenced in the second half of 2019/20.</p>

	<p>Recruit to the Senior Governance Officer post.</p> <p>Develop an induction and training programme for the newly elected Councillors covering a range of topics, including dedicated chairmanship training and an overview and scrutiny workshop.</p>	<p>A review of the Senior Governance Post is currently underway as part of a wider review of the Legal and Finance Services to reflect on the requirements of this role in supporting the Council's Statutory Officers and wider governance arrangements within the Council.</p> <p>A member induction programme was completed in the first quarter of this year. Further training opportunities are being organised including a session covering skills, practice and approach to chairing different meetings, and affordable housing for the Planning Committee. These subjects are in addition to the All Member Briefing programme.</p>
<p><b>Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</b></p> <p><b>Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law</b></p> <p>Ensure the Local Code of Corporate Governance and key policies and procedures are up to date.</p>	<p>Through a centralised review, develop an action and monitoring plan to include policy review dates and associated decision making.</p>	<p>The work associated with this action is expected to commence over the second half of 2019/20 as it will form a key role of the Senior Governance Officer post discussed above.</p>