AUDIT COMMITTEE - Table of Outstanding Issues (July 2021) - GENERAL

Governance Principle and Issue	Recommendation / Issue	Lead / Service	Progress /Comments	Status – Target Date
Developing the Council's capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it.	Following the consideration of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy last year, it was resolved that: The Head of Democratic Services & Elections be requested to consider including training for Members on anti-fraud and corruption measures as part of the Councillor Development Scheme.	Assistant Director Governance	The issue of the integration of training for Councillors on bribery and corruption into the offer for training for Councillors is being taken forward within the wider piece of work endorsed by Cabinet (on 19 February 2021 – Minute 138 refers) and Council (on 16 March 2021 – Minute 103 refers). This wider piece of work arose from the work of the Constitution Review Working Party at which the suggestion for "a suitable mechanism for regular Member input going forward such as a cross-party Member Working Group" was made. The Working Party also identified the potential use of e-Learning Platforms and in pursuance of that access to the LGA's e-Learning Package for Members has been arranged for all Councillors and is being rolled out to them. However, the LGA e-Learning Platform does not include a module on bribery and corruption, and measures to deter and detect such behaviour. Discussions will take place with the	**Review in September 2021**

			Section 151 Officer to look at how best to provide this training as they are on the wider point of Local Government Finance as requested by the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (to supplement the e-Learning module and a workbook on the subject already circulated to Members of that Committee).	
Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management	Following an update from the Assistant Director Housing and Environment on a number of Housing related matters at the Committee's meeting in March, it was agreed to keep under review the on-going issue relating to Council House void periods. This is especially timely given the review / changes to the governance arrangements proposed by the relevant Service in response to this issue.	Assistant Director Housing and Environment	The current position on reducing void turnaround time is still progressing. A new contractor has been appointed and has commenced, introducing some operational changes in order to provide a more efficient process once properties are ready to let. New software (MRI) is currently being introduced to support the management of the lettings process with some key milestones set out below: 10 Aug 21 – system to be made available to new applicants Early September 21 – allocation process will be moved from Northgate system to MRI system	**Est Dec 2021**

			December 2021 – complete move from Northgate to MRI system The system faced an initial delay due to technical issues with configuring the system to the allocations policy. This has now been overcome.	

AUDIT COMMITTEE - Table of Outstanding Issues (July 2021) – EXTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Area	Recommendation and Agreed Action	Lead / Service	Progress / Comments	Status – Target Date
Logical access controls – number of super users	The Council's IT systems identified that there are a large number of super users (users with privileged access rights) on a number of IT systems. There were 28 super users for the Capita system, 10 super users for the Northgate system and 6 super users for the Agresso system. It was considered that 2-3 super users per system would provide a robust level of IT security, and having a large number of super users could jeopardise system security. **AGREED ACTION - Assess the number of super user access rights granted in each of the IT systems and take necessary actions to reduce the number of super users to an acceptable low level.**	IT	Consultation has taken place with service areas in order to identify the number of super users (system administrators) to ensure that a balance is reached in reducing numbers compared to the organisation's operational requirements. The number of super users has decreased marginally as a result of this consultation, however due to the balance highlighted above it has not been possible to reduce this number further. There are a number of super users that are required due to the expertise that they provide in certain systems, along with providing sufficient cover for leave periods and absences. There will be an aim to conduct a review of the amount of super users annually, which will be done in consultation with Internal Audit.	**Completed Review Spring 2022**
Use of Resources	As set out in April 2021, we identified some significant amount of carry forward each year from the planned		1. A review of a range of funded projects has been undertaken in consultation with the	**Resource Capacity**

projects of revenue and capital items, which indicates an issue of deliverability of planned projects. There is a risk that reserves are not being held at the optimum level, given that a number of them have not moved notably in recent years. **AGREED ACTIONS:** **1. Assess the ongoing viability of planned projects and take actions such that they can be delivered within a reasonable time and minimise the carry forward.** **2. Assess, at least once every two years, the appropriateness of the levels of individual reserves and their continued validity based on factors such as historic utilisation rates, associated risk / sensitivity analysis and their underlying purpose and release any excess reserves.**		relevant service area Assistant Directors. The sourcing of providing support across a number of areas is currently being researched and an update should be available for the next Committee meeting in an aim to accelerate delivery of projects during 2021/22. 2. This action will be incorporated into the budget setting cycle from 2022/23 onwards.	**by end of April 2021** **Delivery Capacity - Update by end of July 2021** **By November 2021**

AUDIT COMMITTEE - Table of Outstanding Issues (July 2021) – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTIONS 2020/21

Governance Principle & Issue	Required Action(s)	Update / Additional Comments
Carried Forward and Updated from 19/20		
Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability Ensuring compliance of the Council's governance arrangements through project board reviews. Utilising the Council's systems to implement best practice for drafting, reporting and decision making.	• Review of project outcomes being undertaken by the Project Board to support future decision making and delivery. • Commence the roll out of the functionality of Modern.gov over a phased approach in 2020/21.	The outcome from two key projects are due to be reported to the Project Board in the first six months of 2021/22. Modern.gov remains an ongoing and live project with additional functionality planned to be rolled out during 2021/22. The delivery team have received updated training to support the future roll out of this system.
Developing the entity's capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it. Ensuring the Council has the appropriate structures in place to support delivery of the Corporate Plan following the Senior Management restructure.	• Finalise the operational capacity review and implement any recommended and approved staffing restructures.	This action is included as a standing agenda item on the regular Assistant Director meeting with actions underway in collaboration with HR, to deliver a prioritised / phased approach to this key activity during 2021/22. A significant element of pre-consultation work, including the identification of potential funding options, has been undertaken, which will be taken forward in the second and third quarters of the year.

New and Updated for 20/21		
Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes **Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management** By strengthening the linkages between the Corporate Plan priorities and the Council's investment plans along with review of the longer term impact of COVID-19	As part of the Back to Business and Recovery Plan: • Undertake a corporate review of the Council's operational assets to prioritise spending from an associated reserve over the next few years; • to develop an investment plan during 2020/21 which will be directly linked to the Council's budget and evolving financial position and supported by the reprioritisation of budgets / existing funding and/or as part of the long term forecast; and • conduct an audit review in relation to the effectiveness of the Council's response to the COVID-19 including *a review of the lessons learnt from the Council's response and* longer term consequences.	The Back to Business action plan was agreed by Cabinet at its 19 February 2021 meeting and included within its priority actions for 2021/22 which forms the background against which performances is being formally reported via the revised monitoring arrangements. A review into existing projects and initiatives remains in progress, which is linked to the implementation of additional capacity to support delivery, which is now underway. Some additional capacity is already in place such as the Executive Projects Manager – Governance, which also supports the various next steps of the accelerated delivery approach e.g. project review with Assistant Directors and securing the necessary additional resource. In respect of the latter point, work is underway in securing additional procurement capacity, which has been identified as an essential element of various projects over the coming months. An update on the Council's general response to the COVID-19 pandemic will be set out in the Annual Governance Statement that will be presented to the Committee later in the year. However, this remains subject to formal review by Internal Audit where further opportunities to

		strengthen the Council's arrangements will be considered, e.g. business continuity.
Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits **Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes** To set out the Council's vision following the Council's Climate Emergency declaration of the Council's activities being 'carbon neutral' by 2030.	• Prepare an Action Plan for approval by both the Cabinet and Council to form part of the Council's Policy Framework	A Climate Change Action Plan was agreed by Full Council on 24 November 2020 and included within its priority actions for 2021/22 which forms the background against which performance is being formally reported via the revised monitoring arrangements.
Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law Ensure the Local Code of Corporate Governance and key policies and procedures are up to date.	• Review of the Council's Equality and Diversity strategy, policies and procedures	Both of these actions will be considered as part of the respective Service's key priorities and actions during 2021/22 and are included within the revised performance monitoring arrangements, with updates being reported to Management Team during the year.

Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement Establishing a corporate framework to support community engagement	• Developing the Council's approach and adopting principles for community engagement.	