

Annual Governance Statement: Significant Governance Issues

No.	Issue	Agreed Action	Progress to date (April 2021)
1.	The financial impact of Covid and further losses in future years depending on the outcome of the fair funding review and funding available.	<p>The Council is monitoring budgets closely and utilising government financial support and grants.</p> <p>A new budget will be produced for 2021/22.</p>	<p>The financial impact was reported to Strategy & Resources Committee in July and in regular updates through the Financial Policy Panel.</p> <p>The 2021/22 budget was agreed on 16 February 2021 which identifies a number of service reviews to be undertaken to identify further savings.</p> <p>A register of all grant funding received is maintained by the Finance Team.</p>
2.	Organisational capacity was significantly challenged whilst responding to the emergency and this will continue for a number of months.	<p>The Service delivery plan for 2020/21 has been reviewed and significantly reduced to reflect the reduced capacity and backlogs in some areas. Capacity will be monitored in reviewing performance and in planning for potential local lockdowns and further waves.</p>	<p>Capacity continues to be a challenge as the enduring nature of the pandemic continues. The impact is reflected in the new Service Delivery Plan for 2021/22.</p> <p>The Government's new road map was published on 22 February and plans are being drawn up as new guidance becomes available to support this plan.</p>

Annual Governance Statement: Significant Governance Issues (Cont)

No.	Issue	Agreed Action	Progress to date (April 2021)
3.	The updated Local Plan programme as agreed in June 2019 was delayed by Covid which delayed the Regulation 18 consultation.	A new timetable has been agreed for the Local Plan. There is no impact on the deadline for the Estimated date of adoption.	A report was taken to Licensing & Planning Policy Committee on 4 March 2021 with an updated timetable to deliver the Local Plan. This latest timetable updates the previous version, approved in August 2020. The programme has been updated following various Government announcements on changes to planning, including significant planning reform, and the on-going impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had caused unexpected delays.
4	Emergency response to Covid-19.	A report on lessons learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic will be taken to the Audit, Crime Disorder and Scrutiny Committee in February 2021. Operational protocols and guidance notes have been produced for the Community Hub. Procedures were established for other new work streams such as discretionary grants, business grants and rates relief, which will be audited in 20/21.	A report providing an update on the emergency response and learning points is included on the April 2021 agenda of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee following cancellation of the February meeting. The Internal Audit Progress Report also included on the April agenda provides an update on the latest position of the Business Support Grants internal audit.

Annual Governance Statement: Significant Governance Issues (Cont)

No.	Issue	Agreed Action	Progress to date (April 2021)
5	Review and strengthen compliance with policies, procedures and legislative requirements for procurement.	This is an on-going area for improvement. The Contract Standing Orders are being reviewed and the Contract Register is being refreshed to ensure it contains all necessary and up to date information. A procurement pipeline and action plan is being developed	The Contract Register has been updated and is available on the Council's website. A procurement pipeline is in place to manage resources and timelines. The Contract Standing Orders are being updated and will be reported to Strategy & Resources Committee in 2021/22.
6	Significant work has been Undertaken on the health and safety framework in 19/20, but there is additional risks to be managed due to the impact of the Covid Secure requirements.	Ongoing monitoring and auditing of the risks will continue to be undertaken through the Corporate Health and Safety Group, and is within the Council's existing risk registers.	The Health & Safety Group have received regular updates on the management of the COVID-19 related risks. Work on managing these risk will be ongoing during 2021/22. An audit of the Health & Safety (COVID-19) work to date has been undertaken by internal auditors in 2020/21 and has been given reasonable assurance.
7	Due to Covid-19, the annual performance report against the 2019/20 key priority targets has not yet been finalised	The 2019/20 year-end performance report will be presented to the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee in November 2020.	The 2019/20 year end position was reported to the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee in November 2020 together with the new targets for 2020/21. The 2021/22 performance targets/ annual plan are currently being finalized and will be reported in July .

Annual Governance Statement: Significant Governance Issues (Cont)

No.	Issue	Agreed Action	Progress to date (April 2021)
8	The launch of the Council's new Vision and Four Year Plan, which were agreed in February 2020, has been limited by Covid-19.	The Vision and Four Year Plan will be communicated in 2020/21 and work commenced with partners to achieve the strategic objectives.	As part of the recovery and Building Back Better, programme has been developed to promote the Council's corporate priorities as outlined in the report to S&R Committee 16 March 2021.
9	Due to Covid-19, the annual report from Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee on the work of internal audit in 2019/20, has not yet been presented to Full Council.	The report will be produced and presented to Full Council during 2020/21.	This report was presented to full Council on 8 December 2020.
10	The Council's Equality and Diversity Policies are in need of updating.	Updated policies will be brought before Strategy and Resources Committee for approval in 2020/21.	The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework was reported to Strategy & Resources Committee on 30 March S2021.