

Annual Governance Statement 2021-22

Committee considering report:	Governance and Ethics Committee
Date of Committee:	27 June 2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Tom Marino
Report Author:	Joseph Holmes (Executive Director – Resources)
Forward Plan Ref:	GE4218

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report sets out the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the Council for 2021-22 for approval. The AGS summarises the key governance issues for the Council and the action plan to address these. The AGS is required to be approved by those charged with governance, the Governance and Ethics Committee at West Berkshire, under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
- 1.2 The AGS will form part of the Council’s financial statements and will be considered by the Council’s external auditors, Grant Thornton, as part of their annual audit for 2021-22.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 For the Governance and Ethics Committee to approve the AGS.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	None directly
Human Resource:	None directly
Legal:	This report is a requirement that it must be considered by the Governance & Ethics Committee under the accounts and audit regulations 2015.

Risk Management:	See the main report detailing the action plan to mitigate overall risks raised in the AGS			
Property:	None directly			
Policy:	None directly			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Environmental Impact:		X		
Health Impact:		X		
ICT Impact:		X		
Digital Services Impact:		X		
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		The AGS supports the Council Strategy through focussing on areas to help improve its delivery

Core Business:	X			The AGS focusses on areas that can improve core business
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	The Council's Finance and Governance Group, Corporate Board and the Portfolio Holder			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is a core document that sets out the Council's governance arrangements and a review of their effectiveness. The AGS must be reviewed and approved by the Governance & Ethics Committee annually and is published with the financial statements.
- 4.2 The review for 2021-22 has highlighted three key areas to include in the AGS with an accompanying action plan.
- Capacity to deliver projects
 - Enhancing the governance structure
 - The Constitution Review
- 4.3 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic continued to have a significant impact on the Council's operations and governance. During the year the Council stood down from a major incident and the 'GOLD' emergency planning decision making process was ceased, though this remained during the first half of the 2021-22 financial year.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 This report outlines the purpose of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and explains how the necessary assurance to support the AGS has been obtained. This should enable the Committee to make an informed judgement as to the effectiveness of the process that the Council has followed in conducting the annual review of the system of internal control within the Council.

Background

- 5.2 The AGS is designed to provide stakeholders of the Council with assurance that the Council has operated within the law and that the Council has met the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations:

"The Council shall conduct a review at least once in a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control".

Annual Governance Statement 2021-22

- 5.3 A copy of the AGS for 2021-22 is attached to this report, for review, at Appendix A.
- 5.4 The Council relies on a number of sources of information to carry out the review of the system of internal control and effectiveness. These include:
- Service risk registers
 - The Internal Audit Manager's annual report
 - Reports from external regulators, e.g. OFSTED, Grant Thornton (the Council's External Auditor), CQC, the LGA (peer review process).
- 5.5 This evidence provides the assurance that enables the Leader and Chief Executive to sign the AGS with confidence.
- 5.6 The previous Chief Executive reviewed the governance arrangements in 2019/20 to ensure that these align with the new Council Strategy; the current Chief Executive has undertaken a review of governance arrangements which has been facilitated by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. This is due to report in 2022, and has been commissioned to ensure a sustainable and effective delivery of the Council's priorities through the Council's governance structure and implementing the learning of working during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has been included as a key area within the action plan for the AGS.
- 5.7 A key element of the review of the system of internal control is the identification of any weaknesses or risks in the system, along with recommendations to mitigate such issues. Then in the subsequent year further report is made on progress with implementing agreed recommendations.
- 5.8 The Annual Governance Statement for 2020-21 outlined the following issues of focus, and the below includes some commentary on progress against these in the 2021-22 financial year:

Item from 2020-21	Progress during 2021-22	Included in the 2021-22 AGS
Capacity to deliver projects - ensuring that the Council has sufficient and appropriately qualified staff to deliver its programme of key projects, while maintaining frontline services to residents and businesses.	Additional resources have been included within the budget to enhance both the corporate projects team as well as the delivery of individual projects. However, this has been brought forward to the next AGS as it will take some time to continue to bed into the organisation to ensure that there is long term capacity to deliver projects	Yes

Item from 2020-21	Progress during 2021-22	Included in the 2021-22 AGS
<p>Improving Asset Management - ensuring that the Council maintains a comprehensive, asset register, that supports its decision making process for the enhancement, disposal and maintenance of assets.</p>	<p>A new Asset Management Strategy is due to be considered by the Executive (before the AGS). This will be a significant improvement on the previous plan with greater emphasis on improving processes as highlighted by the audit report.</p>	No
<p>Digital Transformation – ensuring that the Digital strategy has a complete delivery plan that supports the digital enhancements that the Council wishes to make in light of ways of working established through the Covid pandemic as well as to drive service improvements and efficiencies.</p>	<p>The digital strategy action plan has been populated and a number of these actions have progressed e.g. new waste permits being successfully completed online. There remain some outstanding actions still to complete though the Strategy is in the 2nd of 3 years for delivery and progress is being made.</p>	No

Proposals

5.9 In light of the issues raised during the year and after a review of effectiveness, the following **three** areas are the focus for 2022/23:

- **Capacity to deliver projects** - ensuring that the Council has sufficient and appropriately qualified staff to deliver its programme of key projects, for example the Environment Strategy, while maintaining frontline services to residents and businesses. **Core to delivering the refreshed Council Strategy.**
- **Improving governance structures** - ensuring that the Council revises its internal governance arrangements to reduce bureaucracy and enhance service delivery through a more streamlined and clear governance arrangement. **External review commissioned by the Chief Executive**
- **Constitution review** - ensuring that the Council enhances its governance, aligned to the item above, and public transparency of decision making to reflect a streamlined and concise approach through a continually updated Constitution. **Internal Review to improve governance structures**

6 Other options considered

None. The production of the AGS is a requirement to be completed annually and the Council must comply with its production.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 A key function of the Governance and Ethics Committee is to review and approve the AGS for 2021-22 prior to it being signed off by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, and review the conclusion reached.
- 7.2 In order to be able to review the AGS the Committee needs to examine the evidence, highlighted in the AGS and Code of Local Governance.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Annual Governance Statement
- 8.2 Appendix B – Code of Local Governance

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

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Appendix A

Appendix A – Annual Governance Statement

1. Scope of Responsibility

- 1.1 West Berkshire Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. West Berkshire Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, West Berkshire Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3 This Statement explains how West Berkshire Council has complied with the Code and also meets the requirements of regulation 6(1)(a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the review of its system of internal control in accordance with best practice, and that the review be reported in an Annual Governance Statement.
- 1.4 The Council is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of its Constitution to improve its governance and decision making. The Council is also delivering an action plan following a corporate peer challenge led by the Local Government Association November 2019.

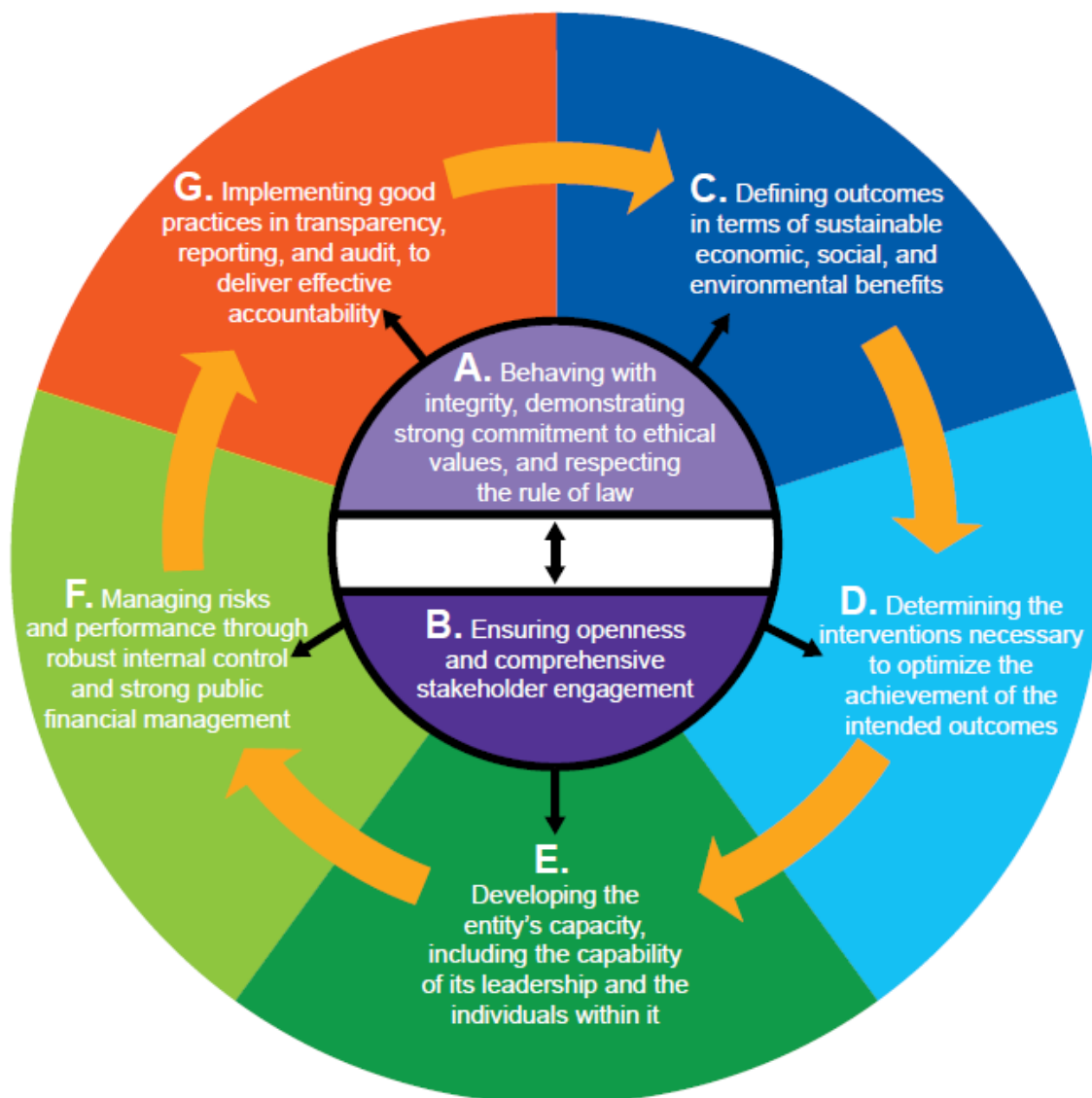
2. The Purpose of the Governance Framework

- 2.1 The purpose of the governance framework is to ensure that the authority directs and controls its activities in a way that meets standards of good governance and is accountable to the community. It does this by putting in place an organisational culture and values which drive a responsible approach to the management of public resources, supported by appropriate systems and processes, and ensuring that these work effectively. It works with the Council's Performance Management Framework to ensure that the Council has in place strategic objectives reflecting the needs of the community and is monitoring the achievement of these objectives through delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.
- 2.2 The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of West Berkshire Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
- 2.3 The governance framework has been in place at West Berkshire Council for the year ended 31 March 2021 and up to the date of approval of the Statement of Accounts. The Governance and Ethics Committee approved a Code of Local Governance at its meeting

in April 2021 which supports the framework for the compilation of the Annual Governance Statement.

3. The Principles of Good Governance

3.1 The CIPFA/SOLACE framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government sets out seven core principles of good governance, these are:



4. Methodology for preparing the Annual Governance Statement

4.1 The Annual Governance Statement has been prepared using a process similar to that used in previous years, including;

- The review of the annual Internal Audit report and quarterly internal audit progress reports.
- The work of the Finance and Governance Group reviewing the Constitution on an annual basis and referring changes to the Governance and Ethics Committee and Council

- The approval of the Annual Governance Statement. By the Governance and Ethics Committee at the same time as the final approval of the financial statements, and that it is signed off by the Chief Executive or Section 151 Officer and Leader of the Council.
- Review of the Corporate Risk Register by the Corporate Board (quarterly) and Governance & Ethics Committee (twice yearly)
- Responding positively to external regulators such as OFSTED, the Information Commissioner, the Local Government Ombudsman and external auditor Grant Thornton.

5. The Governance Framework

5.1 There are a number of key elements to the systems and processes that comprise the Council's governance arrangements. These elements form our local code of Governance and these are underpinned by the CIPFA / SOLACE framework above and core principles of good governance which are:-

- Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the local community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
- Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.
- Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.
- Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managed risk.
- Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective.
- Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

5.2 The Council has arrangements for managing risk in its Risk Management Strategy which was approved at the Governance and Ethics Committee in April 2021.

6. Review of effectiveness

6.1 The authority has a statutory responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of Heads of Service / Service Directors who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of a sound governance environment.

6.2 This review is articulated in the Code of Corporate Governance approved by the Governance and Ethics Committee in April 2021, and the Code of Corporate Governance has been included in appendix B.

- 6.3 It is important to reflect on the previous year's key areas for improvement and well as a review of governance for the year past. The Covid pandemic continued to put a lot of pressure on the Council's governance structures. For the start of the year the Council was operating through an emergency planning framework with 'GOLD' meetings taking place weekly. Though specifically in respect of the Covid response, the GOLD meetings did change the usual governance framework and meant that a lot of the Council's focus was on the Covid pandemic and supporting residents and businesses. The Council continued to provide online meetings, and for public meetings, re-commenced in person meetings (in line with Government policy), which were also streamed online from May 2021. The Council also refurbished its Council Chamber during 2021-22 which necessitated a move to a temporary chamber within the Market St. offices from December 2021. This move was successfully completed and enabled the Council to continue its democratic work and also enhance this with the return of Full Council meetings in person with sufficient space for all members to meet whilst social distancing rules were in place.
- 6.4 During the financial year 2021-22 the Council also changed Chief Executive. Structurally, the Council is operating under the same governance setup during 2021-22 as it was previously, but as highlighted in this AGS, one initial area of focus for the new Chief Executive has been on reviewing the internal governance structure to build on lessons from the pandemic and to reduce internal bureaucracy to make the Council more streamlined in its internal decision making processes.
- 6.5 Another area of focus for the Council's governance is the review of the Constitution. Meetings of the Constitution Review task group have been taking place with some papers brought to the G&E committee e.g. changes to the Budget Council meeting were successfully implemented. Further work needs to be progressed through the task group and brought through to the G&E committee in the coming months as it is important for the effective governance of the Council that there is a regular review of the Constitution to ensure good governance.
- 6.6 The Council's Children and Family Services were subject to an Ofsted inspection during 2021-22.
- 6.7 For 2021-22 the AGS had three areas for improvement; two of these- project capacity and digital transformation- have been continued through into the 2022-23 financial year, and one- Asset Management- has been removed from the AGS.
- 6.8 In 2022-23 the Executive is due to consider a new Asset Management strategy. Though not all actions from the internal audit report and follow up are complete, this has been removed from the AGS as progress has been demonstrated and it ceases to remain a key issue for improvement as the new strategy provides a greater focus, especially around process.
- 6.9 Assurance statements from Service Directors/Heads of Service have also been received and have highlighted the following as the main issues:
- (a) Staff understanding of their role in delivering the Strategic Priorities
 - (b) Scheme of delegation for financial management - to ensure it is up to date

- (c) Arrangements for the Identification of fraud risks
- (d) Reliance on corporate limited resources for project management

6.10 Reflecting on the above items, further work is ongoing on these. For example the new Council Strategy will pick up the first item for 2023-27; this was also raised in the staff survey and can be referenced to the report on DLUHC reviews that came to the Governance & Ethics committee in April 2022. The scheme of delegation is being reviewed as part of the constitution review currently being undertaken and the identification of fraud risks will be highlighted in future risk reports; extra training has been provided in 2021-22 to promote this work. The last issue on project management is reflected in the AGS below.

Key Governance areas for improvement

6.11 The Council faces a number of issues and areas of significant change that will require consideration and action as appropriate over the coming years and these are:

Issue	Detail	Action	Owner / Date
Capacity to deliver	Ensuring that the Council has sufficient and appropriately qualified staff to deliver its programme of projects while maintaining frontline services to residents and businesses.	Additional resources and effective management of the project governance structure following the S&G restructure	Service Director (S&G) – March 2023
Review of governance	External review of governance currently undertaken with summary report to the Chief Executive detailing proposals for enhanced internal governance and streamlining.	Changes to be made by the Chief Executive to the internal governance structures of the Council	Chief Executive – October 2022
Constitution Review	Provide an enhanced update to the Constitution bringing through best practice and knowledge of what works most effectively to streamline decision making and enhance transparency.	Constitution Review to complete during 2022-23	Service Director (S&G) – March 2023

7. Assurance Summary

- 7.1 Good governance is about operating properly. It is the means by which the Council shows that it is taking decisions for the good of its residents, in a fair, equitable and open way. It also requires standards of behaviour that support good decision-making – collective and individual integrity, openness and honesty. It is the foundation for the effective delivery of good quality services that meet the needs of the users. It is fundamental to demonstrating that public money is well spent. Without good governance, the Council would find it difficult to operate services successfully.
- 7.2 The Internal Audit Opinion for 2021/22 is that the Council's framework of governance, risk management and management control is 'reasonable' and that audit testing carried out during the year has demonstrated controls to be working in practice. The assessments contained within this document highlight that there are effective arrangements in place to deliver good governance but that four key areas are highlighted to further improve our governance.
- 7.3 We propose, over the coming year, to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation during the year and as part of our next annual review.

Lynne Doherty
Leader of the Council

Nigel Lynn
Chief Executive

Date: 1st July 2022

Date: 1st July 2022

Local Code of Governance Appendix B

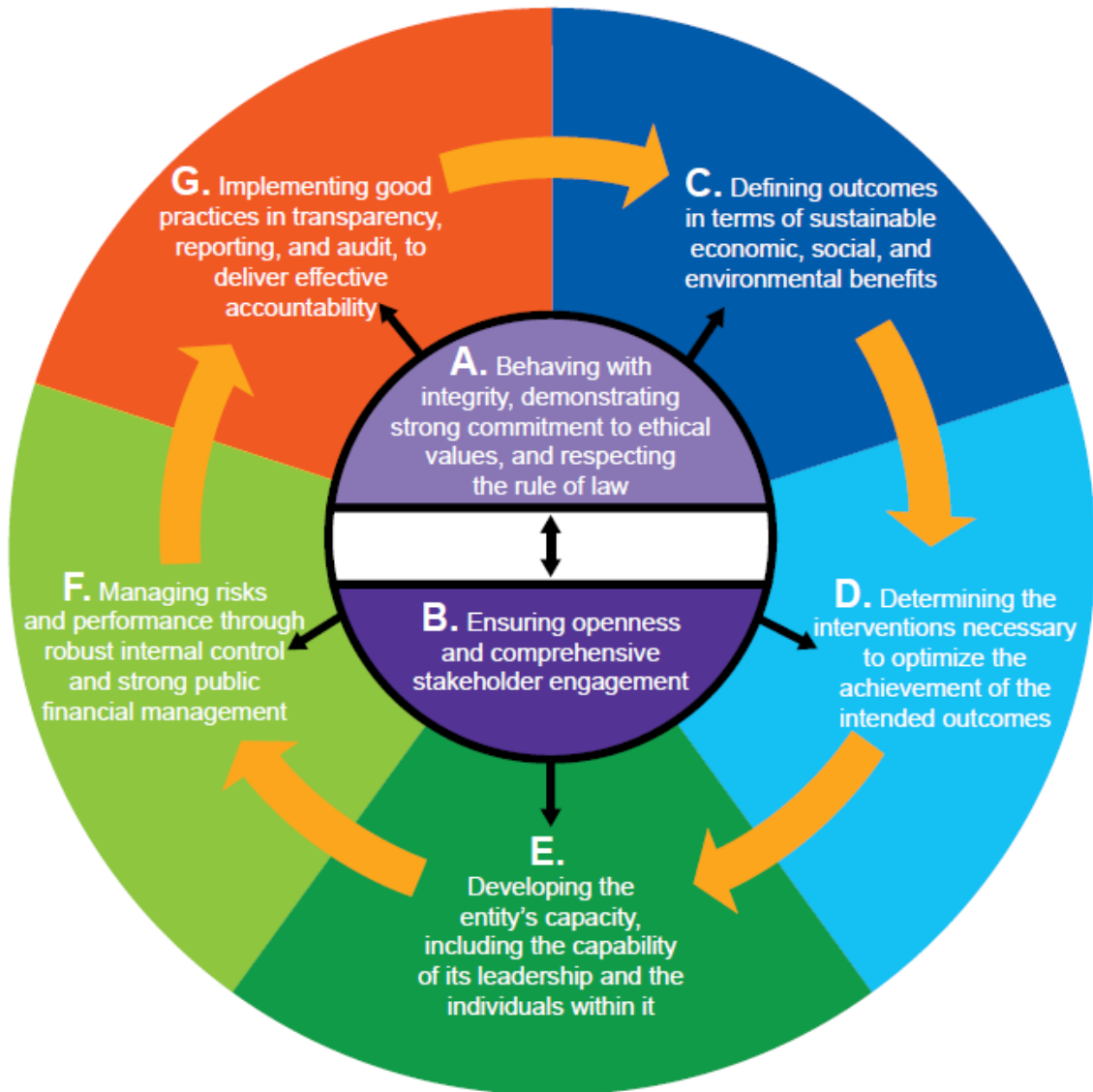
1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Governance is about how the Council ensures it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. It comprises systems, processes, cultures and values by which the Council is directed and controlled and through which it accounts to, engages with and, where appropriate, leads the community. The Leader of the Council and Chief Executive have a special relationship role as custodians of the Council's governance arrangement, but good governance is also the responsibility of all Members and Officers.
- 1.2 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, ("CIPFA") and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives ("SOLACE") have published a framework document for Corporate Governance in Local Government, April 2016. The Council is committed to the principles of good corporate governance through the adoption and maintenance of a Local Code of Corporate Governance, as recommended by the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework.
- 1.3 This Local Code of Corporate Governance therefore sets out and describes the West Berkshire Council's commitment to corporate governance and identifies arrangements that will ensure its effective implementation and application in all aspects of the Council's work. This Local Code of Corporate Governance will be reviewed by the Statutory Officers through the Finance and Governance Group annually.

2. Supporting Information

Background

- 2.1 The Council should have an overarching code of corporate governance, and for West Berkshire this is based on the CIPFA/SOLACE framework. The framework "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" sets out seven core principles of good governance, these are:



3 The Governance Framework

3.1 There are a number of key elements to the systems and processes that comprise the Council's governance arrangements. These elements form our local code of Governance and these are underpinned by the CIPFA / SOLACE framework above and core principles of good governance which are:-

- Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the local community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
- Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.
- Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

- Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managed risk.
 - Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective.
 - Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability
- 3.2 The Council's Constitution explains existing policy making and delegation procedures and the matters which must be dealt with by the full Council. It documents the role and responsibilities of the Executive, portfolio holders, each committee and Members and officers. The Council has approved a protocol governing relationships between Members and Officers as part of its Constitution and has adopted codes of conduct for both Officers and Members which facilitate the promotion, communication and embedding of proper standards of behaviour. Officers have job descriptions and there are clearly defined schemes of delegation, all of which are reviewed from time to time.
- 3.3 The Council's Constitution incorporates clear guidelines to ensure that business is dealt with in an open manner except in circumstances when issues should be kept confidential. Meetings are open to the public except where personal or confidential matters are being discussed. All Executive /committee agendas, minutes and portfolio holder decisions are published promptly on the Council's website. In addition, senior officers of the Council can make decisions under delegated authority. The over-arching policy of the Council is decided by the full Council.
- 3.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Governance and Ethics Committee hold Portfolio Holders to account for delivery of the Council's policy framework within the agreed budget, and protocols are in place for any departure from this to be properly examined.
- 3.5 The Council engages with its communities through a number of channels, including consultation events, surveys and campaigns relating to specific initiatives.
- 3.6 The Council Strategy is supplemented by more detailed information on the key projects and programmes of work that the authority will be delivering during the year – with actions to achieve priority outcomes set out in service plans. More detailed service plans are drawn up by teams across the Council, with objectives set for individual members of staff through the annual appraisal process. This process also looks at the development and training needs of staff, with a programme of training then put in place to meet these needs.
- 3.7 Progress against the Council Strategy outcomes and budgets is monitored regularly by the Corporate Board and Portfolio Holders. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission receives regular reports focusing on delivery of key projects and programmes of work and drawing attention to other areas where progress is exceeding, or falling short of targets. Portfolio Holders also monitor progress of delivery, especially through the Corporate Programme Board.
- 3.8 The Council has an officer Strategic Leadership Team (Corporate Board) to monitor financial performance, service performance, the progress of key corporate projects

and risk management and to oversee the implementation of recommendations from Internal Audit reports.

- 3.9 The Council publishes an Annual Financial Report (the Statement of Accounts) annually within the statutory timescales. The Annual Financial Report incorporates the full requirements of best practice guidance in relation to corporate governance, risk management and internal control.
- 3.10 The Council is subject to independent audit by Grant Thornton and receives an Annual Audit Letter reporting on findings. The Council supplements this work with its own internal audit function and ad hoc external peer reviews. The Governance & Ethics Committee undertakes the core functions as identified in CIPFA's *Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities*.
- 3.11 The Council has arrangements for managing risk in its Risk Management Policy.

4 Review of effectiveness

- 4.1 The authority has a statutory responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of Service Directors/Heads of Service who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of a sound governance environment.
- 4.2 Staff awareness training has been undertaken to ensure that the Council complies adequately with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Freedom of Information Acts, and Equality requirements.
- 4.3 The Council has appointed the Executive Director (Resources) as the Section 151 officer with the statutory responsibility for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs. CIPFA/SOLACE advises that the S151 officer should report directly to the Chief Executive and be a member of the 'Leadership Team', of equal status to other members. The Executive Director (Resources) is a member of the Executive Leadership Team.
- 4.4 The Council has appointed the Service Director (Strategy & Governance) as the statutory "Monitoring Officer" and has procedures to ensure that the Monitoring Officer is aware of any issues which may have legal implications.
- 4.5 All Executive reports are reviewed by the S151 and Monitoring Officer. All reports to Executive are required to demonstrate how the subject matter links to the Council Strategy and highlight resource implications. Officers are also asked to draw out risk, equality, environmental, management and legal issues as appropriate. Similar procedures are in place for the other Council Committees.
- 4.6 The Council has whistle-blowing and anti-fraud and corruption policies. It has a formal complaints procedure and seeks to address and learn from complaints. The Council's Governance & Ethics Committee deals with complaints relating to the conduct of Members.

4.7 Members' induction training is undertaken after each election. Members also receive regular updates and training on developments in local government.

4.8 Key roles in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness is undertaken by:

The Council is collectively responsible for the governance of the Council and the full Council is responsible for agreeing the Constitution, policy framework and budget. Manages risk in making operational and governance decisions together with proposing and implementing the policy framework, budget and key strategies.

The Executive receives regular monitoring reports on revenue and capital expenditure and on key performance measures.

Governance and Ethics Committee approves the annual audit plan, monitors the internal control environment through receipt of audit reports and the AGS, and keeps an overview of arrangements for risk management. It also approves this Statement and the Statement of Accounts.

External Audit external audit is provided by Grant Thornton. Whilst the external auditors are not required to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's risk and control procedures, their work does give a degree of assurance following the annual audit of the Council's financial accounts.

Internal Audit The internal audit team provide the Council with an internal audit service which includes the Council's entire control environment. The Internal Audit Manager takes account of the Council's assurance and monitoring mechanisms, including risk management arrangements, for achieving the Council's objectives.

The Internal Audit Plan is based on the Risk Register and identifies Internal Audit's contribution to the review of the effectiveness of the control environment. The process includes reports to the Governance & Ethics committee on progress of audits. Regular summaries are also produced of the outcome of each audit, together with reviews of whether agreed recommendations have been implemented. Internal Audit provides an annual opinion on the internal control environment and issues that should be included in the AGS

There is a requirement for internal audit to undertake an annual self-assessment and independent external assessment every five year. Any areas of non-conformance must be reported as part of their annual report and opinion. In the light of feedback we have concluded that internal audit is an effective part of the Council's governance arrangements.

5 Proposals

5.1 To achieve and maintain good governance, the Council will seek to apply each of the six core principles above, along with their supporting principles, in the following way:

Principle	Evidence
Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members code of conduct • WBC values • Role of monitoring officer • Council policies e.g. anti-fraud
Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and Engagement strategy • Providing clear decision making process • Review of the Constitution • Consultation process with key stakeholders • Livestreaming of Council meetings and retaining this post May 2021 • Access to information
Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Wellbeing Strategy • Council Strategy • Support strategies and delivery plans e.g. Environment Strategy, Economic Development Strategy
Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly quarterly reporting on key strategies e.g. performance reporting • Corporate Programme Board and regularly monitoring and management of overall list of projects • Ensuring strong link between Council Strategy and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent Senior Management Review • Performance management system • Leadership and Management development through the Workforce Strategy

Principle	Evidence
<p>Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust quarterly monitoring of performance, finance and strategic risk register • Public scrutiny of the above at Executive, Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission and the Governance & Ethics Committee • Annual review and approval of financial statements and progress reporting on action plans • Role of internal and external audit
<p>Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of constitution • Internal audit reporting to Governance & Ethics on a regular basis and an annual report • Implementing the outcome of the Redmond Review (to G&E Committee in Feb. 2021) • Committee reports containing clear sections on consultation / risk management