

Appendix one: Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2019/20 update

	Improvement required	Action planned	By when	Owner	Progress	Status
1.	Support the maintenance of high ethical standards.	Provide member induction training on roles responsibilities, code of conduct and decision making.	July 2019	Solicitor to the Council	Completed. Similar induction training will be provided for any new members joining the council.	
		Implement training re Employee Code of Conduct	March 2020	Assistant Director People	The eLearning module has been written and will be launched to all staff between January and March 2020	On track
		Develop options for implementation of the good practice recommended in the "Local Government Ethical Standards" report	September 2019	Solicitor to the Council	Completed. Review undertaken and actions agreed by audit and governance committee on 24 September 2019	
2.	The level of awareness of fraud risk and potential mitigation is low in areas outside of financial transaction service areas.	Communication and awareness of the current Anti-fraud, bribery and corruption policy will be delivered to all staff	August 2019	Head of Corporate Finance	Amendment to financial procedural rules for January 2020 to result in range of communication updates. Additional programme on counter fraud and corruption instigated with proactive approach including appointment in the new year. Financial procedure rules to be reviewed by Audit and Governance Committee 28 January 2020.	Time delay
3.	Further develop the capacity of the organisation and individuals within it	Adopt and implement a member development strategy and programme	January 2020	Democratic Services Manager	Draft strategy completed to be tested with member-led working group to be established in January 2020 With work completed by April 2020	Time delay
		Adopt and implement a corporate workforce strategy	December 2019	Assistant Director People	Draft strategy held to reflect the new administration's corporate priorities and new implementation date will now be 31 March 2020.	Time delay
		Improve the approach to training for decision report authors	October 2019	Solicitor to the Council	Revision of current guidance undertaken training being prepared for delivery from end of January. New SharePoint site with updated guidance also available from end of January.	Time delay

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		Review manager training to ensure a mandatory induction and refresher element regarding governance and accountability	August 2019	Assistant Director People	Complete. The induction process for all new managers now also includes a section called 'Governance and decision making'. There is also a manager training programme with a face to face module called 'working in a political environment'.	
		Strengthen specialist legal, finance, property and commercial support capacity, with particular reference to major procurements and arm's length delivery arrangements.	January 2020	Chief Executive	Completed a service redesign for Commercial Services with final implementation on 13 January 2020. Interim head of legal services recruited and agency staff appointed to hard to recruit posts or where internal capacity was required. Review of structure undertaken with a reshaping of legal services planned for implementation of first phase by March 2020. New Design and Construction project managers appointed in property services plus generic project managers assigned to property schemes. Appointment of Interim Capital Projects Director to review all capital programmes and projects. To also strengthen for value for money assurance due in the first quarter of 2020.	Part complete
		Provide guidance to managers for all job descriptions to be reviewed each year and accurately reflect accountabilities and requirements of the role.	September 2019	Assistant Director People	Managers are asked to confirm in the annual assurance statement that 'All staff have been issued with up to date job descriptions, which clearly define full authority, responsibility and accountability'	

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4.	Enhance transparency in relation to significant partnerships	Review West Mercia Energy joint committee governance	September 2019	Solicitor to the Council	Raised with monitoring officers in other local authorities. Suggested approach given but not adopted by Shropshire. Will review again at next joint committee meeting in February 2020.	Time delay
		Review the governance arrangements in place between the council and health bodies to ensure they support effective transparency and communication whilst respecting the respective partners distinctive governance processes	March 2020	Director for Adults and Communities	Reviews scheduled with all partnership boards as part of formal governance arrangements. There are no plans to change the existing governance arrangements between the council and external partners. Reviews to also link to the assurance of strategic partnerships due by April 2020. Plus the review of partnerships as part of the rethinking governance working group.	
		Review partnership governance arrangements between the council and higher education bodies	December 2019	Director for Economy and Place	Review underway to update current governance arrangements and take account of recent developments and funding agreements being developed by Head of Economic Development. Expected to be reported to Cabinet in first quarter 2020 to ensure consistency with funding awards.	On track
		Improve consistent corporate compliance with the framework for partnerships' governance	January 2020	Assistant Director Corporate Support	Reviewed of process presented to management board on 26 November 2019. New system for completing compliance live by 6 January 2020.	
5.	There is evidence of good community engagement work by particular service areas but no clearly identifiable strategic	Develop a strategic corporate approach to community engagement	June 2020	Director for Adults and Communities	The Talk Community approach and plan describes the new strategic approach to community engagement. This is currently in draft and will be progressing through	On track

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	approach to community engagement				appropriate governance routes in April 2020.	
6.	Maintain robust internal controls by strengthening clarity and consistency of some arrangements and assurance processes	Strengthen internal controls in respect of treasury management investments	September 2019	Chief Finance Officer	Complete. Amended policy and procedures.	
		Refresh corporate business continuity arrangements	March 2020	Assistant Director People	Ongoing. Management board have been consulted on the revised arrangements and work is ongoing to finalise by March 2020.	On track
		Improve timeliness of strategy, policy and procedure reviews	January 2020	Assistant Director Corporate Support	Work progressing to update register and process for establishing a “policy pipeline” to documents that need review and updating. First phase reviewing the requirement of policies and strategies and their timeline.	On track
		Refresh the performance, risk and opportunity management framework	February 2020	Assistant Director Transformation and Performance	A workshop session in November 2019 with managers within directorates to design PROM with draft produced in December.	On track
		Ensure programme and project board terms of reference are accurate and appropriate	September 2020	Assistant Director Transformation and Performance	Draft terms of reference are currently under review	On track
		Review the manager assurance statement process	December 2020	Assistant Director Corporate Support	Review of process presented to management board on 26 November for implementation from February 2020. Second part will be review requirements of assurance statement.	On track
		Adopt and implement a revised process for close down of accounts including valuation of assets.	December 2019	Chief Finance Officer	Completed and reviewed annually.	

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7.	Further improve the quality and clarity of data informing decisions.	Continue to implement improvements to capital reporting	September 2019	Chief Finance Officer	Continued improvement including Interim Capital Projects Director appointed who will produced recommendations for improvement by March 2020.	On track
		Undertake a best practice review of establishing value for money	March 2020	Chief Finance Officer	Start date for review and preparation of Value for Money strategy in January 2020 which will then determine the time scale and approach.	On track
		Deliver improvements in the accuracy of performance data within Children and Families	December 2019	Head of Corporate Performance	Complete. Following investment there have been clear improvements in the range and accuracy of information available.	
		Redesign the 'Understanding Herefordshire' website to provide more accessible information to inform decision-making	July 2019	Assistant Director Transformation and Performance	Completed. The re-designed website is live and will continue to be refreshed as data is updated.	
8.	Ensure compliance with legislative requirements	Adopt and publish a Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement	December 2019	Head of Corporate Services	Agreed at Cabinet in September 2019. Published on the council website.	
		Approve and publish a policy on employing ex-offenders, and include the council's approach in a new recruitment training programme.	March 2020	Assistant Director People	Will commence January 2020	On track