

**ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (AGS) 2008/9
STATUS OF SIGNIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

AGS-Reference	Significant Governance Issue	Current Action/Comments
5.2	Review the Code of Governance in line with the approved governance framework. (Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Democratic)	It is proposed that the Code of Corporate Governance be reviewed as part of the next Phase of work on the Council's Constitution
5.3	Complete actions on the areas for improvement identified by the Audit Commission in their Use of Resources Report. (Director of Resources).	Programme completed and informing preparation for action plan to be based on current use of resources assessment.
5.4	Urgent corrective action is taken by Directors to ensure that there is an improvement in performance in relation to performance indicator outturn. (Deputy Chief Executive).	Performance is considered (and challenged) at least monthly at Directorate Management Teams, and areas of under performance and remedial action are considered. With regards to data quality there is the policy and action plan that are being followed, and any issues identified will be also considered by relevant management teams. Change Champions are also contributing to performance and data quality.
5.5	Improve the embedding of risk management across the Council (Assistant Chief Executive- Legal and Democratic)	The revised Risk Management Policy and Guidance document has been approved by Cabinet. Some officers have been given training on the new requirements. Of the ten audit recommendations made two have been completed, four partly completed and no action has been taken on four. Joint Management Team has considered a report by an external consultant, they have agreed that there will be annual mandatory risk management training for Directors, Heads of Service and Key Managers, in addition to the setting up of a Corporate Management Risk Group to monitor risks, with a senior officer group tasked to 'cross examine ' risks across the partnership
5.6	Urgent action is taken to ensure that the outstanding data quality actions are completed by the revised dates and that Cabinet receive monthly updates on progress. (Assistant Chief Executive – HR and OD)	The Audit and Corporate Governance Committee received a Data Quality Update report at it meeting on 20 November 2009. Efforts continue to complete all the outstanding actions in the Data Quality Action Plan. The Audit and Governance Committee has been informed on the extent of Directorates local procedures on data quality.
5.7	Action is taken on the recommendations made by Audit	There are approved action plans, which have been monitored by the

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	Services regarding the Creditors and Payment to independent systems providers (Director of Resources).	Head of Revenues and Benefits. The current year's reviews have been completed and both systems have received improved Audit opinions.
5.8	Ensure that the areas identified as areas for improvement in the Audit Commission's report on Planning Services are actioned. (Director of Regeneration).	All of the recommendations in the Audit Commission's Report have been accepted and an action plan has been developed which has been approved by Cabinet in order to address all of the issues raised. In particular detailed work has been undertaken in respect of the proposed new Committee Structure in accordance with the Audit Commissions findings. An initial report has been considered at Full Council and the new structures will be dealt with as part of the Council's new Constitution which was considered at the meeting of Council in November. Progress of the implementation of the Action Plan is monitored by the Environment Scrutiny Committee.
5.9	Ensure that the areas identified for improvement in the Audit Commissions report 'Review of Procurement' are actioned. (Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Resources).	This is underway and the Audit Commission under took a follow up audit. This is being reviewed but noted progress.
5.10	The Herefordshire Children's Safeguarding Board continue to monitor the agreed action plan. (Director of Children Services)	There is a new independent Chair of the Board. The Action Plan is monitored by the Board and progress is being made.
5.11	Continue to promote the Council's antifraud and whistle-blowing policies, keeping them under review. (Assistant Chief Executive - Legal and Democratic, Director of Resources)	Poster 'Employees Role in Maintaining High Standards of Conduct' on notice boards at Council Offices. Level 2 Financial Training includes an introduction to the antifraud policy and the whistle-blowing policy. Employees Role in maintaining High Standards of Conduct highlighted on payslips. The revised Anti-fraud and Anti-corruption Policy has been approved by the Audit and Governance Committee,