

**Actions from 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement**

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1. **Review of governance models:** Rethinking Governance working group to consider governance models and recommendations to be presented to Council.  
Responsible officer: Monitoring Officer

Outcome: Recommendations from Audit and Governance Committee of [25 September 2020](#) agreed by Full Council on 9 October 2020 based on a hybrid cabinet model implemented in 2021.
2. **Managing risks:** Create a new risk management plan, advising all officers on new procedure and monitor implementation.  
Responsible officer: Monitoring Officer / Head of Corporate Performance

Outcome: New plan agreed by cabinet [24 September](#) 2020. Directorate leads established and training provided. – Complete.
3. **Learning from performance:** Revised performance and risk framework including review of member challenge process.  
Responsible officer: Head of Corporate Performance

Outcome: Agreed by cabinet [24 September](#) 2020.
4. **Improving outcomes for children and young people:** Deliver the Herefordshire Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2024 (partnership responsibility); and the Safeguarding and Family Support Improvement Plan.  
Responsible officer: Director Children and Families

Outcome: Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2024 delivery overseen by CYP Partnership Board, reviewing regular updates on delivery of plan. Delivery of Safeguarding and Family Support Improvement Plan overseen via Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee who received a report on first quarter performance for 2020/21 and noted a number of sustained improvements such as visits within timescales as well as areas of focus and improvement. A review of this will be undertaken as part of the improvement plan for children's services. Revised action required.
5. **Decision making produce:** establish new toolkits and provide remote training for members and staff.  
Responsible officer: Monitoring Officer

Outcome: Toolkits published on 3 November 2020 training available upon request and scheduled monthly training available from 3 November 2020 and ongoing - complete
6. **Adult social care challenge:** Deliver on opportunities outlined with the Adults Social Care Peer Challenge.  
Responsible officer: Director Adults and Communities

Outcome: Recommendations have been built in to delivery programmes or operations business as usual. The work audited as part of the SWAP audit plan.

7. **Talk Community governance:** For cabinet to agree the Talk Community strategic approach and programme. Responsible officer: Assistant Director Talk Communities

Outcome: Complete – [24 September 2020](#)

8. **Plans, Policies and Strategies:** To produce guidance on productions of Plans, Policies and Strategies and improve the registration and publication of documents; finalise and publish the equality policy.

Responsible officer: Assistant Director Corporate Support

Outcome: New guidance agreed by Cabinet member on [21 September](#) 2020 and promoted in the chief executive's update on 21 September 2020. The council's new [Equality Policy 2020-23](#) was agreed [13 October 2020](#) by Cabinet member finance and corporate services in consultation with cabinet and the council also produced the [Equality in Employment](#) document profiling the workforce of officer and members including the gender pay gap.

9. **Engagement:** Establish a new approach to engagement with residents and stakeholders to shape the work of the council. Communications strategy renewal in 2021 to be in line with the County Plan and the effects on the community due to Covid-19.

Responsible Officer: Assistant Director Strategy

Outcome: The way the council engage with citizens and key stakeholders is being reviewed as part of a wider engagement framework. The citizen panel forms part of this review but is now being considered more widely and in context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The development and implementation of the engagement framework is now planned for completion in 2021.

10. **Programme Management:** New governance arrangements in place for capital projects through programme boards. Responsible officer: Assistant Director Strategy

Outcome: Head of PMO (programme management office) appointed in October 2020 with new board structure in place for May 2021.

11. **Relationship with External partners:** A project board established to manage the council's relationship with Hoople, review other external governance arrangements and design a framework for their governance to be overseen.

Responsible officer: Solicitor to the Council

Progress: Completed. First project board meeting was held on 15 June 2020. Framework for governance following a review of the articles of association and shareholders agreement is still to be finalised.

12. **Social Value for Money:** Strengthen local value for money element of the Commissioning and Procurement Strategy.

Responsible officer: Assistant Director Corporate Support

Outcome: Financial and Contractual Procedure Rules agreed by audit committee on [26 January 2021](#); and cabinet member report / decision on social value on [15 December 2020](#).

13. **Best Value Review:** Commission a best value review of the public realm partnership.  
Responsible officer: 151 Officer

Outcome: Major Contract performance review of the public realm partnership delivered to Cabinet in September 2020.

14. **HR Policy and Recruitment:** Finalise workforce and organisation development strategy; revised recruitment policy; enhance actions to addressing the gender pay gap; publication of the ex-offenders policy; review market forces guidance to ensure fit for purpose; implement training and consult effectiveness on Employee Code of Conduct.  
Responsible officer: Assistant Director People

Outcome: Workforce and Organisation Development Strategy agreed on [12 January 2020](#) by cabinet member. Code of conduct on line mandatory training. Other areas of work due for later in 2021.

15. **Updated continuity planning:** Reviewed and updated continuity planning and process in light of emergencies.  
Responsible officer: Assistant Director People

Outcome: Due for completion later in 2021.

16. **Audit Planning:** Re-affirm the role of strategic assurance in audit planning including input into the annual plan before finalised.  
Responsible officer: Assistant Director Corporate Support

Outcome: Strategic Assurance amalgamated into monthly performance team meeting.

17. **Partnership framework:** Review effectiveness of current arrangements with the framework covering significant partnerships and steering groups.  
Responsible officer: Solicitor to the Council

Progress: SWAP commissioned to review partnership framework and process; includes improved process for recording partnerships. Action required for 2021/22

18. **Complaints and convening standards:** Review the administration of handling complaints and convening standards hearing focussing on outcomes and openness.  
Responsible officer: Solicitor to the Council

Outcome: Work for review by independent persons on 8 February 2021. HALC and parish council's views have also been sought. Further revised draft has been circulated to independent persons. Revised arrangements will be taken to AGC at same time as details for model code of conduct for comment in November 2021

19. **Continuing support for members:** Adopt a member's development strategy.  
Responsible officer: Democratic Services Manager

Outcome: A member development strategy (MDS) has been agreed by the cabinet member. A training programme is in development with the MDS working group and will also take on board the member development consideration of the Re-thinking Governance Group – in phase II of the review of committee system arrangements.

20. **Co-optees training:** Review appointment and training for co-optees.  
Responsible officer: Democratic services Manager

Outcome: Co-optee protocol has been produced outlining the expectation that independent or co-opted person with voting rights serving on Council Committees are expected to comply with the Councillors' Code of Conduct. The protocol will be applied to the recruitment of co-optees for the new municipal year in-take of co-optees. Induction training programme already in place. Following annual Council in May 2021 co-optee appointments have been invited and candidate's suitability assessed and confirmed against the co-optee protocol criteria. Conditional appointments will be offered only after that assessment has demonstrated candidates are suitable to take up the position, and induction training will then take place.

21. **Terms of reference:** Ensure programme and project board terms of reference are accurate and appropriate.

Responsible officer: Assistant Director Strategy

Outcome: Following an external review of how projects are delivered within the council, a new programme management office has been established which will oversee how projects are delivered to ensure consistency of process and the monitoring of progress. The terms of reference and effectiveness of project and programme boards are part of the assurance function of the new PMO. Implemented from May 2021.

22. **Awareness of anti-fraud, bribery and corruption policy:** Communication and raise awareness of the anti-fraud, bribery and corruption policy to all staff.

Responsible officer: 151 Officer

Outcome A new counter fraud specialist post was recruited to in April 2020 and this has been communicated to all staff. Their role to date has focused on Covid 19 grant support counter fraud and error work. A mandatory training module will soon be rolled out to all staff.

23. **Higher education bodies:** Review partnership governance arrangements between the council and higher education bodies.

Responsible officer: Director Economy and Place

Outcome: An NMITE/ Herefordshire Council Strategic Working Group established and Terms of Reference agreed by the group. The Terms of Reference have been reviewed by the council's legal team, Once NMITE arrangements have been agreed, and the Head of Economic Development will engage the other HE providers in similar discussions to confirm suitable arrangements.

24. **Grants:** That a register of grants is established and at the review of financial procedure rules consideration is given to managing grants

Responsible officer: Assistant Director Corporate Support (register) / Chief Finance Officer (financial procedure rules)

Outcome: Financial procedure rules update and system to agreement to management board in place. Created start of a registered of those applications being submitted for agreement.

25. **Parish council complaints:** Review tightening of rules covering training, disclosure and complaint resolution for parish councillors.

Responsible officer: Democratic Services Manager

Outcome: parish council encouraged to signed-up to code on conduct.

26. **Children Safeguarding:** Deliver statutory responsibilities as one of the partners of the Safeguarding Children and Young People in Herefordshire Partnership, including ensuring there is an effective business unit to enable the work and that a new business plan is put in place and delivers improvements to safeguarding work for children in Herefordshire  
Responsible Officer: Director Children and Family Services

Outcome: new roles of Partnership Manager created in Children and Families Directorate. Further work required.