

Annual Governance Statement

Action plan for delivery in 2021-22

Update January 2022

From the 2020-21 AGS agreed by Audit and Governance Committee in September 2021 a number of continuous improvement actions were outlined and these have been formed into an action plan as below.

A key on status is below:

- Complete: fully completed and no more action on the item
- Part complete: item of the action complete but not fulfilled the whole action
- Not complete: action or outcome not met to date or not updated

The actions link to the principles outlined in the AGS, namely:

- Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
- Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
- Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- Principle E: Developing the organisation's capacity including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

1. Action	Deliver the objectives and recommendations of the Children's Services Improvement Board; and make significant change to the culture and practice in children's social care supported by the wider organisation	
Principle A	Senior Lead: Corporate Director Children and Young People	Status: Not complete.
Evidence of complete:		

2. Action	Implement Rethinking Governance recommended changes to the constitution and oversee operational procedures	
Principle A and E	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: see papers attached to the same meeting of Audit and Governance Committee recommending changes to the constitution and time line in appendix for work to be completed.		

3. Action	New CRM system for complaints and review the Unreasonable Behaviour and Complaints policies	
Principle A	Senior Lead: Service Director Corporate	Status: Complete

	Services	
Evidence of complete: Unreasonable Behaviour Policy ; Complaints Policies ; and decision on CRM system for FOI and complaints.		

4. Action	Introduce anti-fraud training for all staff	
Principle A	Senior Lead: Director of Resources and Assurance	Status: Complete
Evidence of complete: E-learning and intranet site available to all staff. Fraud awareness week (week of 15 November 2021) included widespread awareness with information on the internet on information, advice and new strategy.		

5. Action	A revised code of conduct for members and new arrangements for dealing with allegations that members have breached the code	
Principle A	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Part complete
Evidence of complete: See papers attached to the same meeting of Audit and Governance Committee recommending consultation on new code new arrangements and guidance.		

6. Action	Review annual governance statement based on new guidelines and lessons learnt.	
Principle A	Senior Lead: Service Director Corporate Services	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: Review new guidance from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny on the Governance Risk and Resilience Framework.		

7. Action	Run member and officer working together training sessions	
Principle A	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: Pending review by Chief Executive.		

8. Action	Partnership governance framework to be reviewed	
Principle B	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Not complete.
Evidence of complete:		

9. Action	New Communication and Engagement Strategy	
Principle B	Senior Lead: Service Director Corporate Services	Status: Part complete
Evidence of complete: In preparation for a decision in March 2022, with all members briefing beforehand.		

10. Action	Deliver on arrangements for co-optee appointments	
Principle B	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Complete
Evidence of complete: Approved protocol agreed for co optees from May 2021 see https://hc-modgov.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=954&MId=8358&Ver=4 item 22		

11. Action	To instigate a pipeline of policies and strategies linked to governance decision making	
Principle C	Senior Lead: Service Director Corporate Services	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: List of policies created and when due for renewal.		

12. Action	Embedded new structure in public health to address the continued responses to Covid 19 whilst addressing other public health priorities	
Principle C	Senior Lead: Director of Public Health	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: New structure implemented and appointment of Director of Public Health.		

13. Action	Produce a Covid Recovery Plan	
Principle C	Senior Lead: Director of Public Health	Status: Not complete.
Evidence of complete:		

14. Action	Produce the Estates Strategy for the use of council buildings	
Principle C	Senior Lead: Director of Resources and Assurance	Status: Not complete.
Evidence of complete:		

15. Action	Update the Procurement and Commissioning Strategy	
Principle D	Senior Lead: Service Director Corporate Services	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: In draft pending decision due by Cabinet Member in March 2022.		

16. Action	Implement improvement plan for value for money on the public realm contract	
Principle D	Senior Lead: Director of Resources and Assurance	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: Improvement board overseeing improvement process		

17. Action	Deliver on recommendation of Peer on Peer spotlight review	
Principle D	Senior Lead: Corporate Director Children and Young People	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: Guidance to schools : https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/bullying-1		

18. Action	Implement programme management board decision and assurance framework	
Principle D	Senior Lead: Assistant Director Strategy	Status: Complete
Evidence of complete: Link to intranet pages		

19. Action	Implement the Member Development training plan	
Principle E	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Part Complete
Evidence of complete: Linked to operational changes identified through re thinking governance review. Independent Remuneration panel recommendations in May 2021 council agreed new approach for mandatory training see item 9 https://hc-modgov.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=58166		

20. Action	Additional training and development for Children and Young People Scrutiny	
Principle E	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Complete.
Evidence of complete: development offer from LGA accepted by committee on 21 October see item 40 https://hc-modgov.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=954&MId=8369&Ver=4		

21. Action	Promotion of becoming a council member reflective of flexibility with increased virtual meetings	
Principle E	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Part complete
Evidence of complete: remote meeting regulations have not continued in operation.		

22. Action	Revised training and guidance for officers on decision making	
Principle E	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Complete
Evidence of complete: revised decision making training provided since March 2020		

23. Action	Wider IT training for staff	
Principle E	Senior Lead: Service Director Corporate Services	Status: Part complete
Evidence of complete: Services on training on MS Teams.		

24. Action	Implement changes to portfolio briefing and review effectiveness	
Principle E	Senior Lead: Service Director Corporate Services	Status: Part complete
Evidence of complete: Changes agreed in April 2021 at Cabinet Member Briefing and introduction of capital item on each agenda. Review of facilitation for when new Corporate Directors are in place.		

25. Action	Revised recruitment policy; publication of the ex-offenders policy; review market forces guidance to ensure fit for purpose	
Principle E	Senior Lead: Director of HR and OD	Status: Not complete
Evidence of complete:		

26. Action	Embed a risk management culture and practice in the organisation	
Principle F	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Part complete
Evidence of complete: risk maturity audit currently being undertaken		

27. Action	External funding strategy produced	
Principle F	Senior Lead: Acting Corporate Director Community Wellbeing	Status: Not complete
Evidence of complete:		

28. Action	Updated continuity planning in light of Covid-19 and lessons learnt from flooding emergencies	
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Principle F	Senior Lead: Director of HR and OD	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: In view of the lessons learned, business continuity planning has been reviewed and a review of the council's emergency planning arrangements was carried out by the Emergency Planning Manager in September 2021. The key outcome is business continuity planning is now focused on critical services. In December 2021, management board agreed its list of critical services and management board is ensuring a robust plan is in place for all critical services.		

29. Action	Oversight of external grants and grants register created.	
Principle F	Senior Lead: Assistant Director Corporate Services	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: Register created within Grants and Programmes Team.		

30. Action	Ensure details of significant partnership profiles are up-to-date on the council's website	
Principle G	Senior Lead: Assistant Director Corporate Services	Status: Complete
Evidence of complete: Published on the website ; and presented to Audit and Governance Committee on 27 September 2021 with one outstanding partnership subject to internal audit.		

31. Action	Implement improved and ease of access performance information for staff, members and the public	
Principle G	Senior Lead: Assistant Director Corporate Services	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: New dashboards shared with management board.		

32. Action	Make the most of new features on Modern.gov	
Principle G	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Part complete.
Evidence of complete: part of rethinking governance identified operational changes		

33. Action	Capture number of meeting where public are excluded.	
Principle G	Senior Lead: Director of Legal Governance and Legal Services	Status: Completed
Evidence of complete: This is captured and reported in the leaders report, first one will be January 2022.		