

***AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET***

**Report Title:** Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

**Name of Committee:** Audit and Ethics Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 6 June 2019

**Report Director:** Head of Corporate Resources and CFO

**Portfolio:** Corporate Resources

**Ward Relevance:** None

**Prior Consultation:** Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer, Executive Director, Senior Management Team, Monitoring Officer

**Contact Officer:** Chris Green, Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager, Tel: 01788 533451

**Public or Private:** Public

**Report Subject to Call-In:** No

**Report En-Bloc:** No

**Forward Plan:** No

**Corporate Priorities:** This report relates to the following priority(ies):

**(CR) Corporate Resources**  To provide excellent, value for money services and sustainable growth

**(CH) Communities and Homes**  Achieve financial self-sufficiency by 2020

**(EPR) Environment and Public Realm**  Enable our residents to live healthy, independent lives

**(GI) Growth and Investment**  Optimise income and identify new revenue opportunities (CR)

Prioritise use of resources to meet changing customer needs and demands (CR)

Ensure that the council works efficiently and effectively (CR)

Ensure residents have a home that works for them and is affordable (CH)

Deliver digitally-enabled services that residents can access (CH)

Understand our communities and enable people to take an active part in them (CH)

Enhance our local, open spaces to make them places where people want to be (EPR)

- Continue to improve the efficiency of our waste and recycling services (EPR)
- Protect the public (EPR)
- Promote sustainable growth and economic prosperity (GI)
- Promote and grow Rugby's visitor economy with our partners (GI)
- Encourage healthy and active lifestyles to improve wellbeing within the borough (GI)

**Statutory/Policy Background:** The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the Council to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS)

**Summary:** The report describes how the AGS for 2018/19 was produced. The AGS itself forms an appendix to the report.

**Financial Implications:** No direct implications

**Risk Management Implications:** No direct implications

**Environmental Implications:** No direct implications

**Legal Implications:** No direct implications

**Equality and Diversity:** No direct implications

**Options:** None

**Recommendation:** The Annual Governance Statement be approved.

**Reasons for Recommendation:** To comply with the requirements of the terms of reference of the Audit and Ethics Committee, and to discharge the Committee's responsibilities under the Constitution.

**Audit and Ethics Committee - 6 June 2019**

**Annual Governance Statement 2018/19**

**Public Report of the Head of Corporate Resources and CFO**

**Recommendation:**

That the Annual Governance Statement be approved.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2018/19, describing the governance arrangements that were in place during the financial year.
- 1.2 The AGS is formally approved by the Senior Management Team and signed by the Executive Director and Leader of the Council, who take personal responsibility for the control framework described and for the delivery of the identified improvements to the framework.
- 1.3 The AGS for 2018/19 was drafted by the Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager in consultation with the Senior Management Team and various managers across the Council.
- 1.4 A copy of the AGS for 2018/19 is appended.

**2. Report Details**

- 2.1 Corporate governance is defined as the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which local government bodies are directed and controlled and through which they account to, engage with and where appropriate lead their communities.
- 2.2 There is a strong correlation between effective governance and effective service delivery and achievement of corporate objectives. To deliver the Council's vision and support the drive for continuous improvement strong governance arrangements need to be in place.
- 2.3 A number of evidence sources were utilised for the purpose of drafting the AGS, including:
  - Consultation with, and assurances provided by, key officers. Meetings were held with each Head of Service, the Executive Director, and the Democratic Services Manager. Governance arrangements were

reviewed with each officer and examples of effectiveness and outcomes were also discussed at the meetings. Further evidence was provided by various officers across the Council.

- Work undertaken during the year by Internal Audit and other inspection bodies.
- Key corporate documents including the Corporate Strategy, Committee reports, the Annual Audit Letter, the Constitution, the draft financial statements, the Annual Report of the Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager, the Learning and Development Strategy, and the officer and member training programmes.

2.4 There are two recently completed governance related internal audits which impact on the AGS for 2018/19: Data Protection Governance and a follow up review of Corporate Health and Safety. Both audits resulted in only Limited Assurance and will be considered in full at the next meeting of the Audit & Ethics Committee in July 2019. In both cases action plans have been agreed, delivery of which will be monitored by the Corporate Assurance and Improvement team and reported to the Audit & Ethics Committee. The level of assurance provided in the AGS has been considered taking into account the level of assurance for the two audits. However, the level of assurance also acknowledges the many areas where the Council's governance arrangements are considered to be robust, and the actions taken during the year to improve existing arrangements, such as the provision of risk management training to all managers and team leaders. The Council is satisfied therefore that its overall governance framework provides a **Substantial** level of assurance of effectiveness. The full AGS is set out at Appendix A.

**Name of Meeting:** Audit and Ethics Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 6 June 2019  
**Subject Matter:** Annual Governance Statement 2018/19  
**Originating Department:** Corporate Resources

**DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY**       **YES**       **NO**

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<b>Doc No</b>	<b>Title of Document and Hyperlink</b>
Appendix A	Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

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Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

<b>Doc No</b>	<b>Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A</b>



Appendix A

# **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

## **2018-19**

**PROUD OF OUR PAST, FIT FOR THE FUTURE**



## Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

### **1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

- 1.1 Rugby Borough Council is responsible for ensuring that it conducts its business in accordance with the law and proper standards. Public money must be used economically, efficiently and effectively, safeguarded and properly accounted for. The Council must have in place proper governance arrangements and carry out its functions effectively, including suitable risk management arrangements.
- 1.2 The Council must conduct a review, at least once a year, of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and report the findings in an annual governance statement. The statement must be prepared in accordance with proper practices and be reported to a Committee of Councillors. This document comprises the Council's annual governance statement for 2018/19.

### **2. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING GOOD GOVERNANCE?**

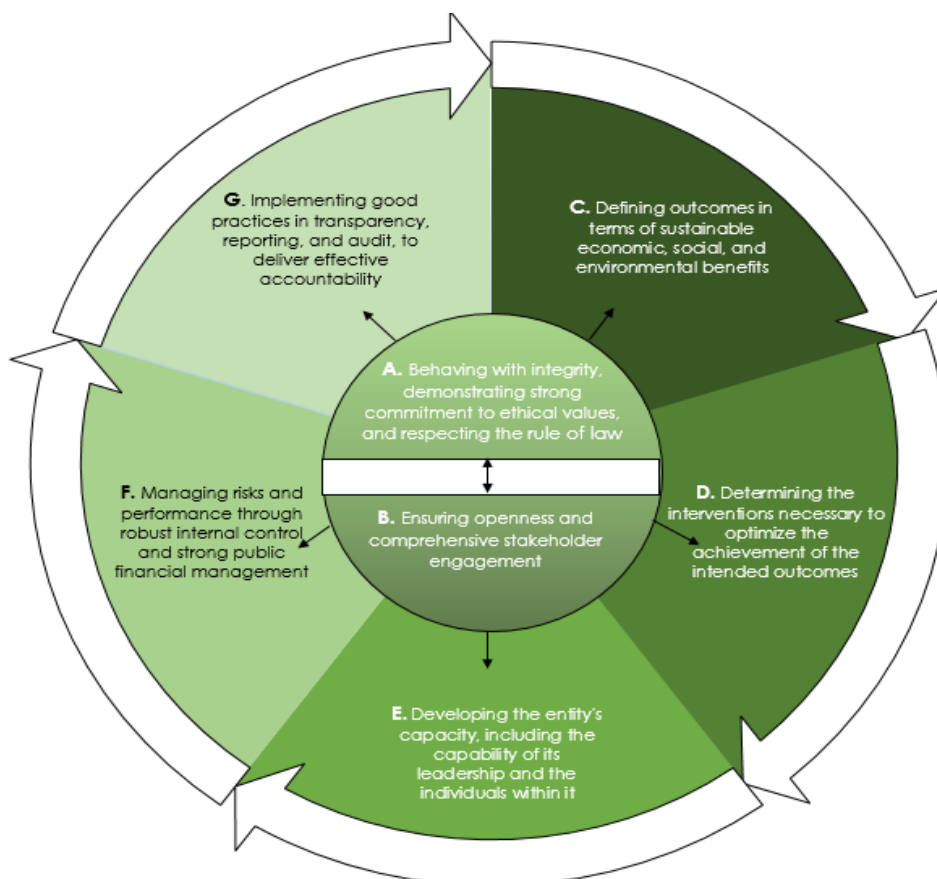
- 2.1 The Council's governance arrangements are overseen by the Audit & Ethics Committee. The Executive Director has overall responsibility for ensuring that effective controls and processes are implemented across the Council and these are regularly reviewed and updated. Regular reports are submitted to the Audit & Ethics Committee highlighting any identified enhancements. The Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) is responsible for ensuring that effective financial controls are in place, for the maintenance of an effective internal audit function and for reviewing the overall effectiveness of the governance framework. The overview and co-ordination of this process is undertaken by the Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager.

### **3. WHAT THIS STATEMENT TELLS YOU**

- 3.1 This Statement provides a summarised account of how the Council's management arrangements are set up to meet the principles of good governance set out in the Constitution and how assurance is obtained that these are both effective and appropriate. It is written to provide the reader with a clear, simple assessment of how the governance framework has operated over the past financial year, how effective that framework has been in enabling the Council to achieve its intended outcomes, and to identify any improvements made and any weaknesses or gaps in arrangements that need to be addressed. Its main aim is to provide the reader with confidence that the Council is managed effectively and efficiently; that services are delivered in accordance with current legislation, the corporate strategy and in a way that optimises value for money.

## 4. THE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

- 4.1 The principles of good governance are set out in the CIPFA Framework for Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016. The framework positions the attainment of sustainable economic, societal, and environmental outcomes as a key focus of governance processes and structures. This statement explains how the Council has complied with the framework and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (England).
- 4.2 Good governance is dynamic, and the Council is committed to improving its governance on a continuing basis through a process of evaluation and review. The diagram below, taken from the International Framework for Good Governance in the Public Sector, illustrates the various principles of good governance in the public sector and how they relate to each other.



*Principles A and B permeate implementation of principles C to G*



## 5. THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 The governance framework comprises the policies, plans, systems, processes, culture and values (the system of 'internal control') that the Council has in place to ensure its intended outcomes for stakeholders and the community are defined and delivered. To deliver good governance objectives must be achieved whilst also acting in the public interest. The framework enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services.
- 5.2 The governance arrangements are designed to ensure that an appropriate and proportionate approach is taken to managing risk whilst ensuring that objectives are achieved. The governance framework has been in place for the year to the date of approval of this annual governance statement. The arrangements are not designed to eliminate all risks but rather provide a reasonable degree of assurance of effectiveness.
- 5.3 The governance framework and an assessment of its effectiveness are set out on the following pages.

**PRINCIPLE A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law**

**Arrangements in place**

- Member and officer codes of conduct
- Confidential Reporting Code
- Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy
- Fraud Response Plan
- Contract Standing Orders
- Declaration of interests procedure
- Register of interests
- Register of gifts and hospitality
- Customer feedback and complaints procedure
- Equalities & Diversity policy statement
- Register of Equality Impact Assessments
- Information security policies, senior information risk owner in post (SIRO) and Information Governance Group in place.
- Corporate values in place which all employees are expected to act in accordance with
- Recruitment/ selection procedures aligned with corporate values
- A standard format is in place for 1 to 1 meetings between managers and staff, designed to ensure that the corporate values are embedded and adhered to
- The Council participates in the National Fraud Initiative
- Delivery of fraud and corruption awareness training
- Internal audit plan coverage has been extended to include governance and ethics related audits, in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Any planning applications submitted by staff are reviewed in public
- Agenda management sheets of Council reports include a requirement to highlight the legal implications of decisions
- Records of regulatory training required and undertaken are retained on the Council's HR system
- There is a Warwickshire independent persons panel in place which is available for consultation regarding any conduct related complaints. The group provides advice to the Council on the appropriate course of action to take to address such complaints.
- The Council has implemented plans to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018.

**Effectiveness and future developments**

Implementation of the Counter Fraud Strategy and Fraud Response Plan has led to a more consistent approach to investigation of irregularities across the Council and improved awareness amongst staff. Furthermore, dedicated time is set aside within the internal audit work plan to ensure that resources are available to thoroughly investigate any allegations and to enable proactive risk based testing to be conducted during the year. Counter Fraud, Bribery and corruption awareness training has been delivered to all managers and training is being delivered to individual teams on a rolling basis; 4 teams were provided with training during 2018/19. Awareness training was also delivered to Members in July 2018. The Council has

implemented a new cloud-based system of meta compliance and in June 2019 all employees will be asked to confirm that they have read and understood the Fraud Response Plan; a questionnaire will be included to confirm employees' understanding. A further review of fraud risks and mitigating controls across all Council departments was also completed in 2018/19; this resulted in a Substantial level of assurance and delivery of recommended actions is being monitored by the Corporate Assurance and Improvement team. **See Action 1.**

A framework of corporate values and behaviours was implemented in early 2017/18. There is a high commitment to embedding the values across the organisation. A behaviours document was issued to all officers with a covering letter and compliance is mandatory. There are five core corporate values: **C**ustomer First, **A**ct With Respect, **N**urture People, **D**rive Excellence, and **O**wn It, (CANDO). In line with the values all members of staff are expected to have regular one to one meetings with their line manager at which success is recognised and any concerns regarding conduct are also raised. Such meetings are expected to take place on a monthly basis unless agreed by exception with the relevant head of service. This process also ensures that staff development needs are considered on a rolling basis rather than once or twice per year. Customer Care training is mandatory for all staff in accordance with the Council's value of putting "customers first". An internal audit review was completed in April 2018 which assessed the extent to which the values framework was embedded across the Council. The review concluded that the overall level of maturity of the framework was "Defined". A further internal audit review will be completed in 2019/20 which will consider and report on the progress made and the direction of travel.

Rolling licensing committee training has been provided to members leading to a clearer evaluation of prosecution cases. The Council has invested in the provision of enhanced regulatory training to planning committee members leading to a greater awareness and understanding when making decisions, and a reduction in appeals.

Senior management has taken steps during the year to ensure that positive feedback and successes are celebrated and recognised. Recognising success is built in to the one to one process and notable successes are celebrated at employee briefing sessions and at the Corporate Management Forum. An 'Employee of the Quarter' initiative has recently been launched which allows managers to nominate colleagues who have excelled. One person is selected from the list of nominees each month and awarded a prize.

The Council's information security procedures are comprehensive. New Data Protection legislation took effect in May 2018. Steps were taken to prepare the Council for implementation of the new regulations. These steps include the roll out of eLearning training to officers and completing data reviews across the organisation. All officers were required to confirm in 2018 that they had read and understood the Information Security policy. Information asset owners, who are mostly managers and team leaders, have completed personal data audits covering their areas of responsibility. Together, these comprise the Council's register of processing activity (ROPA), and each processing activity has been assigned one of the six lawful bases of processing identified in the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). An Information Governance Group has been formed comprising the Head of Communities and Homes (CIO – Chief Information Officer and Senior Information Risk Owner – SIRO), the Communication Consultation and Information Manager (Data Protection Officer), the

Corporate ICT Manager and the Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager. Personal data breaches and near misses are reported to the communications, consultation and information team for triage, and are then referred to the Information Governance Group. The Group decides on what further action to take, which may include making a statutory report to the Information Commissioner.

An internal audit review of data protection governance confirmed the operation of the above arrangements. However, the audit also confirmed a number of significant gaps in the control framework. Notably, there is no formal information governance framework, no terms of reference for the Information Management Steering Group, no action plan to monitor and enforce data protection improvements, and no clear desk policy in place. The Information Governance Group has agreed that further steps will be prioritised in 2019/20 to develop an Information Governance framework for the Council and implement the action plan arising from an internal audit review of Data Protection Governance. The group will also report periodically to the Senior Management Team on its activities and any significant issues and emerging risks. **See Action 2.**

The Council is moving towards an increasingly agile workforce, with technological developments enabling more employees to work remotely and/ or at home. Whilst there are codes of conduct in place for members and officers, the IT Code of Conduct requires updating to reflect the increasing number of agile workers. Furthermore, the Council will develop and implement an agile working policy to ensure there is a consistent framework in place for all staff. Management of such working practices will also be incorporated. **See Action 3.**

## **PRINCIPLE B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement**

### **Arrangements in place**

- The Council publishes a range of information including meeting agendas and reports, financial and procurement data, invitations to tender, senior officer salaries, the contracts register, annual governance statement and financial statements, corporate performance information, planning applications and decisions and section 106 agreements.
- Records are retained detailing any decisions taken by officers using their delegated authority, including the rationale.
- The strategic risk register is scrutinised by the Audit & Ethics Committee with open reporting to Cabinet. At the time of writing the register is being refreshed.
- The Council consults widely and comprehensively with stakeholders on its proposals. Wider engagement takes place via the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- There is a Scrutiny Committee work programme in place, with members of the public invited to recommend topics and attend annual work planning meetings.
- A Forward Plan is in place setting out what consultation will be undertaken in advance of decisions being made, and with whom.

- The Council holds an Equality & Diversity "excellent" accreditation and Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's) are completed for Council decisions. A register of EIA's is in place and kept up to date.
- A communications strategy is in place.
- Customer feedback procedures are in place.
- Active engagement with employees takes place in a number of ways including through a bi-annual survey, regular employee briefings, core briefs, and the corporate management forum and through the Joint Union Consultation Forum.
- Employment policies are developed in consultation with staff and trade unions.
- Cross party working parties are operated as an additional measure which ensures engagement with all members on key Council decisions.

#### **Effectiveness and future developments**

Equality and diversity training is mandatory for all staff and Equality Impact Assessments are a key element of the Council's decision making. A revised template for completing the assessments has been put in place and all managers received training in 2018/19 to ensure that the assessments are carried out in a consistent manner. In 2018/19 the Council commissioned Warwickshire Pride to conduct a survey on the experiences of the Rugby borough LGBT+ community. The results indicated that the LGBT+ community does not feel comfortable that Rugby is a friendly place for them. The results of the survey have been analysed and an action plan has been developed jointly with Warwickshire Pride, the police and the county council. Furthermore, Warwickshire Pride will be delivering mandatory LGBT+ training to all Council employees and Councillors during 2019/20. **See Action 4.**

The Council uses a range of approaches to engage with communities including through associations, forums, leafletting, parish councils, drop in events, Facebook, the website, surveys, and face to face. There is a contract with language line to support any face to face communication issues and the Council accesses the Warwickshire County Council interpretation and translation service to translate written documents. The Council is a partner of Warwickshire Observatory, which provides information and intelligence about Warwickshire and its people. The information provided was used to inform the Council's vision for Rugby Town Centre and to inform the development of the Corporate Strategy for 2017-20. The information is also used by staff when completing Equality Impact Assessments, which helps to ensure that decisions are taken after due consideration of the potential impacts across the community.

In 2017/18 residents were consulted on a final draft of the Local Plan for a 12-week period; this was double the required length of time. The consultation generated over 6,000 submissions in relation to the development proposals This fed in to the public examination of the Local Plan and the Council summarised and responded to every submission. During 2018/19 work has progressed on supplementary planning documents following the Local Plan hearings, and on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019 an independent planning inspector gave the Council approval to adopt the Plan.

In 2018/9 the Council successfully completed the decant of 124 properties in two high rise blocks of flats at Biart Place. The decision was made to decant the properties in April 2018. The decant was due to be fully complete by 31 March 2019 but was completed over three months ahead of schedule on Fri 21<sup>st</sup> Dec 2018. The successful operation was attributed to effective communication, knowing the Council's tenants and understanding what they needed; this resulted in low levels of resistance. Individual one to one consultations were carried out, putting customers and their needs front and centre to ensure suitable housing was sought. Project planning was robust and effective – working closely with the Council's registered provider partners and the private sector. Flexibility was applied by the Council to offer additional support to tenants where it was needed. All qualifying households were successfully relocated and appropriately compensated. Further engagement events are planned for wider residents in the area to consult on the future of the site/ development.

A consultation exercise was undertaken with stakeholders to shape the development of the new Brownsover Medical and Community Centre. Feedback and community aspirations were identified in a meeting with the local community and ward members. This formed part of the process for consultation for development of the wider site including medical provision. A further meeting was held to discuss the plans in more detail; this meeting included the Brownsover Community Association. Feedback from this meeting informed the specification for the new facility. An expression of interest was advertised and Cabinet approved entering a lease arrangement with Brownsover Community Association. The completed property was handed over to the Council in December 2018. The centre is expected to be fully open by the end of Spring 2019. Quarterly monitoring meetings are in place with the Brownsover Community Association to ensure the facility is used to support the wider community.

The Council undertook a consultation exercise on its Public Space Protection Orders during 2018/19. This involved working with Scrutiny, which identified four areas of focus – dog fouling, anti-social behavior at Newbold Quarry, intoxicating substances and cycling in the town centre. A broader geographical area was adopted for intoxicating substances, and new dog fouling measures have been adopted including the provision of dog waste bags.

As noted above, when an officer exercises their delegated authority as permitted in the Council's Constitution, these decisions are recorded in writing. The rationale for such decisions is also recorded and the records are retained. The Council has decided that such decisions will in future be published; this will be implemented with effect from September 2019. **See Action 5.**

During 2018/19 the Council commissioned an external company to undertake a review of the customer experience at the Rugby Art Gallery and Museum (RAGM). The review followed the customer journey and included the Visitor Centre. Staff were fully involved and the Council worked closely with the library. Following the review a detailed report was circulated with recommendations. There has been an increase in customer meet and greets and a new customer charter has been developed, which will be launched early in 2019/20.

The Council has a tenant panel in place but plans to enhance and improve this by developing an engagement strategy to support and enable tenants to live independent lives. The new strategy will link with the Housing Strategy and financial inclusion strategy. **See Action 6.**

Collaborative and joint working across Council teams has enabled a faster and more effective response to gypsy and traveller encampments. Early contact is made; welfare needs assessments are carried out, a Code of Respect, waste disposal bags and advice on portable water supplies are provided. The Council works with the occupants, building a rapport and negotiating an exit with formal eviction being the last resort.

Whilst the Council has an embedded customer feedback procedure in place, an internal audit review has been scheduled for 2019/20 which will consider its effectiveness and how services measure customer satisfaction more widely outside of the formal system. The review will also consider the mechanism for capturing and communicating this data, and how effectively the results are used to drive improvements in Council services. The audit and resulting action plan will be reported back to the Council's Operational Manager Group chaired by the Head of Communities and Homes. **See Action 7.**

### **PRINCIPLE C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits**

#### **Arrangements in place**

- Approved Corporate Strategy in place covering the period 2017-2020, and which was subject to a public consultation exercise.
- Medium Term Financial Plan is regularly reviewed and updated, with the latest iteration presented to Cabinet in February 2019.
- Cabinet and Committee reports set out the potential impacts of changes on stakeholders.
- Strategic and operational risk registers are in place, and a register of corporate risks has been drafted for approval in 2019.
- A "clean" Value for Money opinion was received from the external auditors in 2018.
- As part of plans to ensure the Council is fit for the future, decisions are taken for the long term including the implementation of green waste charges, digitalisation of services and internal processes, a forward plan for the Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, and through the commercialisation agenda.
- The Council consults widely on its proposals considering the economic, social and environmental impacts of plans, policies and decisions.
- There is a clear vision for Rugby Town Centre including an action plan and marketing plan.
- All planning and development decisions are considered openly and transparently in terms of their economic, social and environmental benefits and impacts.

#### **Effectiveness and future developments**

The Council has reviewed the arrangements in place to support the independent living service during the year. Extensive face to face consultations have taken place and customers were encouraged to fill in a questionnaire. Some 32 coffee mornings were held with sheltered housing tenants to help them determine how they can live their lives more independently. The findings of the review are in the process of being analysed and evaluated, following which the next steps will be determined. Furthermore, a Warwickshire wide homelessness strategy is in development and the Council's new Allocations Policy has an element of financial inclusion



built in. Where customers have prior arrears and they can show that either a sustained repayment plan is in place, or in the case of applicants in receipt of universal credit that the property related debt not subject to a repayment arrangement is no more than two months' rent, then the Council will support their housing needs. This is in line with the Council's health and wellbeing agenda, enabling people who are inevitably the least well off to access sustainable housing whilst ensuring that the Council discharges its statutory homelessness duties.

The RAGM/ Hall of Fame education programme has been expanded and provides facilitated education sessions at the Roman Gallery, Art Gallery and Hall of Fame for primary school Key Stage 2 pupils. In addition the RAGM runs a programme for persons suffering with dementia and autism, which enables individuals to develop and utilise their skills, for example by doing craft activities, in a relaxed environment which also provides a form of social therapy.

The Family Weight Management programme 'Changemakers' was awarded project funding of £145,000 for its 4th year, to continue delivering 9 week family lifestyle courses across the Warwickshire county. The team has continued to achieve its programme targets and provide successful outcomes for children and families. The On Track social inclusion programme has continued to develop links and relationships with Rugby's youth community. Continuation funding has been secured via Orbit Housing Association, National Lottery 'Awards for All' enabling youth provision in the priority wards of Brownsover and Overslade to be delivered. The Rugby Sports Awards was once again delivered by Rugby Borough Council's Sports Development team attracting sponsorship from GLL Sports Foundation, Nationwide Windows and Hinckley and Rugby Building Society. The annual event attracted a large volume of nominations celebrating sport and physical activity achievements by Rugby borough community sports clubs and its participants.

The Council has worked with the local community to make improvements to the Whitehall Recreation Ground. External funding was secured and added to the Council's own capital programme, and the improvements were undertaken in a phased approach in line with the available funding. As part of the first phase the Council undertook a further round of consultation with the local community to update the original masterplan developed in 2012. Stakeholder suggestions were then fed in to a final, more detailed design stage consultation to ensure the refurbished park met the needs of those that use, or want to use it. The consultation was promoted both physically on site and also on the Council website and social media platforms, to ensure a cross section of responses were received from the community. The redevelopment has now been successfully completed.

The Council launched the Rugby Lotto in February 2019, to support the community and voluntary sector and specific organisations that the community values. The Lotto will enable increased funding for community based projects whilst ensuring that the community has a direct stake in determining which projects and activities will be supported. The first draw is scheduled for early May 2019 and 23 good causes have been approved as benefactors. At the time of writing 600 tickets had been sold and over 300 people had signed up to the Lotto via direct debit. Annual ticket sales for 2019/20 are currently projected to be £33,992, which would generate £18,500 for local good causes. These figures are expected to increase, and the annual sales and contributions to good causes are already expected to be higher than





those projected for the first year. The Lotto is currently being promoted via social media and by the good causes themselves, and the Council is hoping to approve more good causes in the near future.

The Benefits team was merged with the Housing Options team (CAST – Community Advice and Support Team) in 2018 and this decision was driven by the outcomes that joined up service delivery can bring to customers, particularly in relation to financial inclusion and homelessness prevention. An internal review is currently in progress to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the joined up service delivery are maximised.

The Council has reviewed its grass cutting provision during 2018/19. Some areas of grass are now cut less frequently to enable wildlife to flourish. These urban meadows saw new species of plants, moths, butterflies and dragonflies on sites for the first time, and now the Council is to create further urban meadows in other areas of the town. An interim survey at one of the trial sites found the following species already becoming established: Meadow Vetchling, Tares, Sow-thistles, Prickly Lettuce, Meadow-sweet, Greater Burnet, Common Knapweed, Small Skipper, Marbled White, Burnet Moth, Meadow Browns, Ringlets, and the Hawker dragonfly.

The Council recognizes that volunteers make a significant and valuable contribution to its services. In 2018/19 some 11,727 hours of volunteering were facilitated on the borough's parks and green spaces, an increase of over 10% on the previous year. Volunteers undertook a range of tasks ranging from habitat management work to assisting at events. The Council's work with community organisations ranges from the well-established groups such as the Hillmorton Village Green volunteers and the Rugby group of the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, to newly formed groups such as the Friends of Bluebell Wood, Friends of Newton Cutting and the Friends of Rugby East. The Council has also secured £18,643 of government grant funding to enable it to make the town centre a clean and tidy place which attracts people, and has joined the Great British Spring Clean for a third consecutive year, supported by hundreds of volunteers.

A programme of successful exhibitions at the RAGM attracted over 10,000 visitors in 2018/19, including the Peter Rabbit Mischief & Mayhem exhibition which launched in January 2019. The exhibitions were supported by local businesses and a town trail was created with links to town centre shops, increasing footfall. As part of a dedicated marketing plan for the Hall of Fame, a successful meet the speaker event was held with Sir Clive Woodward, with funds being used to support the education programme. The event was fully subscribed and further meet the speaker events are planned for 2019/20. The Council also collaborated with Rugby School to launch the Rugby Pass, which enables visitors to tour the Hall of Fame, the Rugby School and receive discounts at various local businesses all for one price.

The Council has drawn up a draft masterplan for a revamp of St Andrew's Gardens in Rugby town centre; this includes extensive landscaping of the gardens, removing dense shrubbery and replacing it with seasonal and woodland bulbs, meadow grass and flowering lawns. The aim is to make the gardens a welcoming space where residents can relax in quiet surroundings away from the hustle and bustle of the town centre, but in a way which remains respectful of the site's history as a churchyard. Residents are being invited to take part in a consultation on the draft proposals.

## **PRINCIPLE D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of intended outcomes**

### **Arrangements in place**

- The Council manages performance through published local and management performance indicators; this enables intervention to be targeted where it is needed.
- The service planning process is designed to ensure that the Council targets the actions necessary to deliver the Corporate Strategy.
- The corporate performance management system (RPMS) is used to monitor the delivery of action plans.
- There are four distinct service areas with a Head of Service and dedicated member portfolio holder for each area.
- Committee and Cabinet reports set out the risks and options associated with decisions.
- A "clean" Value for Money opinion was received from the external auditors in 2018 and the Contract Standing Orders and financial instructions are designed to ensure best value.
- Quarterly finance and performance reports are submitted to and reviewed by Cabinet.
- An annual budget report is submitted and there is an established budget setting and monitoring process.
- The Medium Term Financial Plan is regularly reviewed and updated, with the latest iteration endorsed by Cabinet in February 2019.
- A new Asset Management Strategy was approved in April 2018.
- The Council consults widely on its proposals considering the economic, social and environmental impacts of plans, policies and decisions.
- There is a Forward Plan of key decisions and scrutiny committee arrangements in place.
- A customer feedback procedure is in place.
- Key corporate projects, for example digitalisation, the housing management system, and the corporate asset management system, have governance boards in place to provide oversight and ensure effective delivery.

### **Effectiveness and future developments**

As part of the corporate strategy the Council has continued to facilitate investment and growth in Rugby. This is evidenced by progress in developing the site of the old Rugby Radio Station. The new community development at the old Rugby Radio station now has approximately 140 people living there, the first school has been built and a major link road is almost complete, linking the site to the town centre. Building work has also begun on the secondary school. The Council is also working in partnership with Warwickshire County Council to develop a sustainable transport plan for the Borough, including where interventions could be made to expand road capacity in Rugby.

Route optimisation software is being implemented for refuse services; this will ensure that refuse rounds are completed in a more efficient manner requiring fewer rounds to be completed. The software will result in an improved customer experience as reports of missed bins will be addressed more quickly. It is expected that significant financial savings will also be realised, helping to ensure that the Council has the funds available to achieve the corporate strategy

outcomes. Optimisation of domestic and trade waste and recycling routes is expected to be implemented in 2019/20.

A new Asset Management Strategy was approved in April 2018 to facilitate delivery of the Corporate Strategy priority of "optimising the use of our land and assets". A new Corporate Asset Management System is being implemented to enable better management and utilisation of the Council's assets. The strategy sets out the high level integrated vision of the Council's approach to all its property assets both in terms of operational land and buildings, and affordable housing and land. There are five key principles set out in the strategy:

- Acquire or develop homes to meet the housing service strategy and customer needs;
- Dispose of small and difficult parcels of land to free up cash and staff resources;
- Ensure statutory, health & safety and disability compliance of all Council built environment assets;
- Ensure efficient and effective space, energy usage, and sustainability within the Council's built assets to maximise value; and
- Efficient and effective asset management systems and internal communication procedures.

The Council led the bid to Central Government to set up and run a Warwickshire wide pilot service to prevent homelessness at an early stage. This way of working was new and untested in a Local Authority environment. PHIL (Preventing Homelessness Improving Lives) has now completed 50 preventions, compared with 16 by the end of last year. This has been achieved through setting up an enhanced partnership working approach including receiving referrals from partnership agencies, sending out regular correspondence to partners through a newsletter, having a social media presence, facilitating an online housing options self-assessment tool and presenting at strategic meetings. The project has just been extended until December 2020 and is governed by the Warwickshire Heads of Housing Board (WHOH).

A service level agreement is in place with Warwickshire County Council to support new business start ups in the Borough. Funding has for the last 3 years enabled businesses to be provided with financial support for their first 12 months and the Council is currently bidding for funding to enable this to continue for a further 3 years. The Council has also continued to support the Business Improvement District by providing match funding for town centre events including the Food Festival, Bike Fest, Christmas Lights Switch On and the Festival of Culture.

A series of business cases and reports have been prepared for garage sites to enable much needed new homes to be built on brownfield sites, enhance neighbourhoods, and help reduce antisocial behaviour. During 2019/20 these business cases will be progressed further resulting in a redevelopment programme.

**PRINCIPLE E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it**

**Arrangements in place**

- Each member of the senior management team undertakes professional development appropriate to their role.
- The respective roles of the Executive Director and Leader are clearly defined.
- The senior management team meets formally every two weeks and informally every week and Cabinet meets on a regular basis.
- Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance), Monitoring Officer, and Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO/ CIO – Chief Information Officer) are in post.
- The Constitution, which was revised and updated in December 2017, sets out roles and responsibilities and the Council's decision making process. An approved scheme of delegation is in place. Contract Standing Orders and associated toolkits are in place and are designed to ensure procurement activity is cost effective and ethical.
- Registers of gifts, hospitality and conflicts of interest in place.
- Updated protocol in place setting out the relationship between and roles of members and officers.
- Member training and development programme in place (and currently under review), including dedicated training for planning and licensing committee members.
- New HR Strategy approved in April 2018.
- Thorough induction processes are in place for all new employees and members, linked to the corporate values.
- Job profiles clearly set out the responsibilities of officers throughout the organisation.
- Learning and Development Strategy and Corporate Learning Group in place.
- There is a system of regular team meetings and one to one meetings between managers and staff.
- Employee health and wellbeing days are arranged and confidential employee counselling support is available at all times.
- A comprehensive suite of training and development courses is offered to all employees.
- All managers are expected to complete the "Way We Manage" training programme.
- Corporate Management Forum in place, where managers work together to review what has gone well and where the Council can do better.
- The Council has a comprehensive suite of HR policies covering employee capability, disciplinary, recruitment and selection, disciplinary and grievance, and flexible working.
- An established Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme in place.
- Where projects are required, teams are put in place based upon the skills and experience available.
- The Council develops the capacity of community and voluntary groups to become more self sufficient.
- The Council participates in the Local Authority Challenge.



### **Effectiveness and future developments**

The Council has a Corporate Apprenticeship scheme and there have been 47 apprentices since the scheme started in 2011. The apprentices provide a range of valuable support to various Council services whilst undergoing a structured programme of self-development and qualifications.

Over 100 managers have completed the Council's "Way We Manage" corporate training programme. This is a significant investment in the workforce. The training includes governance issues such as financial management, performance management, health and safety and procurement procedures.

A new HR Strategy was approved in April 2018 and is aligned with the corporate strategy and values and behaviours framework. There are six key principles set out within the strategy:

- Attract and retain a "CAN DO" workforce;
- Develop leadership;
- Build workforce skills and capability;
- Nurture employee engagement and wellbeing;
- Continuous review of terms & conditions and remuneration; and
- Provide an excellent HR service.

A consistent format is in place for one to one meetings between managers and staff. A standard formal agenda is in use which enables staff development needs to be identified and addressed throughout the year rather than at six monthly intervals. Furthermore, the training material is aligned to corporate values. The content of the "Way We Manage" training programme is being reviewed to ensure it enables managers to have the right skills to drive excellence. The management training programme has been extended to include a formal management qualification. The Council has also introduced a new programme – The Way We Work – for new employees to ensure they have all the information about the Council and the skills set to offer excellent services to customers.

The Corporate Learning Group meets bi-monthly and includes portfolio representatives who agree jointly on the approach to learning and development activity.

Implementation of the Counter Fraud Strategy and Fraud Response Plan has led to a more consistent approach to investigation of irregularities across the Council and improved awareness amongst staff. This included the provision of investigative training to five additional managers, which has improved the resilience of the fraud investigation function. Counter Fraud, Bribery and corruption awareness training was delivered to all managers in March 2018, members in July 2018, and a rolling programme of training for individual teams is in place.

The Council is actively engaged in the Coventry and Warwickshire year of wellbeing 2019 and has implemented an employee forum and appointed mental health first aiders. These people have been trained in how to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis. In the same way as learning physical first aid, Mental Health First Aiders know how to recognise those crucial warning signs of mental ill health and feel confident to guide someone to appropriate support. Embedding this initiative within the Council will encourage people to talk more freely about mental health, reducing stigma and creating a more positive

culture. The Council is also participating in the "Thrive at Work" West Midlands Combined Authority initiative and is aiming initially to achieve a Bronze accreditation against the framework.

As indicated above, the member training programme is currently being reviewed to ensure there is effective engagement and that members are developed to fulfil their roles as effectively as possible. The revised training programme will focus on the key governance areas and is expected to be in place by the end of 2019. **See Action 8.**

## **PRINCIPLE F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management**

### **Arrangements in place**

- The Council has a risk management strategy in place which was reviewed and updated in February 2019. Strategic and operational risk registers are in place; the strategic risk register is currently undergoing review. Senior management, Audit & Ethics Committee, Cabinet, Strategic Risk Management Group, and the Health & Safety Members Working Party, all oversee the risk management arrangements.
- A regular risk assessment of the Council's financial reserves and balances is conducted. Key risks are identified, and potential financial impacts are quantified. Reserves are reviewed annually in the context of the risk assessments.
- A new Medium Term Financial Strategy was approved in April 2018 and an updated Medium Term Financial Plan was presented to Cabinet in February 2019.
- Financial information is published on a regular basis and established and embedded budget setting and monitoring procedures are in place.
- Cabinet and Committee system in place including two scrutiny committees and an Audit & Ethics Committee with independent Chair and Vice Chairs.
- Training is provided annually to all members of the Audit & Ethics Committee to ensure that they are suitably skilled to carry out their role effectively.
- Counter fraud strategy, fraud response plan and confidential reporting code in place.
- The internal audit service provides an independent and objective annual report and opinion.
- Service planning and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed in line with the Corporate Strategy.
- A corporate system is used to monitor, manage and report performance and conduct verification checks on the quality of our data. Performance data is reported quarterly to Cabinet and is reviewed by a scrutiny committee.
- Data sharing protocols are in place where applicable.

### **Effectiveness and future developments**

The annual report of the Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager provides a Substantial level of assurance that the Council has an adequate and effective control environment in place. The Internal Audit Service uses Risk Based Internal Auditing (RBIA), which is recognised as best practice. The work of internal audit is aligned closely with the aims and risk profile of the Council and the service is responsive to emerging issues and risks.

A full review and update of corporate performance indicators was completed during the final quarter of the year to ensure that measures are relevant to the needs and objectives of the organisation, and in line with the Corporate Strategy. A programme of data quality reviews has also been instigated to provide assurance that published data is accurate, timely and complete. This programme of work will be expanded in 2019/20, to provide assurance across a range of services that effective performance management arrangements are in place. **See Action 9.**

In line with the Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy proactive assurance work was completed during the year; fraud risk exposures were reviewed and evaluated across the Council, and where applicable internal audit testing considered the risk of fraud. Fraud awareness training was delivered to members in July 2018, and a rolling programme of training for teams is in place.

All managers and team leaders received mandatory risk management training during 2018/19 as the Council works to embed a consistent and effective approach to operational risk management across the organisation. This was a significant investment by the Council, with over 70 members of staff attending the full day course. Following the training the risk management strategy was also subject to independent external review. The feedback was positive and there were also a number of recommendations which were considered and incorporated within a new strategy. An action plan has been developed alongside the new risk management strategy; delivery of which will be overseen by the Strategic Risk Management Group. In addition to the action plan, the internal audit plan for 2019/20 includes a programme of departmental reviews which will seek to provide assurance that operational risks are being managed effectively. The results of this work will be reported to the Strategic Risk Management Group and the Audit & Ethics Committee. **See Action 10.**

The Council faces a number of risks which cut across service areas and for which the response needs to be coordinated at a corporate level to manage the risks effectively. A draft corporate risk register has been developed; this will be approved by and managed through the Strategic Risk Management Group. The corporate risk register will also be submitted to the Audit & Ethics Committee for review. **See action 11.**

The Medium Term Financial Strategy, approved in April 2018, sets out the measures being taken by the Council to prepare as far as possible for the future. Robust financial management has enabled the Council to report an underspend against its budget for 2018/19. The Council has continued to implement policies to support its route to financial self sufficiency by 2020. This includes ongoing work to understand the costs of running the various services and the benefits to customers, ensuring that services are run efficiently and effectively. Examples of outcomes

from this work are the implementation of route optimisation software for the green waste service and ongoing implementation of the digitalisation programme. A review of fees and charges was also carried out during the year. The Council does, however, face considerable uncertainty around the future arrangements for retention of business rates. Modelling has been completed and presented to members, setting out the range of possible outcomes along with the potential financial impacts and various options for mitigating those impacts.

Against this financial backdrop, the Council took two major decisions in 2018/19 to regenerate the Biart Place and Rounds Gardens sites for the provision of new homes, which provides an opportunity to develop a new more attractive and cohesive community. These decisions were taken with a full assessment of the various options for the sites, including costs and the impact on tenants. Cost assessments were informed by an assessment undertaken by independent building and project consultants. Tenants were consulted individually to clarify their thoughts on both the potential for redevelopment and their individual housing needs and the response rate was 87%. In December 2018 the Council also approved a Housing Acquisitions Fund of £13m to increase the availability of temporary accommodation and reduce the cost and usage of emergency accommodation such as B&B.

There are a number of projects currently in progress designed to help the Council become financially self sufficient by becoming a more efficient and effective organisation. These projects include:

- Implementation of a new housing management system to provide an improved customer experience and deliver a digitally enabled service that residents can access.
- Implementation of a new IT system called "Agile" in the Development Management and Enforcement service, enabling a more efficient process for staff and customers.
- Route optimisation of the domestic and trade waste and recycling rounds.
- Development of a longer term business plan for the Benn Hall and RAGM.
- Installing audio visual in the Council Chamber, which will significantly reduce the Council's administrative expenditure.
- Implementation of a corporate asset management system and the asset management strategy, including a review of the assets which the Council owns and strategically acquiring assets, for example to prevent homelessness.
- A systems thinking review of the Customer Advice and Support service, designed to ensure that it operates efficiently in a way which effectively meets customer needs.
- A systems thinking review of the licensing service including implementation of a new IT solution.
- A review of the Customer Service Centre with a focus on promoting digital channels as they are developed.



## **PRINCIPLE G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability**

### **Arrangements in place**

- A range of information is published including an annual report of internal audit, the financial statements, the annual report of our external auditor and this annual governance statement, which contains an action plan demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement.
- All reports are subject to a robust internal review process to ensure they are presented in an understandable style.
- The performance information set out in the financial statements is prepared in consideration of the presentational approach adopted by other similar authorities.
- There is an open data section on the Council's website which includes details of senior officer salaries.
- Implementation of external audit recommendations is monitored by the Financial Services Manager and Deputy Section 151 officer.
- Implementation of internal audit recommendations is monitored by the Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager and reported to senior management and the Audit & Ethics Committee.
- The Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager is provided with direct unfettered access to the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Audit & Ethics Committee.
- Internal audit plan coverage includes governance and ethics related audits, in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.
- The Council submits itself to external peer reviews including by the Local Government Association, and in May 2017 welcomed an equalities and diversity peer review and challenge. Action plans arising from these reviews are monitored by the senior management team.
- An internal audit review of governance arrangements for jointly managed organisations and partnerships was recently completed in 2017/18 and provided a Substantial level of assurance.
- Invitations to tender are published along with the contracts register.

### **Effectiveness and future developments**

The Annual Audit Letter for 2017/18 provided assurance over the Council's financial control and overall governance arrangements.

The presentation of the Council's financial statements is designed to make them easy to read and for stakeholders to understand. The design of this annual governance statement is also intended to make it easy to read, and it has been prepared in line with good practice guidelines published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA). Furthermore, the draft financial statements and annual governance statement are now published earlier; this provides stakeholders with more timely information.

The internal audit service was subject to an external quality assessment in September 2017 which concluded that there were no areas of non-compliance with the public sector internal audit standards that would affect the overall scope or operation of the internal audit activity. A self assessment conducted by the Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager in May 2019 has concluded that the internal audit service operates in conformance with the standards.

A full review and update of key performance indicators (KPIs) was completed during the final quarter of year to ensure that measures continue to be relevant to the needs and objectives of the organisation, and in line with the Corporate Strategy. There are a number of proposed amendments and additions to the KPIs for 2019/20, which are at the time of reporting awaiting finalisation. A programme of data quality reviews has also been instigated to provide assurance that published data is accurate, timely and complete. This programme of work will be expanded in 2019/20, to provide assurance across a range of services that effective performance management arrangements are in place. A report summarising the Council's performance in 2018/19 will be published on the Council's website alongside the financial statements. **See action 9.**

A review of the Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements was conducted during the year, with a view to implementing procedural improvements, increasing effectiveness, reviewing developments and assessing ongoing performance. The review considered what worked well and also made a number of recommendations. The recommendations, which were considered and endorsed by Cabinet on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2019, included the retention of two overview and scrutiny committees but with set remits aligned to the four portfolio areas. A programme of training was also recommended for the committee chairs, members, the Democratic Services team and senior management. The review also recommended that the scrutiny area of the Council's website be improved to encourage better public engagement. **See action 12.**

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) published guidance in 2018 on the function and operation of audit committees in local authorities. Self-assessment checklists and effectiveness evaluation forms were circulated to all members and named substitutes of the Audit & Ethics Committee, using the CIPFA guidance as a benchmark. This exercise highlighted a number of areas in which the effectiveness of the Audit & Ethics Committee could be enhanced. The Committee agreed on March 26<sup>th</sup> 2019 that a working group would be formed, to examine the opportunities for improvement and develop and implement an appropriate action plan. **See action 13.**

## 6. PROGRESS ON DELIVERY OF LAST YEAR'S ACTION PLAN

	Improvement Action	Assessment of Progress
1	Deliver fraud awareness training to teams and members. Re-review the Council's fraud risks. Require all employees to confirm that they have read and understand the Counter -Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Fraud Response Plan.	<p><b>Substantially completed</b></p> <p>Counter fraud, bribery and corruption awareness training has been delivered to all managers and training is being delivered to individual teams on a rolling basis; 4 teams were provided with training during 2018/19. Awareness training was also delivered to Members in July 2018. The Council has implemented a new cloud-based system of meta compliance and in June 2019 all employees will be asked to confirm that they have read and understood the Fraud Response Plan; a questionnaire will be included to confirm employees' understanding. A review of fraud risks and mitigating controls across all Council departments was also completed in 2018/19; this resulted in a Substantial level of assurance and delivery of recommended actions is being monitored by the Corporate Assurance and Improvement team. <b>See Action 1.</b></p>
2	Develop and implement a revised template for completing equality impact assessments. Provide training to all managers to ensure that the assessments are carried out in a consistent manner.	<p><b>Completed</b></p>
3	Publish performance reports to show delivery against the corporate strategy. Review and update the content, format and presentation of the Council's performance data.	<p><b>In progress</b></p> <p>A full review and update of key performance indicators (KPIs) was completed during the final quarter of year to ensure that measures continue to be relevant to the needs and objectives of the organisation, and in line with the Corporate Strategy. There are a number of proposed amendments and additions to the KPIs for 2019/20, which are at the time of reporting awaiting finalisation. A report summarising the Council's performance in 2018/19 will be published on the Council's website alongside the financial statements. <b>See Action 9.</b></p>

	<b>Improvement Action</b>	<b>Assessment of Progress</b>
<b>4</b>	Implement the employee forum and mental health first aider initiatives.	<b>Completed</b>
<b>5</b>	Fully implement the action plan arising from the internal audit review of corporate health and safety.	<b>In Progress</b>  An internal audit follow up review has been completed and the report will be submitted to the Audit & Ethics Committee on June 6 <sup>th</sup> 2019. Following appointment of a new Safety and Resilience Manager in April 2019, there is an appropriate structure in place to implement the remainder of the action plan.
<b>6</b>	Implement the action plan arising from the internal audit review of fleet management.	<b>In Progress</b>  Follow up has been completed by the Corporate Assurance and Improvement team and the remaining actions are expected to be completed by the end of September 2019.
<b>7</b>	Develop a corporate risk register; ensuring risks are effectively managed through the Strategic Risk Management Group (SRMG). Deliver risk management training to all managers.	<b>In Progress</b>  Risk management training has been delivered to all managers. A draft corporate risk register has been developed; this will be approved by and managed through the Strategic Risk Management Group. The corporate risk register will also be submitted to the Audit & Ethics Committee for review. <b>See action 11.</b>

## 7. UPDATED ACTION PLAN

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Target completion date</b>
<b>1</b>	Require all employees to confirm that they have read and understand the Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Fraud Response Plan.	Head of Corporate Resources & Chief Finance Officer	30/06/2019
<b>2</b>	Develop an Information Governance framework for the Council and implement the action plan arising from an internal audit review of Data Protection Governance. Ensure that the Information Governance Group reports periodically to the Senior Management Team on its activities and any significant issues and emerging risks.	Head of Communities and Homes	31/03/2020
<b>3</b>	Update the IT Code of Conduct to reflect the increasing number of agile workers. Develop and implement an agile working policy.	Head of Communities and Homes	31/12/2019
<b>4</b>	Implement the action plan arising from the Warwickshire Pride survey of the Rugby borough LGBT+ community. Deliver LGBT+ training to all Council employees.	Head of Communities and Homes	31/03/2020
<b>5</b>	Publish the decisions which involve officers exercising their delegated authority, including the rationale.	Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager (Monitoring Officer)	30/06/2019
<b>6</b>	Develop an engagement strategy to support and enable tenants to live independent lives.	Head of Communities and Homes	31/12/2019
<b>7</b>	Complete the internal audit review of customer feedback arrangements, including consideration of their effectiveness and how services measure customer satisfaction more widely outside of the formal system. Report the results of the audit back to the Council's Operational Manager Group.	Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer	31/03/2020
<b>8</b>	Review the member training programme, ensuring there is effective engagement and that members are developed to fulfil their roles as effectively as possible.	Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager (Monitoring Officer)	31/12/2019

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Target completion date</b>
<b>9</b>	Publish the report summarising the Council's performance against the corporate strategy in 2018/19 on the Council's website alongside the financial statements. Finalise the agreed suite of KPIs for the 2019/20 financial year.	Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer	30/06/2018
<b>10</b>	Implement the Risk Management Strategy action plan.	Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer	31/03/2020
<b>11</b>	Obtain approval for the corporate risk register from the Strategic Risk Management Group and submit it to the Audit & Ethics Committee for review.	Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer	31/07/2019
<b>12</b>	Develop and implement the programme of training for the scrutiny committee chairs, members, the Democratic Services team and senior management. Update the scrutiny area of the Council's website to encourage better public engagement.	Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager (Monitoring Officer)	31/03/2020
<b>13</b>	Develop and implement an action plan to enhance the effectiveness of the Audit & Ethics Committee.	Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer	31/03/2020

## 8. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND CERTIFICATION

- 8.1 Good governance is about running things properly. It is the means by which the Council shows it is taking decisions for the good of the people in the area, 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 delivery of good quality services that meet all local people's needs. It is fundamental to showing public money is well spent. Without good governance the Council will struggle to deliver the outcomes set out in the corporate strategy.
- 8.2 This statement has been considered by the Audit & Ethics Committee, which was satisfied that it is an accurate reflection of the governance framework and that the arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework. A number of future developments have been highlighted and these are specifically addressed within the Action Plan.
- 8.3 The Council is satisfied that its overall governance framework provides a substantial level of assurance of effectiveness, although a number of further development areas have been highlighted. Delivery of the Action Plan will be monitored during 2019/20.
- 8.4 Our overall assessment is that the Annual Governance Statement is a balanced reflection of the governance environment and that an adequate framework exists within the Council to ensure an effective internal control environment is maintained. We are also satisfied that there are appropriate plans in place to address any significant governance issues and will monitor their implementation and operation.

**Adam Norburn - Executive Director**

Date:

**Councillor S Lowe - Leader of Rugby Borough Council**

Date: