

Appendix A

Gloucester City Council Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2020-21 Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Governance matter identified	Position as at December 2020	Target Date and Lead Officer
<p>Future Financial Sustainability / Efficiency Savings / Covid-19 Impact: Close monitoring of budgets has been and will continue to be carried out in each financial year. Continuous monitoring of service pressures and ongoing focus on preventative support will continue.</p> <p>The Council during 2020/21 continued to lobby and work with Government for additional Covid funding and will continue to do so.</p>	<p>Budget Monitoring during 21/22 has continued to ensure that the financial position of the Council is known. Quarterly Financial and Performance monitoring reports are being provided to Scrutiny Cabinet.</p> <p>The Council has continued to complete all COVID returns for government to ensure all income and expenditure is highlighted.</p>	<p>31st March 2022</p> <p>Head of Policy and Resources</p>
<p>An eight-strand Recovery Plan was adopted to return (restart suspended services), retain (keep and sustain any improved new ways of working), resist (resist the temptation to simply return to doing things as before) and reimagine (consider new ways of delivering services after the pandemic) Council Services. All eight strands have been subject to Overview and Scrutiny.</p> <p>A review of corporate risk management is being undertaken. This will assess risk management processes within the Council and review these against current guidance and best practice requirements. This review is an opportunity to benchmark the Council's risk management approach and support a positive direction of travel on the area.</p> <p>The Council's Corporate Directors will both leave their posts in early</p>	<p>The progress on the recovery plan was presented to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee between 6th July 2020 and 30th November 2020 to update on the various strands.</p> <p>A further update on progress and future plans was provided to committee on 1st November 2021.</p> <p>This work is in progress with progress report expected before the end of the financial year.</p> <p>New senior management structure in place from 01 January 2022</p>	<p>31st March 2022</p> <p>Head of Policy and Resources</p>

<p>2021/22 – one due to retirement and the other to pursue a different career path. The Council can be assured that effective leadership, continuity and resilience continues to be provided by the senior management team. Additional interim resource has been secured to provide further resilience and Monitoring Officer duties while the outcome of any review of senior management is undertaken and recruitment is completed.</p> <p>The local elections were postponed in 2020. These took place in May 2021 and has seen quite a high volume of new Members in 2021. The Council established and is delivering a robust program of induction of Member training, development and support.</p> <p>It is also pleasing that, given the tremendous challenges of the last year, there have been no Limited Assurance outcomes have been reported to date for 2020/21 from ARA activity. Furthermore, no diminution of service or governance has been reported in assurance statements completed by management.</p>	<p>New councillor induction and training programme delivered in 2021 with ongoing member development training ongoing.</p>	
<p>There are planned audits in 2021-22 Internal Audit Plan that will further enhance the Council’s governance arrangements. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change Strategy – With the objective of the Council to be Carbon Neutral by 2030. This will have governance impacts throughout the Council. • Investment Portfolio Risk – The investments into the regeneration of the City underpin the vision set out by the Council. These have a strategic significance in the Council meeting its objectives. 	<p>The two audits listed were planned to be completed within quarter four of the financial year and had been progressing as expected. However due to recent events that have impacted the Council’s ICT, Internal Audit alongside the Section 151 Officer, will review the best use of Internal Audit resources in quarter four.</p>	<p>31st March 2022</p> <p>Head of Policy and Resources</p>

With both of the above, governance arrangements surrounding them will be looked at and advised upon to ensure they are suitable and are happening as intended.		