

Progress on 2018/2019 Gloucester City Council’s Governance Improvement Actions

AGS Review Reference	Governance matters identified / actions taken	Target Date and Lead Officer
<p>AGS Assurance Framework</p>	<p>Future Financial Sustainability / Efficiency Savings</p> <p>The Money Plan sets out the Council’s strategic approach to the management of its finances and presents indicative budgets and Council Tax levels for the medium term. It also comments on the significant financial risks facing the Council in the forthcoming years and explains what the Council is doing to reduce those risks. The Money Plan forecasts indicate the need for a continued delivery of savings in each year of the Plan. In February 2019, Council approved the implementation of the target savings for the Money Plan 2019-24. In addition to savings in previous years, further savings of £0.250m in 2019/20 were included. With the inclusion of settlement figures for 2019/20 and the assumption of further formula grant reductions over the life of the plan, further savings will be required. The financial gap is £0.090m in 2019/20.</p> <p>Due to the high levels of further savings required, the Council put in place a transformation programme called ‘Together Gloucester’ to deliver required efficiencies in line with the Council’s Money Plan.. The Council’s challenge is to continue this journey of transformation to fully implement Together Gloucester and designed outcomes.</p>	<p>Head of Policy and Resources</p> <p>31st March 2020</p>

	<p>The Council has now commenced its move to Shire Hall and the digital transformation journey is continuing to deliver the required transformation and savings.</p> <p>Actions taken in response to the above: Close monitoring of budgets will be carried out in each financial year. Continuous monitoring of service pressures and ongoing focus on preventative support.</p>	
<p>Position as at December 2019</p> <p>During 2019/20 detailed budget monitoring continues, identifying both in year opportunities and potential pressures. Where these opportunities or pressures are considered to be ongoing the Council 5 year Money Plan is updated to reflect this. Detailed monitoring reports are provided to both the Senior Management Team and to both scrutiny and Cabinet. The plan due to be presented to Council in February 2020 does not expect any additional efficiencies or additional income requirements. However the Council will continue to seek and identify opportunities to provide Value for Money in the service we deliver.</p>		

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AGS Assurance Framework	<p>Together Gloucester Service Transformation</p> <p>A peer challenge was undertaken in November 2017 and made 10 recommendations for future action and corporate improvement. This action has been completed. However the Council is continuing its transformation journey.</p> <p>The Together Gloucester programme is focussed on putting in place a coherent transformation programme and a clearer narrative for our internal transformation plans. Identifying and promoting Gloucester’s ‘Unique Selling Point’ and use it consistently for inward investment, tourism, cultural and economic development regeneration and to establish a stronger identity for Gloucester. Finding effective ways to harness the co-operation, spending power and resources of local, county and regional partners to shape and deliver Gloucester based solutions which have a beneficial social impact and make the most of our ‘asset based community development’ approach.</p> <p>Additional Actions taken in response to the above:</p> <p>The Council commissioned Ignite, a market leader in this field, to help us develop a resourced transformation programme which will enable us to redesign business processes and develop a robust IT transformation plan.</p>	Managing Director 31 st March 2020

	<p>The transformation proposals were presented to Cabinet on 12th September 2018.</p> <p>In October 2018 Together Gloucester 2 (TG2) was launched to deliver 5 transformational work streams:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Accommodation – the relocation of the City Council’s main offices to Shire Hall, Gloucester to provide a fully agile, IT enabled working environment;2. Service Redesign – to critically examine 180 high volume or high value operational processes to eliminate, streamline, simplify or automate where possible;3. IT Investment – to implement an ambitious programme of investment in hardware and software to enable service redesign and office agility;4. Commercialisation – to explore opportunities to reduce expenditure or increase income from the Council’s commercial, contracted or commissioned activities; and5. Strategy, Performance and Governance – to increase the Council’s capacity better manage its strategic direction, its performance management and its programme and project governance. <p>All elements of the TG2 programme are underway.</p>	
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Position as at December 2019

1. **Accommodation** The relocation to Shire Hall and The Gateway has taken place alongside the introduction of a new IT platform and new telephony and the promotion of hot desking and agile working.
2. **Service Redesign** A Business Analyst team drawn from existing staff was recruited to systematically work through the Council's 180 high volume operational processes. Where efficiencies and improvements could be made without the need for IT process changes these have been or are being introduced. Processes which require new IT systems or integrations are being revised as technology becomes available.
3. **IT Investment** IT investment has been made including new laptops for Staff and Councillors, new Skype for Business Telephony, an upgrade to Windows 10 and a shift to Microsoft Office 365 and a transfer of processing technologies to new servers. A new digital platform and contact centre have been procured and improvements have been made to the City Council website; these changes improve the experience when interacting with the Council and provide the capability for customers to self-serve where appropriate.
4. **Commercialisation** This is underway. The Council's property Investment Strategy is generating additional income forecast to be £900k pa, a revision to the Amey Contract has been negotiated which will better share risk with Amey and lead to financial benefits forecast to be worth £720,000 over the remaining lifetime of the contract. Procurement options and programmes are being developed for the Council's other major outsourced services over the next 4 years – Leisure (Aspire); Revenues and Benefits (Civica); IT (Civica) and Waste and Streetscene (Amey).
5. **Strategy, Performance and Governance** Strategic planning, service planning and performance reporting have been strengthened and strategic policy and performance posts have been appointed to improve capacity.