

Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

Summary

This Annual Governance Statement (AGS) sets out the Council's position at the end of the 2021/22 financial year in relation to compliance with the Local Code of Corporate Governance (LCCG) which sets out the standards to be achieved across the corporate governance framework.

The AGS comprises the following sections:

- an overview of the Council's governance arrangements;
- progress made on governance during 2021/22;
- Internal Audit activity and governance concerns arising from that in 2021/22
- Member involvement in corporate governance
- issues that have arisen during 2021/22;
- a position statement against the Code of Corporate Governance; and
- conclusion, summary of the key issues to be addressed and resulting governance priorities for 2022/23.

It sets out:

- how well the Council has delivered previous commitments to strengthen its corporate governance arrangements, providing an update on actions committed to in the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement
- governance concerns arising from Internal Audit activity during 2021/22
- specific events during 2021/22 that relate to corporate governance arrangements and their impact on compliance with the LCCG.

In summary, across the different sections of the document, the following key issues and themes have been set out:

- During 2021/22 there were a series of statements of concern made in relation to Mayoral conduct that required investigation which identified weaknesses and incidents of non-compliance with procurement, financial governance and project management.
- Member to member and member to officer relationships have deteriorated further in the 2021/22 financial year resulting in a more dysfunctional culture than that evident in 2020/21, detail of which was referenced in the 2020/21 AGS. During 2022/23 positive action has begun to address this and has resulted in the commissioning of external support, development of a Corporate Governance Improvement Plan, comprising equal Member / Officer membership to oversee delivery and in recognition of the need to further develop and strengthen officer / Member working relationships
- Actions set out for delivery in 2022/23 may need to be adjusted to align with the model for Corporate Governance Improvement agreed by Council in October 2022. As well as progress, any required changes will be reported to the Corporate Governance Improvement Board (CGIB) and to full Council
- Significant concerns in two internal audits resulted in seven Priority One recommendations in relation to CCTV and the governance of the BOHO X project. As a result of this and other issues reported in the body of the AGS, the overall opinion of the Head of Internal Audit on the framework of governance, risk

management and control operating at the Council is that it provides **Limited Assurance**.

- Although outside the scope of the reporting period, inflation and the cost of living have had a significant impact on the Council's budget position and on the financial resilience of the town.

In order to ensure there is a continued high profile focus on this corporate governance activity, content of this statement has been cross referenced with the Corporate Governance Improvement Plan and progress against the detailed activities set out within this AGS will be reported by Exception to the Corporate Governance Improvement Board (CGIB) established in November 2022, comprised of Group Leaders, the Mayor, Senior Officers, CIPFA representatives and the Local Government Association (Chair). this replaces the previously established officer led Corporate Governance Board, reflected in the 2021/22 governance structure diagram.

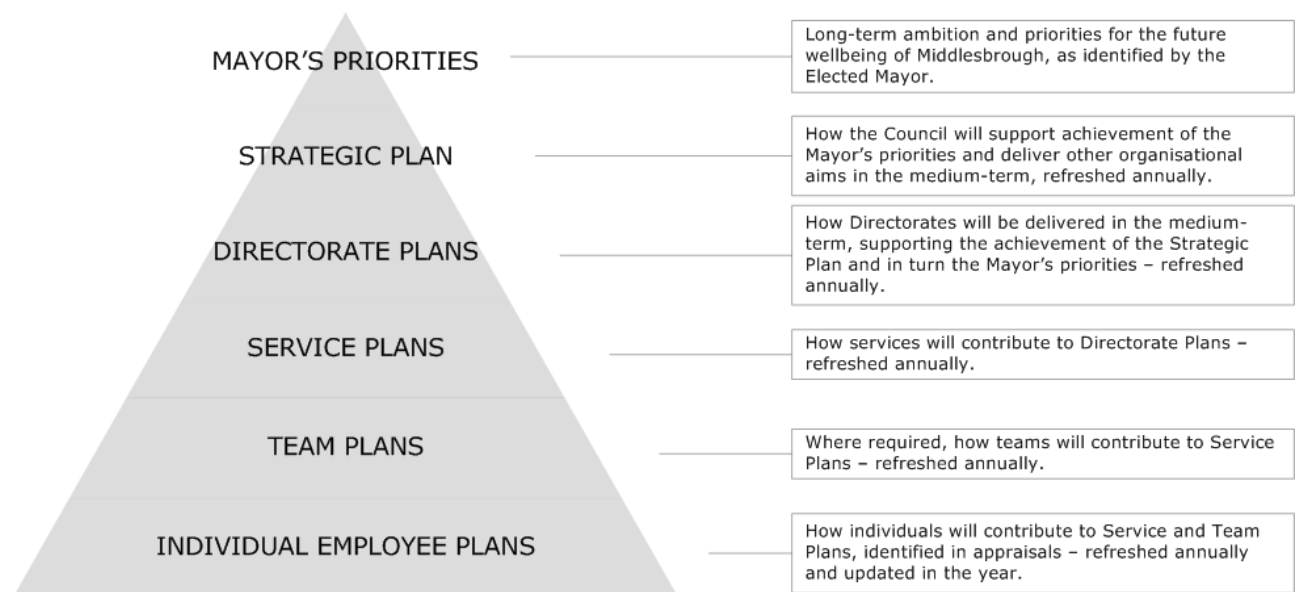
Introduction

1. Middlesbrough Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards. The Council has in place a [Code of Corporate Governance](#), which sets out its corporate governance framework and is reviewed annually. This framework comprises the culture, values, systems and processes of the Council, which together ensure that it does the right things, at the right time and in the right way. As set out in the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts, the Council is currently experiencing challenges in meeting these standards though is working to address areas of weakness or non-compliance.
2. This statement will set out that Member to Member and Member to officer relationships have deteriorated further in the 2021/22 financial year, resulting in a more dysfunctional culture than that evident in 2020/21. It will also set out joint plans to address this as both members and officers have the responsibility for this in terms of the result of further dysfunctionality and in terms of repairing this situation. The seriousness of this situation has been recognised by the Council's external auditors, Ernst & Young (EY), who have indicated that if insufficient progress is made in tackling the weaknesses that exist in our Value for Money arrangements by February 2023, EY will consider exercising its powers by making formal statutory recommendations. In December 2022 EY will submit a report to the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee to state it does not intend to exercise further reporting powers at this time.
3. Please note, as a result of delays in the ratification of the recently agreed 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement, this draft statement contains repetition between that document. Progress made during the coming months will be reflected in the finalised version of this statement.
4. The Code of Corporate Governance aligns with the latest CIPFA / Solace guidance, which sets out the following principles of good governance:
 - behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law;
 - ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
 - defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits;
 - determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;
 - developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
 - managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management; and
 - implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.
5. The purpose of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is to assess the extent to which the Council complies with its Code of Corporate Governance, how it has monitored and improved the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the past year and identify actions to strengthen these arrangements going forward.

6. The AGS forms part of the Statement of Accounts that the Council must produce on an annual basis and as such must be approved by the Mayor of Middlesbrough and the Council's Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer.
7. The development of the AGS was coordinated by the Strategy, Information and Governance service, in conjunction with statutory officers and other officers with responsibility for corporate governance processes, and with input from Internal Audit.

The Council's governance arrangements during 2021/22

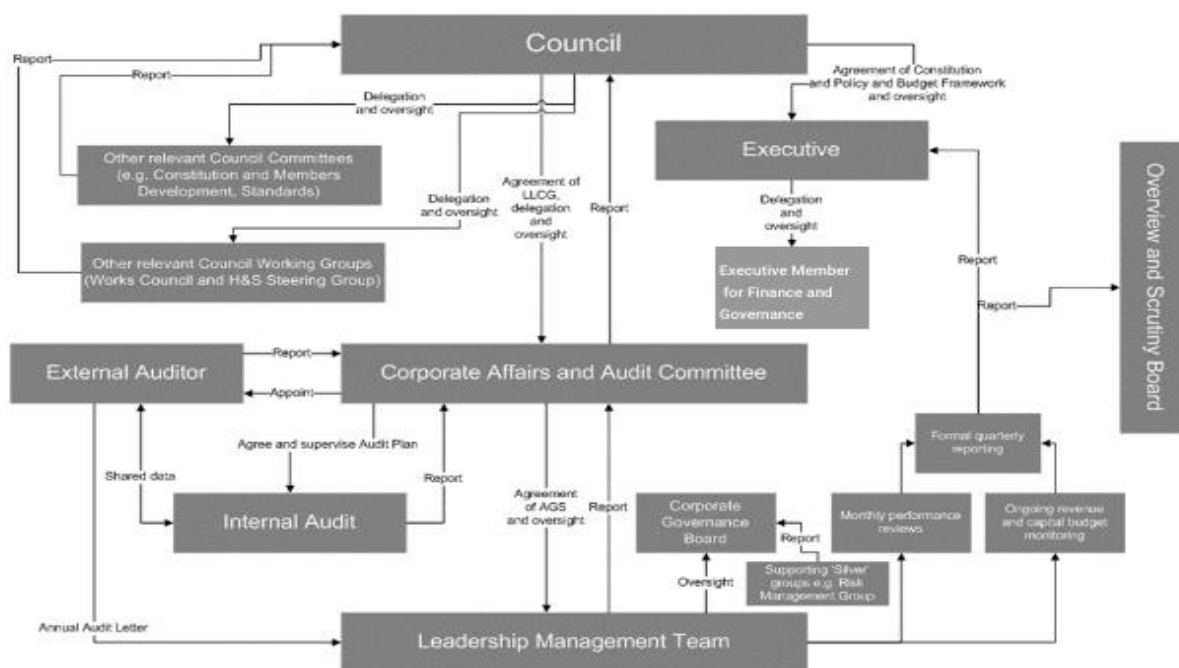
8. The Committee structure in place within the Council during 2021/22 is set out Appendix 2. The terms of reference of all committees are published on the Council's [committee papers](#) site and [open data](#) site.
9. Committees take decisions in line with the Council's approved strategies and policies. The Strategic Plan is the Council's overarching business plan for the medium-term and is typically refreshed on an annual basis. The plan was last refreshed in February 2021 to reflect the impact of COVID-19 and UK's exit from the European Union on Middlesbrough and on the Council's strategic priorities. However in April 2022 the underpinning work programme was refreshed by Council to cover the period up until 2024.
10. There is a 'golden thread' which runs from this document and throughout of the Council's governance and policy frameworks.



11. In making decisions, the Mayor and councillors are supported by a senior management structure that is designed to support effective compliance with the Council's legal and governance responsibilities, led by the three statutory officers (Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer). Some decisions are delegated to senior officers. All delegations are required to be published on the Council's [website](#).
12. The Council's Constitution defines the respective roles of councillors and officers, outlines expected standards and behaviours and provides a framework to enable effective working relationships across the Council. The Constitution also provides

direction on the various roles in place to ensure effective corporate governance within the Council.

- Member and officer groups work together with the Council's auditors within the following structure which was in place during 2021/22 to ensure compliance with the LCGG and its supporting policies and procedures (as set out in Appendix 3) and promote continuous improvement in governance, maximising its potential to deliver its priorities and value for money.



Progress made during 2021/22

Implementing actions from the 2020/21 AGS

- This section would normally set out progress made against the previous year's Annual Governance Statement which had been considered 12 months before this statement. Delays in the signing off of the 2020/21 AGS mean that document has only recently been approved and it therefore contains little movement between the table set out in the 2020/21 AGS and this document, at this stage. Actions due to be delivered in October in relation to delivery of officer training in relation to understanding governance and delivery of advice and challenge have been completed.
- One action in relation to delivery of a refreshed training approach to ensure senior officer training encompasses the full suite of corporate governance training has been reprofiled to February 2023 in order to allow the shape of that to be influenced by the Training and Development working group which commenced work in November 2022 as part of the Corporate Governance Improvement journey.
- As set out in the summary of this statement, in order to ensure there is a continued high profile focus on this corporate governance activity, content of this statement has been cross referenced with the Corporate Governance Improvement Plan and progress against the detailed activities set out in both the 2020/21 AGS and this AGS will be

reported by Exception to the Corporate Governance Improvement Board (CGIB) established in November 2022, comprised of Group Leaders, the Mayor, Senior Officers, CIPFA representatives and the Local Government Association (Chair). This replaces the previously established officer led Corporate Governance Board, reflected in the 2021/22 governance structure diagram. 12 actions were completed, one is ongoing and six will be delivered during 2022/23. Appendix 2 sets out the detail of those actions.

Internal Audit during 2021/22

17. During 2021/22 Internal Audit undertook and finalised 20 audits during the year which are set out at Appendix 1.

Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee during 2021/22

18. Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee reviews the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and makes recommendations as appropriate to ensure good governance and continuous improvement.

19. The committee met seven times during 2021/22, and considered the following corporate governance related items:

- Annual Report of the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)
- Update on the Ofsted improvement journey
- Annual Audit letter 2019/20
- Annual assurance report on HR – Health and Wellbeing
- Annual Report of the Head of Internal Audit
- Counter Fraud reports
- 2020-21 EY planning report
- Draft Statement of accounts 2020/21
- Lessons learnt – Best Value Inspection of Liverpool City Council
- Annual Assurance report on Procurement
- Subject Access Requests – Compliance Update
- Complaints and lessons learned report
- Annual Review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Health and Safety Annual Assurance Report
- Community Governance review
- Corporate Debt Write Off policy
- Capital Strategy
- Appointment of External Auditors
- Lessons Learned – Governance on Leasing our Commercial Assets.

Overview and Scrutiny during 2021/22

20. Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB), supported by a range of topic-specific panels, scrutinises Executive decisions and the performance of Council services. During 2021/22, scrutiny considered the following items that are relevant to corporate governance:

- quarterly reports on delivery of the Strategic Plan and compliance with key corporate governance disciplines;
- quarterly reports on budget outturns for the quarter;
- the Executive Forward Work Programme;
- Terms of Reference for the Middlesbrough Council COVID-19 Recovery group and the subsequent plan;
- COVID-19 Update: Health, Adult Social Care and Public Health;
- Middlesbrough Council COVID-19 – Response and Test, Track and Trace;
- Children’s Services update on finance and performance
- COVID-19 updates; and
- governance updates from the Chief Executive.

21. There were no scrutiny call-ins during 2021/22 of any Executive decision.

Other governance related events during 2021/22

COVID-19

22. The During the period covered by this statement, the pandemic continued to impact on the Council and the public, affecting the way services were delivered, although during 2021/22 the delivery of the vaccine programme enabled government to remove all domestic legal restrictions in February 2022. Throughout the year staff continued to work flexibly to ensure services continued to be delivered.

23. During 2021/22 the Council administered and issued over £9m in business grants on behalf of the Government in response to the pandemic, and approximately £2.5m of support to households, providing assistance to hundreds of businesses and over 30,000 residents in some form.

Governance allegations

24. In May 2021, several former Members of the Council’s Executive made statements of concern on alleged Mayoral conduct in relation to activity conducted during 2020/21 and concerns that there had been failings of governance across a number of areas. Pre-formal fact finding has been conducted by Internal Audit as a precursor to any matters being conducted under the standards regime. This was commissioned by the Monitoring Officer, following consultation with the 151 Officer and the Head of Paid Service. This has identified weaknesses and incidents of non-compliance, by officers and Members, in relation to governance controls for procurement, financial governance and project management. Actions to address these weaknesses are reflected in the action plan for this statement. This work has been shared with the External Auditors and used to inform their Value for Money assessment.

Resignation of Executive Members

25. Following the submission of the governance allegations referenced above, five Executive members resigned from the Executive on the 11 May 2021, leaving the Council with an Elected Mayor and one Executive Member. The Localism Act 2011 sets out that the Executive minimum composition is a Mayor plus two other members and therefore the Executive was not lawfully constituted and unable to make decisions.

26. The Monitoring Officer immediately set out to senior managers the contingency measure contained in the Council's constitution that could be put in place to enable decision making, however it was not necessary to implement this as the Mayor appointed two new members to the Executive within the following two days.

Organisational culture and Member officer relationships

27. As set out in the 2020/21 AGS, Member to Member and Member to officer relationships have deteriorated further in the 2021/22 financial year resulting in a more dysfunctional culture than that evident in 2020/21. It is the responsibility of both officers and Members to address this proactively to ensure that the culture of the organisation improves. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) were commissioned to undertake an independent diagnostic of the issues to assist the Council in a way forward. This was reported to Council in the autumn.

28. In addition, positive discussions have been held between senior officers and senior members as part of the finalisation of the 2020/21 AGS which will be built on going forward. External support has also been provided from the Local Government Association (LGA). An extraordinary meeting of the Council was also called to discuss the findings of the External Auditor.

Although out of time scope, significant progress has been made to date in 2022/23 to secure external support, develop an improvement plan and establish an officer / member governance structure to oversee delivery, assess impact to drive forward improvement at a pace. The first meeting of the Corporate Governance Improvement Board and associated Task and Finish working groups to agree the detailed improvement plan commenced in November 2022. Progress against delivery will be measured at 30 / 60 / 90 days. Task and finish groups have been organised around the following themes:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Training and Development
- Constitution
- Culture and Communities.

29. Some of the key outcomes this work aims to achieve are:

- a refreshed constitution that is easier to follow and reflects the procedures, behaviours and standards that should be adhered to
- improved Officer and Member and Member to Member relationships
- an approach to Member and Officer training that better equips them to deliver their roles in full while adhering to the Council's values and in Members case, the Nolan Principles of Public Life
- A better understanding of, and respect for, the differing roles and responsibilities undertaken by various officers and Members across the organisation.

BOHO X Internal Audit

30. An internal audit of the project management of the BOHO X project was undertaken during 2020/21. The findings of this audit identified five Priority One internal audit actions. The Section 151 Officer and the Chief Executive provided an overview of the detailed findings of this audit to the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee in April

2022 in order to provide assurance to the Committee that officers recognised the seriousness of the findings and give assurance to committee that these issues were being tackled by also setting out the governance actions to address them. These actions were embedded within the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement improvement plan. All five priority actions have now been delivered.

CCTV

31. Although completed as part of the 2020/21 internal audit programme of work, an audit of CCTV governance arrangements was not finalised until July 2021. As reported in the 2020/21 AGS, that audit found that there was no central register available that identifies the location of all CCTV camera equipment across the Council. Therefore, the Council was unable to confirm that all CCTV schemes are compliant with the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice and the relevant legislation.

Post-OFSTED improvement journey

32. In December 2019 OFSTED completed an inspection of the Council's compliance with the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) framework. The outcome of that inspection was a judgement across four categories:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Inadequate
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Inadequate
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness	Inadequate

33. In 2020/21 a three-year plan was developed to deliver sustained improvement and change in Children's Services, monitored by a monthly Multi-Agency Strategic Improvement Board with a highly-experienced independent chair. The board receives progress reports on delivery of the improvement plan, has oversight of key performance metrics to track impact and considers themed reports on key practice issues. These three elements give the board a comprehensive overview of the delivery and impact of improvement work. The strategic board is supported by an operational board and weekly meetings with senior managers within Children's Services.

34. The Council continued to deliver against this plan during 2021/22 and continues to engage with Ofsted and the Department of Education on its improvement journey. A monitoring visit conducted in March 2022 identified that the Council has:

1. 'delivered a sustained programme of improvements to ensure there is a systemic focus on children'
2. 'Senior managers know their service well and have an improved management grip'
3. 'there has been a substantial improvement in permanence planning for children in case'.

32. A further visit was held in July 2022 which found that:

- the corporate leadership team has continued to develop and improve services at the front door

- there are stronger and wider partnerships in the Multi-Agency Children's Hub (MACH)
- there are challenges around workforce stability which are impacting on caseloads and quality of practice.

Inflation and cost of living

35. Although the larger impacts are out of the time scope for this statement, the ongoing and cost of living inflationary pressures facing the town and its residents have had and will continue to have a significant impact on the Council's budget position. This is because not only are the costs of delivering services continuing to rise but demand for services has and will continue to increase as more and more households are affected by this issue. As Middlesbrough is one of the most deprived local authorities in England, it is likely to also be one of the most adversely affected areas. An effective Council-wide response to this will be a key challenge for Middlesbrough in 2022/23.

Middlesbrough Development Company activity during 2021/22

36. Middlesbrough Development Company (MDC) is a local authority trading wholly-owned company limited by shares, with the Council as the sole shareholder.
37. During 2021/22 MDC Board met 11 times, with key decisions taken by the company published at www.middlesbroughdevelopmentcompany.co.uk.
38. Internal Audit are currently undertaking an assessment of the company using Local Partnerships and CIPFA best practice guidance on local authority trading companies. While the Council is awaiting feedback and the outcome of their work, the Council is considering the future role of the company and its contribution it makes to delivering council strategic objectives notwithstanding any possible recommendations and changes to strengthen governance arrangements.

Position statement against the Council's Code of Corporate Governance

Self-assessment

39. The Council has completed a position statement against its Code of Corporate Governance for the 2021/22 year, informed by:
- The information identified in the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement which has been significantly delayed in its finalisation and therefore updated throughout 2021/22
 - the professional opinion of statutory and other officers with responsibility for the development and maintenance of the Council's internal control environment;
 - reports from Overview and Scrutiny, and Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee's examinations of governance processes; and
 - findings from Internal Audit's review programme and other work completed by Internal Audit, and engagement with the Council's external auditor.
40. The detailed position statement is at Appendix 3 and is reflective of governance risk levels as outlined in the Council's strategic and directorate risk registers.

41. In summary, while the Council can demonstrate that governance processes are in place for the most part, the control weaknesses that were identified in the recently published 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement continue to exist. The Council commissioned CIPFA during 2022 to complete an independent review of its governance arrangements which has informed a Corporate Governance Improvement Plan, along with establishment of an appropriate governance structure which includes a multi-disciplinary Member and officer board that aligns with the Council's Project Management Framework. Progress will be reported to Council on a regular basis to demonstrate delivery of actions and also to assess the impact of those actions.
42. This will provide assurance to members on action being taken and ensure that if control weaknesses continue to exist even after action, further actions can be identified to address those. This will also include engagement with Internal and External Audit to provide assurance around delivery.

Internal Audit opinion

43. The overall opinion of the Head of Internal Audit on the framework of governance, risk management and control operating at the Council is that it provides **Limited Assurance**. No reliance was placed on the work of other assurance providers in reaching this opinion.
44. In giving this opinion, Internal Audit drew attention to the following significant control weaknesses which are considered relevant to the preparation of the 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement.
45. An audit on the project management of Boho X found significant weaknesses in governance and decision making. It found that the project was not always managed in line with the Council's Constitution and the Council's project management framework. In addition, the Council's elected Mayor held undocumented meetings with external contractors without officers present, following agreement by a senior officer.
46. The audit has now been finalised and actions have been agreed with management and delivered.
47. During the year a further audit work was carried out on a number of allegations made by former Executive members. This work was fact-finding in nature and intended to provide management with information on the allegations enabling them to make a decision on the next steps to be taken.
48. Whilst Internal Audit's work on this is not yet complete, the findings have largely been agreed with officers. The work found issues related to those for the Boho X audit including governance weaknesses, a lack of challenge or advice from officers, and examples of the Mayor holding undocumented meetings with external contractors.
49. These findings lead Internal Audit to conclude that the concerns identified are not limited to one area or audit and are indicative of wider issues around relationships between councillors and officers and a lack of clear separation of their respective roles, in practice.

50. Actions agreed for the issues identified from the Boho X audit will be followed-up during 2022/23 and further updates will be brought to the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee.
51. The overall opinion given is based on work that has been undertaken directly by Internal Audit, and on the cumulative knowledge gained through their ongoing liaison and planning with officers. In giving the opinion, Internal Audit note that the Covid-19 pandemic has continued to affect the Council over the last year, with a consequential impact on business operations and controls. The work of Internal Audit has been directed to the areas considered most at risk, or that offer the most value for the authority overall. However, not all the areas affected by the Covid-19 pandemic will have been reviewed.

External Audit opinion

52. The opinion of the Council's External Auditor will be provided to Corporate Audit and Affairs Committee alongside the final version of this document.

Conclusion

53. As was the case in the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement, the Council continues to demonstrate that while there are governance processes in place for the most part, it is clear that control weaknesses have continued to exist and need to be addressed if the Council is to improve adherence to processes.
54. During the financial year 2021/22 Member to member and member to officer relationships deteriorated further. Both members and officers have the responsibility for this in terms of the result of further dysfunctionality and in terms of repairing this situation. This was reflected in the diagnostic work completed by CIPFA and reported to Council in October 2022. All members at that meeting voted to accept those findings in full and to work together, with officers to address them. The Chief Executive has also stated that senior officers fully accept the findings of that work.
55. The scale of the culture change required is significant and cannot be underestimated. The Council's External Auditors have made clear that they view this matter with the utmost seriousness, as do the senior officers and senior members who have contributed towards the development of this statement.
56. During 2022/23, the upmost governance priority of the organisation will therefore be ensuring that it responds positively to the issues identified within both the 2020/21 AGS and through ongoing discourse through 2021/22 and into 2022/23. The Mayor is committed to leading this change with the support of the Chief Executive and senior managers.
57. As set out in this AGS, the diagnostic work undertaken by CIPFA during the second quarter of 2022/23 provided an evidence base to inform the planned governance improvements actions required to ensure the culture of this organisation is improved. A detailed improvement plan has been developed in partnership with officers and members to maximise the likelihood of them being successfully delivered.

Signed on behalf of Middlesbrough Council (to be completed upon finalisation)

Andy Preston
Elected Mayor of Middlesbrough
Xx/xx/xx

Tony Parkinson
Chief Executive
Xx/xx/xx

Helen Seechurn
Director of Finance
(Section 151 Officer)
Xx/xx/xx

Appendix 1 Internal Audits completed during 2021/22

Audited System / Service	Assurance Opinion	Priority Actions		
		P1	P2	P3
Use of CCTV	Limited Assurance	2	5	1
Officer and Member decision making	Reasonable Assurance	0	0	6
Schools themed audit – pupil premium	Reasonable Assurance	0	0	4
Teesside Pension Fund – investments	Substantial Assurance	0	0	1
Teesside Pension Fund – Administration	Substantial Assurance	0	1	2
Governance arrangements	Substantial Assurance	0	0	2
Main accounting system	Reasonable Assurance	0	0	3
Cyber security awareness	Substantial Assurance	0	0	1
Social Care and emergency payments	Substantial Assurance	0	0	0
Council Tax and NNDR	Substantial Assurance	0	0	0
Council Tax Support and Housing Benefits	Reasonable Assurance	0	2	0
Youth Employment Initiative	Substantial Assurance	0	0	0
Project management – Boho X	Limited Assurance	5	6	1

Audited System / Service	Assurance Opinion	Priority Actions		
		P1	P2	P3
Asset maintenance	Substantial Assurance	0	0	0
Teesside Pension Fund – Overpayments	Substantial Assurance	0	0	0
Schools themed audit – purchasing cards & asset management	Reasonable Assurance	0	6	9
ICT change management	Substantial Assurance	0	0	1
Home working	Substantial Assurance	0	1	2
Future High Street Fund Governance	Substantial Assurance	0	1	1
Benefits – overpayments	Substantial Assurance	0	0	0
Burial grounds	Draft report issued			
Children’s commissioning & contract management	In progress			
Middlesbrough Development Company	In progress			
	Total:	7	22	34

58. The opinions used by Internal Audit during 2021/22 are explained below:

- Substantial Assurance – A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
- Reasonable Assurance – There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

- Limited Assurance – Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
- No Assurance – Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

59. The following categories of opinion are also applied to individual recommendations agreed with management:

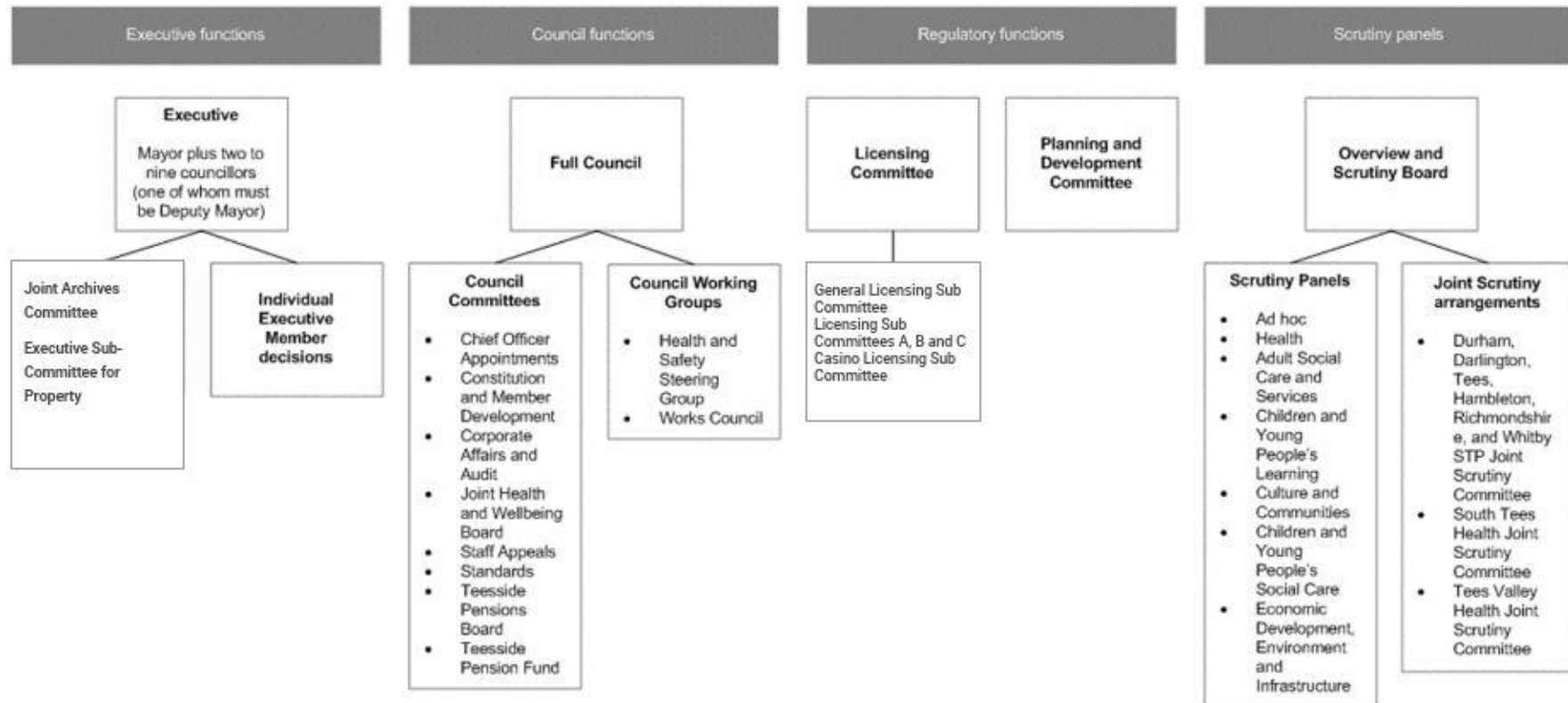
- Priority 1 (P1) – A fundamental system weakness, which presents unacceptable risk to the system objectives and requires urgent attention by management.
- Priority 2 (P2) – A significant system weakness, whose impact or frequency presents risks to the system objectives, which needs to be addressed by management.
- Priority 3 (P3) – The system objectives are not exposed to significant risk, but the issue merits attention by management.

Appendix 2 – 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement actions

Action	Lead Officer(s)	Status / deadline
Revise members' code of conduct and deliver training on it to all members, including ethics.	Head of Democratic Services	Complete
Raise awareness of the role of the Monitoring officer, in particular giving advice and guidance to officers on governance.	Monitoring Officer	Complete
Delivery of training to all Members on roles and responsibilities in relation to Programme and Project Management	Strategic Delivery Manager	Complete
Launch the revised Management Framework, to ensure managers understand how they are expected to act to be in line with the refreshed corporate values.	Head of Human Resources	Complete
Refresh training materials on the Council's Organisational Development system to align training with compliance with the values	Head of Human Resources	Complete
Refresher senior leadership development work programme delivered by the LGA to ensure officer and member roles continue to be understood and adhered to.	Monitoring Officer	Complete
Launch an expanded 360 project to cover a wider cohort of managers.	Head of Human Resources	Complete
Member refresher training on the code of conduct will include information on hospitality requirements and registers of interests.	Head of Democratic Services	Complete
Constitution and Member Development committee to consider amendments to the constitution to strengthen and clarify the actions that can be taken in response to councillors failing to complete mandatory training.	Head of Democratic Services	Complete
Deliver training to members on use of social media.	Head of Democratic Services	Complete
Continue to deliver the OFSTED Improvement plan, in particular those actions that have been identified to strengthen leadership within Children's Safeguarding Services.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Ongoing
Refreshed and strengthened training to officers delivering projects to ensure project and wider Council decision making governance is understood and adhered to.	Strategic Delivery Manager	Complete
Delivery of training for Senior Officers on the officer code of conduct and the provision of effective advice and challenge	Monitoring Officer	Complete
Refreshed training approach to ensure senior officers training encompasses the full suite of corporate governance training.	Head of Human Resources and the Monitoring Officer	February 2023
Transition to OPEN, the NEPO e-procurement system that is being put in place for the North East, replacing the current contract management framework with an end to end product once fully rollout.	Head of Commissioning and Procurement	March 2023

Refresh training on the Equality Act and the impact assessment process, ensuring it is mandatory for key officers.	Head of Strategy, Information and Governance	March 2023
Complete mandatory refresher training on the officer and member protocol within Middlesbrough Council's constitution for all members and senior officers.	Monitoring Officer	March 2023
Continue to implement a scheme of sub-delegations where appropriate to further improve governance around officer delegated decisions.	Director of Legal and Governance Services	March 2023
Refresh the Joint strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for children and young people this year and complete the Adults and Older persons JSNA.	Director of Public Health with support from the Interim Head of Strategy, Information and Governance	March 2023

Appendix 3: Middlesbrough Council Committee Structure 2021/22



Appendix 4: Position statement against the Council’s Code of Corporate Governance

Local Code of Corporate Governance		Self-assessment	
Principle / supporting principles	To meet these requirements, the Council will:	Evidence of compliance with this principle	Areas for improvement
<p>Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaving with integrity Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values Respecting the rule of law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work diligently and with integrity to achieve the Elected Mayor’s Priorities for Middlesbrough. Clearly document expected behaviours, and decision-making processes, for members and officers, and regularly review these. Effectively communicate expected behaviours to members and officers, and provide appropriate training on ethical behaviour. Ensure members, statutory officers, other key post holders are able and supported to fulfil their duties and meet their responsibilities. Ensure compliance by maintaining effective audit committee, internal audit and scrutiny functions, and standards and disciplinary processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitution and supporting documentation clearly set out expected behaviours and decision-making processes, including member and officer relationships, codes of conduct, financial procedure rules and schemes of delegation. Constitution updated during 2020 to reflect COVID impacts to ensure meetings continued to be conducted effectively and in line with best practice. Additional guidance was issued to support this. Corporate values (one of which is integrity) in place and embedded within employee recruitment and selection, induction, appraisal and development. They were refreshed during 2020/21. Comprehensive member induction process and member development programme was delivered for the first year of the current term of office (19/20). Member and officer declarations of interests registers in place, and requested to be updated annually but there is a requirement that Members notify the Monitoring Officer electronically of any changes through the Council’s committee management system, Modern.gov. Training for members on the code of conduct in place with a high level of compliance, and with all members individually signed up to the code. The action to deliver refreshed training in 20/21 has been slipped to 2021/22 as a result of COVID and its impact on capacity to deliver. Comprehensive member handbook in place to provide guidance and signpost support, and members’ enquiries service in place to assist with casework and data requests. Statutory officers clearly identified and appropriately supported. The Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A robust officer scheme of delegations and sub-delegations is required to ensure effective, appropriate and timely taking of decisions that can be taken by officers. (20/21 action) Refresher training on ethics has been identified as prudent in light of increased standards complaints and the misconduct in public office conviction. (20/21 action) Action required to ensure understanding of the Equality Act and the impact assessment process, supplementing mandatory equality and inclusion training with refresher impact assessment training for key officers. (20/21 action) Increased awareness of the role of the Monitoring officer, to ensure officers are aware that they can seek advice and guidance on governance matters as well as escalation to line managers or use of HR or whistleblowing processes. (20/21 action)

		<p>complies with the CIPFA statement on the role of the Chief Financial Officer (2016).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee, internal audit and scrutiny arrangements in place, with members trained appropriately.• Policies in place for counter-fraud, bribery and corruption; complaints; procurement; and whistleblowing, and regularly reviewed.• Member standards arrangements and employee disciplinary procedures in place and updated regularly.• Proactive approach to equality and inclusion in place, engaging staff, acting on intelligence and reporting progress. The Council has engaged staff online (and offline for staff with no ICT access) during Covid using a variety of methods to support maintenance of a positive, inclusive culture.	
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Local Code of Corporate Governance		Self-assessment	
Principle / supporting principles	To meet these requirements, the Council will:	Evidence of compliance with this principle	Areas for improvement
<p>Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Openness Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document and operate a culture of openness and transparency within the organisation. Maintain a culture of accountability, so that members and officers understand what they are accountable for and to whom they are accountable. Consult appropriately with stakeholders on the development of its budget, key plans and service development. Maintain effective decision making processes, ensuring that reports to decision makers clearly set out stakeholder views where relevant. Publish all Executive and Committee reports and decision papers, unless there is a legitimate need to preserve confidentiality on the basis of the statutory tests. Publish on its website information on the Council's strategies, plans and finances as well as on outcomes, achievements and challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stated commitments to transparency within the Strategic Plan and supporting strategies such as the Information Strategy and annual SIRO Report. Constitution and supporting documentation clearly set out accountabilities and delegated authorities. Consultation on Strategic Plan priorities; and annual budget consultation in place. Corporate consultation and impact assessment policy in place (refreshed during 2020/21), ensuring that stakeholders (including third party providers) are engaged appropriately and views considered in decision making. Committee diary planner published on an annual basis, approved by members and accessible via the Council's website. Executive Forward Work Programme in place, setting out planned decisions in the coming four months on the online committee system. All public Executive and Committee agendas, papers and minutes are published via the Council's website. Officer-delegated decisions are also published. Virtual meeting solutions in place for Councillor meetings while Covid-19 restrictions are in force to ensure transparency around decision-making. Key strategies and plans are clearly published on the Council's website / open data site, and regularly updated. Information on performance and expenditure sent to all households annually as part of Council Tax billing. The Council complies with Open Data requirements, publishing statutorily required and other datasets such as the Freedom of Information Act publication scheme on its open data site. The Council proactively seeks to publish information for which there is a demand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A robust officer scheme of delegations and sub-delegations is required to ensure effective, appropriate and timely taking of decisions that can be taken by officers. (20/21 action) Action required to ensure understanding of the Equality Act and the impact assessment process, supplementing mandatory equality and inclusion training with refresher impact assessment training for key officers. (20/21 action) Key Performance Indicators with targets will strengthen the Council's Strategic plan and increase transparency around the impact of actions on the achievement of aims within it. (21/22 action) Work during 2021/22 has identified weaknesses in understanding across elements of the corporate governance framework. Refreshed training will ensure senior officers training encompasses the full suite of corporate governance disciplines. (20/21 action). Work was undertaken to improve compliance with Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests during 2021/22 to improve compliance. This continues to be monitored on a monthly basis by the Council's Leadership Management Team. Completion of a review of the Constitution as part of the Council's Corporate Governance improvement journey.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Plans with the digital and marketing and communications strategies to advance in the current approach.	
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Local Code of Corporate Governance		Self-assessment	
Principle / supporting principles	To meet these requirements, the Council will:	Evidence of compliance with this principle	Areas for improvement
<p>Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining outcomes Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly set out its contribution to delivery of the Mayor's priorities for Middlesbrough, and use this as the basis for its overall strategy, planning and other decisions. Define outcomes through robust consideration of appropriate evidence bases, such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. Ensure that it delivers defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within available resources. Effectively identify and manage risks to the achievement of targeted outcomes. Manage customer expectations effectively when determining priorities to make best use of resources, and ensure fair access to services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Plan and Directorate Priorities Plans in place which outline how the Council plans to deliver the Council's priorities for Middlesbrough, Strategic Plan is part of the Council's policy framework – reports to decision makers set out how recommendations would impact on strategic objectives if approved. Consultation on Strategic Plan priorities; and annual budget consultation in place. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and supporting assessments in place for children and young people – the children and young people's assessment was refreshed during 2017/18. Market position statements use needs assessments to inform commissioning priorities. Corporate planning cycle considers targeted outcomes and annual budgeting over the medium-term within the context of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Investment Strategy. Performance, Risk and Programme and Project Management frameworks provide for regularly tracking of progress and addressing issues and risks, with reporting to members and senior managers as appropriate. Customer Strategy and Charter in place, identifying what customers can expect from the Council, alongside specific service eligibility criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Performance Indicators with targets will strengthen the Council's Strategic plan and increase transparency around the impact of actions on the achievement of aims within it. (21/22 action) Refresh the Joint strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for children and young people this year and complete the Adults and Older persons JSNA. (20/21 action) Recent guidance on the conduct of local authority owned arm's length companies has been issued that Middlesbrough Development Company should be assessed against to ensure it is operating in line with it. (21/22 action)

Local Code of Corporate Governance		Self-assessment	
Principle / supporting principles	To meet these requirements, the Council will:	Evidence of compliance with this principle	Areas for improvement
<p>Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining interventions • Planning interventions • Optimising achievement of intended outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure reports to decision makers on services are fair, balanced, and analyse options and the risks associated with those options, to ensure Best Value is achieved. • Ensure that external and internal stakeholders are engaged with when the Council is determining how services should be planned and delivered, and the outcome of consultations is considered when decisions are made. • Ensure achievement of social value through service planning and commissioning. • Ensure that it has clear and robust planning and control cycles for its strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets. • Determine appropriate KPIs to demonstrate service and project performance, and provide members and senior managers with timely updates on these. • Ensure medium and long term resource planning is realistic, sustainable and inclusive. • Prepare budgets that are aligned to the strategic objectives of the organisation and its MTFP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to decision makers developed using a standard format to ensure effective, fair, and evidence-based decision making. • Corporate consultation and impact assessment policy in place, ensuring that stakeholders engaged appropriately and views considered in decision making. • Guide to social value in procurement and commissioning in place. • Strategic Procurement Strategy in place. Contract management framework now also in place. • 'How to do Business with Middlesbrough Council' guidance for providers in place. • Annual reports to Corporate Affairs and Audit committee on disposals on the grounds of social value provided where appropriate. • Corporate planning cycle considers targeted outcomes and annual budgeting over the medium-term within the context of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan and capital Investment Strategy. • Performance, Risk and Programme and Project Management frameworks provide for regularly tracking of progress and addressing issues and risks, with reporting to members and senior managers as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A robust officer scheme of delegations and sub-delegations is required to ensure effective, appropriate, and timely taking of decisions that can be taken by officers. (20/21 action) • Transition to OPEN, the NEPO e-procurement system that is being put in place for the North East, replacing the current contract management framework with an end to end product once fully rollout. (20/21 action) • Recent guidance on the conduct of local authority owned arm's length companies has been issued that Middlesbrough Development Company should be assessed against to ensure it is operating in line with it. (21/22 action) • Key Performance Indicators with targets will strengthen the Council's Strategic plan and increase transparency around the impact of actions on the achievement of aims within it. (21/22 action)

Local Code of Corporate Governance		Self-assessment	
Principle / supporting principles	To meet these requirements, the Council will:	Evidence of compliance with this principle	Areas for improvement
<p>Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing the Council's capacity Developing the capability of the Council's leadership and other individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly review operations to ensure that it is continuing to deliver services that are effective, including the use of benchmarking and sectoral research. Work collaboratively and in partnerships where added value can be achieved. Maintain an effective approach to organisational development to ensure continued capacity and capability to deliver. Clearly define roles, responsibilities and terms of engagement for members and employees. Maintain and regularly review its schemes of delegations that outline the types of decisions that are delegated and those that are reserved for collective decision-making. Develop the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership. Ensure there are appropriate structures in place to encourage public participation. Ensure that systems are in place to ensure that members and staff can be both held to account for performance, and supported as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Management Policy set out how corporate performance will be managed. Directorates review performance internally. Business intelligence dashboards are have been implemented to facilitate this. Range of benchmarking and other tools are used within Directorates to contextual performance and drive improvement. Wider Leadership Management Team in place to enable broader consideration of key policy issues. Key strategic partnerships in place, such as the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board. The organisational development ambitions of the Council are embedded within the Strategic Plan which clearly outlines corporate approach to organisational development. Constitution and supporting documentation clearly set out member and officer role profiles, relationship protocol and schemes of delegation. Corporate consultation policy and online consultation portal in place. Plans with the digital and marketing and communications strategies to advance in the current approach. Processes in place for public involvement in determining scrutiny priorities, for the public to petition Council and to register questions to be considered by full Council. Clear employee appraisal and development process and member development programme in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A robust officer scheme of delegations and sub-delegations is required to ensure effective, appropriate and timely taking of decisions that can be taken by officers. (20/21 action) The Council must continue on its improvement journey to address issues raised by OFSTED in relation to its safeguarding services for children to ensure all children are safe receive consistently good care that results in sustained improvement to their lives and their families lives. (20/21 action)

Local Code of Corporate Governance		Self-assessment	
Principle / supporting principles	To meet these requirements, the Council will:	Evidence of compliance with this principle	Areas for improvement
<p>Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing risk Managing performance Robust internal control Managing data Strong public financial management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed a proportionate approach to risk management within all activities, ensure that progress is reviewed regularly and that risk is considered as part of decision making. Ensure effective performance management of service delivery and provide members and senior managers with timely updates on service performance and progress towards outcomes. Ensure reports to decision makers on services are fair, balanced, and analyse options and the risks associated with those options, to ensure Best Value is achieved. Ensure effective, member-led scrutiny is in place that provides constructive challenge and debate on objectives and policies before, during and after decisions are taken. Ensure an effective, risk-led Internal Audit service is in place to provide assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements. Ensure effective counter fraud and anti-corruption policies and arrangements are in place. Ensure effective internal control arrangements exist for sound financial management. Maintain an effective audit committee function. Ensure effective arrangements are in place to collect, store, use and share data, including processes to safeguard personal data. Put in place arrangements to ensure that data used to support decision-making is accurate and clear. Ensure financial management arrangements support both long term outcome delivery and day-to-day operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Management; Risk and Opportunity Management; and Programme and Project Management policies provide for regularly tracking of progress and addressing issues and risks, with reporting to members and senior managers as appropriate. Risk is a standard section in reports to decision makers. Reports to decision makers developed using a standard format to ensure effective, fair, and evidence-based decision making. Wide-ranging annual scrutiny programme in place, examining policy and performance. Urgent decision process and records in place and reported to Council annually. Effective internal audit arrangement in place, utilising the Council's plans and risk registers to identify priorities. Policy in place for counter-fraud, bribery and corruption; complaints; procurement; and whistleblowing, and regularly reviewed. Money Laundering Policy. Effective Corporate Affairs and Audit committee in place clear terms of reference and a full and trained membership. Information Strategy in place to provide systematic approach to information governance, including data protection and data quality. Robust financial management procedures in place relating to medium-term financial planning, budget setting, procurement and contract management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A robust officer scheme of delegations and sub-delegations is required to ensure effective, appropriate and timely taking of decisions that can be taken by officers. (20/21 action) Action required to ensure understanding of, and compliance with, procurement processes of the organisation. (21/22 action) Assess and embed compliance with the Partnerships Governance policy. (21/22 action) Limited assurance judgement from Internal Audit which will be addressed by the Corporate Governance Improvement Plan.

Local Code of Corporate Governance		Self-assessment	
Principle / supporting principles	To meet these requirements, the Council will:	Evidence of compliance with this principle	Areas for improvement
<p>Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing good practice in transparency Implementing good practices in reporting Assurance and effective accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide reports in plain English wherever possible, ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate and balancing transparency requirements with clarity. Report regularly on performance, delivery of value for money and stewardship of resources. Report on compliance with good governance principles within its Annual Governance Statement, including an action plan for continued improvement. Ensure compliance with good governance principles extends to its partnership arrangements. Ensure that recommendations made by external audit are addressed. Ensure that the internal audit service has direct access to members to enable it to provide assurance with regard to governance arrangements. Welcome and positively engage with peer challenges, reviews and inspections of its services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard template for reports to decision makers designed to advance proposition logically and simply, and reduce duplication of information. Training for report writers ongoing, including expectations around use of plain English. Quarterly results reports to Executive and scrutiny covering performance, financial and risk updates. Annual Governance Statement complying with the standard set out in the Local Code of Corporate Governance. Governance arrangements in place for key strategic partnerships, such as the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board, with improvement activity underway. Recommendations made by external audit are addressed as a matter of priority through the most appropriate route. Internal audit reports its plans, progress and findings regularly to the audit committee. Agreed actions from internal audit are tracked by DMTs until completion. Council proactively seeks peer challenge, publishing findings and responses and commissioning follow-ups. There are positive relationships with statutory inspectorates and regulators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and embed compliance with the Partnerships Governance policy. (21/22 action) Action required to ensure understanding of the Equality Act and the impact assessment process, supplementing mandatory equality and inclusion training with refresher impact assessment training for key officers (20/21 action) Key Performance Indicators with targets will strengthen the Council's Strategic plan and increase transparency around the impact of actions on the achievement of aims within it. (21/22 action) Provision of an independent Technical Advisor to the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee to support challenge

Appendix 5: Corporate governance priorities for 2022/23

2020/21 AGS actions to be still delivered

Action	Lead officer	Deadline
Refreshed training approach to ensure senior officers training encompasses the full suite of corporate governance training.	Head of Human Resources and the Monitoring Officer	February 2023
Transition to OPEN, the NEPO e-procurement system that is being put in place for the North East, replacing the current contract management framework with an end to end product once fully rollout.	Head of Commissioning and Procurement	March 2023
Refresh training on the Equality Act and the impact assessment process, ensuring it is mandatory for key officers.	Head of Strategy, Information and Governance	March 2023
Complete mandatory refresher training on the officer and member protocol within Middlesbrough Council's constitution for all members and senior officers.	Monitoring Officer	March 2023
Continue to implement a scheme of sub-delegations where appropriate to further improve governance around officer delegated decisions.	Director of Legal and Governance Services	March 2023
Refresh the Joint strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for children and young people this year and complete the Adults and Older persons JSNA.	Director of Public Health with support from the Interim Head of Strategy, Information and Governance	March 2023

Actions identified within this 21/22 AGS for delivery in 2022/23

Issue	Action	Lead officer	Deadline
The 2020/21 AGS identified that while there were governance processes in place for the most part, there were control weaknesses that needed to be addressed. In particular that process identified there were concerns about Member to Member and Member to Officer relationships that needed to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The Council's External Auditors stated in its 2020/21 Value for Money judgement that the Council should 'develop a comprehensive Improvement Plan to address the cultural and relationship issues which exist within the Council as a matter of urgency. In our view it is the responsibility of all elected members and officers to work together to address these serious matters. This will require the involvement of external specialists as, in our view, the relationships within the Council have	Develop a Governance Improvement plan for noting by full Council during 2022/23 that identifies actions to improve the culture of the organisation and reflect detail of that plan within the final version of this document.	Chief Executive	Complete

Issue	Action	Lead officer	Deadline
deteriorated to a point which the Council will not be able to remedy on its own.'			
The 2020/21 Audit results report of the council's External auditors identified concern in relation to accurate declarations of interest. It stated 'Whilst we recognise that the responsibility to declare actual or potential conflicts of interest sits with members under both statute and the Council's Code of Conduct, given our observations we also recommend that management implement additional assurance checks over elected member declarations of interest, for example by cross-referencing to Companies House records or declarations made by elected members to other public bodies, to provide additional comfort over their completeness.'	The Council will undertake periodic spot checks on a risk-based basis at least three times a year of one or more Members' declarations during 2022/23 to assess whether there are ongoing compliance issues	Head of Democratic Services	March 2023
Within the 2020/21 Audit reports report External Auditors also recommended that Management should work with internal audit to ensure that where future pieces of work identify evidence of wider risks which are not immediately followed-up on, these are reported so that the Council's officers and the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee can decide whether further investigation is appropriate	Management will work with Veritau to build the highlighting of identified wider risks into the audit reporting process. The reporting of these risks will then be built into regular Internal Audit updates to Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee	Section 151 Officer	The initial action has been completed but there is ongoing monitoring this as part of our monthly liaison meetings and Veritau will be addressing this action within their regular reports to Committee.
Within the 2020/21 audit results report it was identified that the Council's procurement processes required strengthening.	Updated e-learning training guides on procurement practice will be developed along with improved links through business partner relations with service directorates. Enhanced detail will be recorded on exemption forms following approvals. Procurement will also introduce a Best Value process to facilitate a smarter	Head of Commissioning and Procurement	March 2023

Issue	Action	Lead officer	Deadline
	procurement process for lower value procurement of goods and services		
Weaknesses in relation to the Council's recording of leasehold interests was identified by the Council's External Auditors as part of its assessment of the Council's control environment.	All leasehold interests are now recorded on the TF system with quarterly reviews matched against Delegated Approvals (DA) for any changes. A revised DA notification system is currently in development and will go live by end August 2022	Head of Commissioning and Procurement	Complete
It was identified during the development of the Partnership Governance Register that there were entities that would benefit from an appropriate governance framework.	Develop and implement a governance framework for wholly or partly owned Council companies that aligns with best practice guidance.	Interim Head of Strategy, Information and Governance	March 2023
Following completion of the first register and annual assurance report, it would be prudent to assess continued impact within the next annual review.	Assess and embed compliance with the Partnerships Governance policy.	Interim Head of Strategy, Information and Governance	September 2023
Whole Council response required to ensure that it responds effectively to the cost of living crisis impact on its budget position and its ability to meet increased demand for services	Complete a refresh of the Medium Term Financial Plan position to provide assurance to the organisation that there is good financial governance in place.	Chief Executive and Section 151 officer	February 2023
There are areas for improvement within the next refresh of the Council's Strategic Plan to ensure that it is better able to differentiate between actions the Council can deliver and actions to be delivered in partnership. Strengthened measures within the plan will also enable improved assessment of impact.	Ensure Key Performance Indicators with targets are embedded within the Council's Strategic plan when next refreshed. (21/22 action)	Interim Head of Strategy, Information and Governance Strategic Delivery Manager	September 2023