



**Governance & Audit
Committee**

Tuesday 14th March 2023

Subject: Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 Action Plan Update (Areas for Improvement During 2022/23)

Report by:	Assistant Director People & Democratic Services
Contact Officer:	Emma Redwood Assistant Director People & Democratic & Monitoring Officer
Purpose / Summary:	To review the progress with the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 Action Plan

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That members seek assurance that the current position of the AGS Action Plan for 2021/22 will bring improvements to the identified areas.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: The AGS must comply with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011

(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO

Financial: FIN/172/23/SL

There are none from this report.

Staffing: There are none from this report.

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

None

Data Protection Implications: None

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: None

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations: None

Health Implications: None

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

None.

Risk Assessment: None

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Annual Governance Statement is the formal statement of the quality of the Council's governance arrangements, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.
- 1.2 In July 2022 (draft) and November 2022 (Final), the Governance and Audit Committee agreed the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 and noted the areas identified for improvement to be delivered in 2022/23.

2. Areas for Improvement

2.1 The areas identified for improvement are shown below:

- Loss of key staff – ensure that processes are fully documented, succession plans in place where appropriate, identify activities which are overly reliant on one individual
- Financial settlement – continue to update the MTFS as we gain greater certainty on the level of funding for future years
- Preparing for all out elections in May 2023 – ensure robust election planning and deliver and a full member induction plan
- New finance system – ensure it is effective and compliant
- Continue review of corporate procurement procedures (carried forward from last year). The Council historically has bought in services from Lincolnshire but due to vacant posts, Lincolnshire County Council can only provide a limited service.
- Implementation of CIPFA FM Code requirements

3 The Action Plan

- 3.1 Progress is being made across the identified areas, further detail is contained in the table below:
- 3.2 Members will receive a final closure report in July 2023, along with the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23.

Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 Action Plan – to be delivered during 2022/23

Description	Action Taken	Action to be Taken	Officer	BRAG
Loss of key staff – ensure that processes are fully documented, succession plans in place where appropriate, identify activities which are reliant on one individual	Business / service plans in place for services Business continuity plans for services Directors exploring options for increasing resilience across services Notice periods in place with handover procedures	This needs to be a continuing piece of work across the council to ensure resilience	Emma Redwood	Green
Financial settlement – continue to update the MTFS as we gain greater certainty on the level of funding for future years	The MTFS has been updated on an ongoing basis and we have built in all information known from Policy Statements into future years.	Ongoing review and savings programme launched in June 2023.	Emma Foy	Green
Preparing for all out elections in May 2023 – ensure robust election planning and deliver a full member induction plan	Elections as 14/2 VAC (Voter Authority Cards) portal now open and local process for temp VACs established. Local comms plan implemented regarding Voter ID . Briefing info to Members and Parishes. Website Updated. Polling stations booked and staff recruitment almost complete. Induction Plan Induction Timetable was approved by G And A committee in January agreeing timings and subjects to be covered as part of induction. External trainers booked where identified	Elections Nominations Packs to be made available Nominations to open and all Nominations to be published by 4 April Candidate and Agent Training Material to be made available Candidate packs to developed Continue with Comms Plan Allocate staff to positions and Train Staff. Arrangements for Postal vote opening Logistics map of ballot box, fill, collection and return prior to polling day and on day of poll Finalise Count Plan arrangement Induction Plan	Ian Knowles (Returning Officer)	Green

	Learning Pool roll-out completed in January and will support new on-line training element of 23 Induction. Member IT Offer approved and in procurement	Working with Officers and Training Providers to build the content of each session . Democratic Services to create and build the handbooks and guides which support Members and the induction period.		
New finance system – ensure it is effective and compliant	Tech One implemented. 2023-24 Budget built on Tech One budget module. Financial Statements 2022-23 successfully closed.	Dashboards to be completed for all budget managers June 2023.	Emma Foy	Green
Continue review of corporate procurement procedures (carried forward from last year).	External review of function undertaken with recommendations reported to Management Team. Procurement Lincs refining support offer and will report in time for new financial year. Assessment of officer training needs undertaken New procurement legislation due imminently	Management Team to consider refreshed offer from Procurement Lincs Officer training scheduled for Spring 2023 Procurement Lincs advising senior officers on implications of new legislation	Ady Selby	Green
Implementation of the CIPFA Financial Management code requirements	Full implementation of long term MTFS planning.	Dashboards to be completed for all budget managers June 2023 Finance training for non-budget managers (July 2023)	Emma Foy	Green