

Annual Governance Statement 2022 – 2023

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1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 Denbighshire County Council (the Council) is responsible for making sure that its business is carried out in accordance with the law and proper standards. The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018) require the Council to conduct a review on the effectiveness of its system of internal control and include an Annual Governance Statement reporting on the review with the Statement of Accounts
- 1.2 The statement has been prepared in accordance with the guidance produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) – ‘Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework’ (2016). This is to show that the Council:
- Conducts its business in accordance with relevant laws and regulations;
 - Properly accounts for and safeguards public money;
 - Uses its resources economically, efficiently and effectively to achieve agreed priorities that benefit local people.
- 1.3 The Council has adopted the ‘Core Principles’ which underpin the CIPFA / SOLACE framework to form its Corporate Governance Framework. The seven core principles are set out below:
- A. Behave with integrity
 - B. Engage with stakeholders
 - C. Define outcomes
 - D. Ensure planned outcomes are achieved
 - E. Develop capacity, capability and leadership
 - F. Manage risks and performance effectively
 - G. Demonstrate transparency and accountability

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- 1.4 The review against the CIPFA/SOLACE framework highlights if there are opportunities to improve the Council's arrangements. Where this is the case, an action plan is included to ensure that the necessary action is taken.

2 The Governance Framework

2.1 Principle A - Behaving with integrity, with commitment to ethical values, and respect for the rule of law

- 2.1.1 The Council's Constitution includes the Codes of Conduct for members and officers and demands a high standard of behaviour. Mandatory training for officers has been deployed to ensure that staff are aware of the code of conduct and other key policies. These are supported by more detailed guidance such as the Strategy for the Prevention and Detection of Fraud, Corruption and Bribery, Whistleblowing Policy, Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules. The Corporate Director – Governance & Business (Monitoring Officer) and Head of Finance & Property Services (Section 151 Officer) both have responsibilities to ensure that Council decisions meet legal requirements.

2.2 Principle B - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

- 2.2.1 The Council engages with stakeholders and partners through joint working arrangements, partnership boards and representation on external bodies' governing boards.
- 2.2.2 The resident survey has been replaced by the Stakeholder Survey to comply with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and inform the Council's Self-Assessment of performance against its functions. During November 2022 and March 2023 the council launched its

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‘Stakeholder Survey’ for the second time, to ask specific questions now required under the Act.

2.2.3 The Council publishes information on the website and all Council meetings are now webcast. Online meetings were set up during Covid-19 and due to the success of these meetings, the council has now moved to a hybrid style meeting approach.

2.2.4 Internal Communication channels involve press releases and online releases through social media channels (Facebook and Twitter) and the County Conversation portal.

2.3 Principle C - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits

2.3.1 The strategic vision for Denbighshire is set out in its Corporate Plan. The new Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027 was approved by Council in October 2022. It sets out our Well-Being Objectives (otherwise referred to as our Corporate Plan themes), and our commitments in relation to the seven governance areas, and the Public Sector Equality Duty (which includes the new Socio-Economic Duty). Many of our Corporate Plan themes build on the work started in our last Corporate Plan demonstrates our commitment to using evidence and stakeholder aspirations to plan for the long term to prevent problems from deteriorating or developing in the first place. In short, we are committed to embedding the sustainable development principle and five ways of working.

2.3.2 The council has undertaken significant work in this year to develop its new Corporate Plan Performance Management Framework, with excellent engagement and input at all levels of the organisation. Significantly, the new framework will address concerns around a lack of national benchmarking within the council’s corporate performance reporting and elevate a significant amount of service level performance data to its public reports. New

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governance arrangements for the new Corporate Plan are being established and these will involve either establishing new Boards or redefining existing arrangements.

2.3.3 Our Self-Assessment, which is due to be published online [here](#) imminently, demonstrates that during the year we have used our resources economically, efficiently, and effectively; that our governance is functioning and effective; and that our focus is on securing the best possible outcomes for our environment and communities in Denbighshire.

2.3.4 This self-assessment summarises our performance and governance across the year into some general observations about our strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. Our Self-Assessment Performance Update report for the period January to March 2023, provides a baseline position for the new Corporate Plan using our new performance management framework. It provides an overview of performance against our measures and our projects, and highlights areas needing particular attention and effort.

2.3.5 A Wellbeing Impact Assessment is completed to inform significant decisions and [an assessment was undertaken for the new Corporate Plan](#). We have been in discussions with Public Health Wales, Welsh Government and other local and national partners on the arrangements for mandatory Health Impact Assessment and we are confident our existing assessment will or can meet any new requirements.

2.4 Principle D - Determining the intervention necessary to achieve intended outcomes

2.4.1 Senior Management and Members (via Scrutiny committees and the Governance & Audit Committee), ensure the Council remains focussed on achieving its objectives and priorities. Our Chief Executive has led on a restructure of our Corporate Executive and Senior Leadership Teams (having

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appointed two new directors to key roles, and agreeing a new structure for services from April 2023). New governance arrangements to ensure effective delivery of the new Corporate Plan themes.

2.4.2 The council's Self-Assessment of Performance for 2022 to 2023 has been approved by Council in July 2023, and includes an assessment against our governance functions, as recommended by the statutory guidance for the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Quarterly Performance Reports that make up the Self-Assessment have also continued to catalogue the activity of our principle meetings (Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny, and Governance and Audit), key news items, and reports by our internal audit and external regulators.

2.4.3 Like most other councils in Wales, we know that we still need to consider arrangements to put a Peer Assessment Panel in place in the term of the current council, responding to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, 2021.

2.4.4 Service Performance Challenges were suspended this year and will resume from April 2023. These are instrumental in identifying potentially transformative actions to address deficiencies in services, to better align services with strategic and collaborative objectives, and to support services to maximise opportunities to achieve better value for money or service outcomes. Actions arising from these challenges will be reported as Improvement Actions through our quarterly self-assessment reports.

2.5 Principle E - Developing capacity, including the capability of leadership and individuals within the Council

2.5.1 Development is directed by the leadership strategy, apprenticeship schemes and an e-learning portal is used to develop staff at all levels.

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- 2.5.2 Our corporate plan was developed using the body of evidence developed by the Public Service Board. Discussion at that level - and across Boards such as the Regional Leadership Board and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board - has informed the development of our Plan.
- 2.5.3 The Council also works across a broad set of partnerships and collaborative arrangements, and uses commissioning and procurement processes to maximise capacity by delivering services in the most effective and efficient way. A partnership (Alternative Service Delivery model) toolkit continues to be in place to set out key requirements and tools for ensuring partnerships are managed effectively.
- 2.5.4 Our senior leadership restructure was consulted on and implemented at Director-level from summer 2022, with the complete senior leadership structure being implemented from April 2023. This has taken longer than expected but will result in a transformational redesign of services, whereby the council is on the 'front foot' in relation to influencing and preventing demand; better positioned to maximise opportunities; and has clearer leadership on important matters like climate change and Welsh language.
- 2.5.5 We have completed a review of our flexible working policy and guidance, and subject to approval from Cabinet, these will be implemented from June 2023 together with support for staff and managers with the new ways of working. A fresh workforce planning process will commence once the new senior leadership structure is in place later in the year.
- 2.5.6 Workforce planning has continued to grow in significance as the consequences of the pandemic and changes in work patterns and opportunities have heightened challenges in relation to recruitment and retention across the council.

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2.6 Principle F - Managing risks and performance through strong internal control and financial management

- 2.6.1 Corporate risk registers are updated as a minimum twice every year, with significant risks brought to the attention of senior management and members. A Risk Register summary was created during the year to help communicate the growing number of risks that the council faces in the current global climate. The council's risk appetite statement was also reviewed and updated. The council's previously 'minimalist' risk appetite in relation to Workforce: Terms and Conditions was relaxed very slightly to a 'cautious' risk appetite, to reflect the way we are 'flexing' recruitment processes – in a safe way – to alleviate challenges in filling roles. All other aspects of our risk appetite statement have remained the same.
- 2.6.2 This year we have seen a growing interdependency between risks (in terms of existing risks growing in likelihood or impact), and national and global issues that are beyond our control, such as the deterioration in the economy and continuing pressures in relation to recruitment and retention. We apply a "three lines of defence model" whereby for our most serious corporate risks, we use performance data, identify key and ancillary controls, and identify external and internal assurance that is in place or is planned. For example, the risk of "a serious safeguarding or practice error, where the council has responsibility, resulting in serious harm or death" was escalated during the year. Our governance has responded to this with increasing oversight by Cabinet, Performance Scrutiny and Governance and Audit; whereby the relationship between risk management, corporate planning and workforce planning have been highly connected, and will be subject to further interrogation by Internal Audit in the new financial year.
- 2.6.3 The council has drafted a revised Information Risk Policy, which it will shortly seek approval for. The requirement for services to consider Information Risk

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was part of their Service Planning for 2023 to 2024 and services are also encouraged to continually review their Service Risk Registers, which should capture any information risks that services are carrying.

2.6.4 The Council has a strong track record in financial management, delivering services within budget and timely production of the accounts in response to the early closure requirements.

2.6.5 Internal Audit assess the overall quality of risk management, governance and internal control and agree actions for improvement as necessary.

2.7 Principle G - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

2.7.1 The external assessment of Internal Audit confirms it conforms to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. External regulators provide independent assessments, notably: Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales, Estyn and Ombudsman for Wales; overall positive results with no significant issues raised.

2.7.2 The Council provides clear and accurate information, and has developed both its website and the format of Council reports to improve transparency and accessibility. The website has been updated to meet Accessibility Standards. Minutes of meetings and key decisions are published on the Council's website.

2.7.3 Council meetings are carried out online and are now also available to the public in accordance with legislative requirements.

2.8 Covid-19 Impact on Governance

2.8.1 As the impact of Covid-19 pandemic drew to a close in the first quarter of 2022/23, the impact to the Council and our residents required the council to adapt the way we deliver services to our residents as well as creation of new

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services. This has resulted in changes to governance arrangements, with council meetings moving to a hybrid set up, and prioritisation of service delivery to cope with changing demand.

2.8.2 The Council now has simultaneous translations to virtual meetings which are now able to be webcast to allow public access and increase transparency and openness.

2.8.3 As restrictions have been lifted, the Council implemented new rules to allow key employees access to work from a council office. The Council has also left shielding arrangements for employees classed as high risk. Implementing processes at speed in response to Welsh Government grants for financial support to small businesses (NNDR).

2.9 Cost of Living Crisis

2.9.1 Internal Audit during 2022/23 has worked with our Revenues and Benefits service to support the team in rolling out the following Welsh Government support grants:

- Cost of living crisis support for Denbighshire residents;
- Winter fuel scheme for Denbighshire residents; &
- Alternative fuel funding.

2.9.2 Internal Audit has provided support and assistance around setting up appropriate controls to ensure that all payments claimed are made by genuine residents and the amounts being claimed are correct.

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3 Key contributors to developing and maintaining the Governance Framework

Key Contributors	Contribution
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves the Corporate Plan • Endorses the Constitution • Approves the policy and financial frameworks
Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary decision-making body of the Council • Comprises of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet members who have responsibility for specific portfolios
Governance & Audit Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help raise the profile of internal control, risk management and financial reporting issues within the Council, as well as providing a forum for the discussion of issues raised by internal and external auditors
Standards Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards Committee promotes high standards of conduct by elected and co-opted members and monitors the operation of the Members' Code of conduct
Programme & Project Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track efficiencies, highlighting risk and mitigating actions to achievement • Consider the robustness of efficiency planning and forecasting and consider resourcing of planned delivery • Plan communication and engagement activity
Scrutiny Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and scrutinise the decisions and performance of Council, Cabinet, and Committees • Review and scrutinise the decisions and performance of other public bodies including partnerships
Licensing and Planning Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing Committee considers issues relating to taxis, entertainment, alcohol, food premises and miscellaneous licensing functions. • Planning Committee makes decisions on development control issues, including applications for planning permissions.

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Key Contributors	Contribution
Corporate Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team & Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for developing, maintaining and implementing the Council's governance, risk and control framework Contribute to the effective corporate management and governance of the Council
Internal Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal control, risk management and governance arrangements Delivers a programme of risk based audits, including counter fraud and investigation Identifies areas for improvement in the management of risk
External Audit	Audit and report on the Council's financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statement), providing an opinion on the accounts and use of resources, concluding on the arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

The Governance Framework above are now all operating as hybrid meetings with members and officers choice to either join on-line or attend the meeting in person. Meetings are now carried out online and webcast to allow the public to attend. Members and Officers have adapted to the new way of working and it ensures transparency and openness.

3.1 Review of Effectiveness

3.1.1 The effectiveness of governance arrangements is measured in several ways, and in 2020/21, the first year in which the Council has prepared group accounts, the Council has considered its relationship with its group entities, i.e. Denbighshire Leisure Limited, in conducting its review.

3.1.2 The Corporate Governance Officer's Group reviewed the Council's arrangements against the CIPFA/Solace Framework in March 2023 and confirmed that governance arrangements such as the Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations, and other corporate processes have broadly operated

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as intended during the year; there were instances of non-compliance as highlighted by Internal Audit reviews. The Corporate Governance Framework is updated to reflect the current arrangements and will continue to be updated to reflect developments.

3.2 Internal Sources of Assurance

3.2.1 Our Self-Assessment report for 2022 to 2023 went to the Governance and Audit Committee on 14 June and was approved by Council on 4 July.

3.3 Internal Audit Annual Opinion

3.3.1 One of the key assurance statements, in reviewing effectiveness, is the annual report and opinion of the Chief Internal Auditor. Internal Audit operates a flexible audit plan which enables it to refocus on changing priorities during the year. The focus of Internal Audit work in 2022/23 was to again audit areas considered to be a higher risk and the resultant changes to control processes. The Chief Internal Auditor's opinion is that the council's governance, risk management and internal control arrangements in the areas audited continue to operate satisfactorily. While the scope of assurance work was reduced due to the three investigations, recruitment, and staff sickness, reasonable assurance can be given that there have been no major weaknesses noted in relation to the internal control systems operating within the Council. Improvement in the following areas were recommended:

Internal Audit Low Assurance Reports Issued in 2022/23	Agreed actions relating to significant risks/issues
None were issued	N/A

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4.0 Chief Finance Officer Statement on Compliance with the Financial Management Code

4.1 The CIPFA Financial Management Code (CIPFA FM Code) is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist local authorities in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The CIPFA FM Code therefore sets the standards of financial management for local authorities.

4.2 The Code is based on a series of principles supported by specific standards and statements of practice which are considered necessary to provide the strong foundation to:

- Financially manage the short, medium- and long-term finances of a local authority;
- manage financial resilience to meet foreseen demands on services; and
- financially manage unexpected shocks in their financial circumstances.

Each local authority must demonstrate that the requirements of the Code are being satisfied.

4.3 As Section 151 Officer I have the Statutory Responsibility (supported by the Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members) for ensuring compliance with the FM Code. I have carried out a full assessment of Denbighshire's compliance with the FM Code, as part of the annual review of the Annual Governance Statement and I can confirm that in my opinion Denbighshire is compliant with the code in the majority of areas. However, areas of improvement have been identified, many of which are already underway, including:

- Develop Council's Project Management 'Verto' system to integrate more fully with Capital Business Plan process.
- Develop use of full-life costing in option appraisal.

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- Further develop the Budget Process to embed long term decision-making and consultation as core principles
- We will continue to lobby for multi-year indicative settlement figures from Welsh Government.
- Complete the annual review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5.0 Key indicators

5.1 The adequacy of governance arrangements can also be gauged using several key outcome indicators:

Key performance indicators	Outcomes 2022/23
Statutory reports issued by the Monitoring Officer (Section 5 - Local Government and Housing Act 1989)	None issued
Proven frauds by councillors or members of staff	None in 2022/23
Ombudsman referrals 2022/23	No complaints upheld
Internal audit reports	No low assurance reviews
Complaints about elected members	5 in 2022/23
Number of negative reports from our External Regulators	None in 2022/23

6.0 Assurances from External Regulators:

Audit Wales

6.1 The Council's external auditor, Audit Wales, provides assurance on the accuracy of the year-end Statement of Accounts and the overall adequacy of arrangements for securing and improving value for money. The draft accounts

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were signed by the Head of Finance on the 27th June; they were made available for audit as required and were open to public inspection from 15th July to 11th August.

6.2. Further to an issue regarding infrastructure assets which impacted all Welsh local authorities and would delay the audit to January 2023, two more specific issues were raised in the meantime concerning DCC's council house asset values which required a prior period adjustment. Due to the complexity involved a decision was made to delay the final audit work on the 2021-22 Statement of Accounts until Summer 2023.

6.3 Annual Audit Summary Report 2022 provided a summary of their audit work which included:

- Continuous Improvement – The Auditor General certified that the Council had met its remaining Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 duties for the financial year 2020-21, as saved by an order made under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- Assurance and risk assessment review - We reviewed the arrangements the Council has put in place to secure value for money in the use of its resources. Our work focused on the following aspects of the Council's arrangements:
 - The Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021
 - Recovery planning
 - Carbon reduction plans
 - Self-assessment arrangements

Our findings from this work will be set out in our Assurance and Risk Assessment Report.

- Springing forward review – assets and workforce - During 2021-22, we examined how councils are strengthening their ability to transform, adapt and

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maintain the delivery of services. Our work focused on the Council's strategic management of its assets and workforce. In our report we found that overall the Council is actively developing its New Ways of Working Project, which will impact on both its building assets and its workforce, integrating this activity with wider strategies, and looking further ahead will strengthen the Council's consideration of the sustainable development principle.

Local projects

- Delivering Sustained Performance Improvement - During 2021-22 we examined if the Council's performance management arrangements are robust and likely to support continuous and sustainable improvement as it rebalances from the impact of COVID-19. In our report we found that the Council's performance management arrangements are supporting the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities, with opportunities to strengthen arrangements in some areas.

7.0 Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales

7.1 The Council is subject to Statutory External Inspections from various bodies including ESTYN and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Recent work is summarised below:

- CIW have identified strengths and areas for priority improvement, and they will review the progress of these areas through their performance evaluation review meetings with the Council's heads of service and director.
- There were no Denbighshire County Council inspections in this period, but Estyn has resumed its inspection of local schools in Denbighshire, and services that are registered with CIW in Denbighshire are subject to regular review.

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8.0 Action Taken in Response to 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement

8.1 Last year’s Annual Governance Statement highlighted seven areas for improvement. The table below sets out the action taken to address these issues during 2022/23:

Improvement areas identified in 2021/22	Progress to date
<p>Review and update Officers’ code of conduct and the process for capturing and response taken to declaration of interest, gifts and hospitality.</p>	<p>This is still ongoing as the service over the last year has been involved in recruitment for two Corporate Directors, five Head of Service and have recruitment challenges within the service.</p> <p>It has been agreed at the HoS meeting in June 2023 that this would be rolled over into 2023/24.</p>
<p>Continuing budget pressures and uncertainty over funding. Also, address any actions arising from the review of the Financial Management Code</p>	<p>Welsh Government provided a one-year indicative settlement figure in 2023/24 for 2024/25. We will continue to lobby for the return of multi-year indicative settlement figures.</p> <p>We reviewed the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and will continue to review on an annual basis.</p> <p>We monitored the impact of external pressures, such as legacy impact of Covid-19 and Cost of Living crisis, on our budgets and demand for services.</p> <p>We will continue to include the un-earmarked reserves in the corporate dashboard to compliment the annual outturn projections.</p> <p>Work on the following areas are continuing and will be rolled over to 2023/24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop the Budget Process to embed long term decision-making and consultation as core principles.

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Improvement areas identified in 2021/22	Progress to date
Address contract management weaknesses highlighted by Internal Audit.	Internal audit completed two more follow-ups during the year and in November 2022, the assurance rating went from medium to high assurance as we noted a significant progress by the Procurement team. No further action required.
Implement requirements of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.	The Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services and Strategic Planning & Performance Manager have completed this task.
Workforce capacity and resilience and reliance on key positions	<p>The last two CET positions, Corporate Director – Governance & Business and Corporate Director – Economy & Environment were filled in September 2022.</p> <p>The consultation paper on the review of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) was approved in January 2023 and the five Head of Service positions will be filled by the end of July 2023.</p> <p>A review of the workforce plan has been completed by Internal audit and a medium assurance rating was provided. We confirmed that HR are working effectively through their action plan, but our review identified that certain positions are difficult to fill and therefore, we will look at a follow up in Quarter 4.</p>
Review the Whistleblowing Policy	This review has not been completed again this year due to several factors and it has been agreed to roll into the following year.
Uncertainty over future funding arrangements following EU Exit.	<p>Resources and processes put in place to ensure that the Council maximises the opportunities in relation to the new UK Funding Initiatives including the UK Levelling Up Fund, UK Community Renewal Fund and the forthcoming UK Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>Denbighshire has been successful in applying for the various funds available and we have been working with the services to ensure</p>

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Improvement areas identified in 2021/22	Progress to date
	appropriate controls around diligence checks are in place to safeguard the monies and ensure the projects are completed.

9.0 Improvement Actions Arising from 2022-23 Annual Governance Statement

9.1 Looking ahead, the following areas for improvement have been identified to be addressed in 2023/24. This takes into consideration the continued impact of the coronavirus pandemic on governance:

Improvement areas identified for 2023/24	Agreed action
Review and update Officers' code of conduct and the process for capturing and response taken to declaration of interest, gifts and hospitality.	<p>Review and update Officers' code of conduct and the process for capturing and response taken to declaration of interest, gifts and hospitality.</p> <p>Revised system to capture officer declaration of interests and gifts and hospitality.</p> <p>Strategic HR Manager by 31/03/2024</p>
Workforce capacity and resilience and reliance on key positions	<p>Recruit vacant five Head of Service positions by the end of July 2023</p> <p>Internal Audit to look at a follow up of workforce planning process.</p> <p>Chief Internal Auditor by 31/03/2023.</p> <p>New Ways of Working Project includes a work-stream developing new HR policies to support future work patterns</p>
Review the Whistleblowing Policy	Update the policy capturing lessons learned from recent concerns raised.

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Improvement areas identified for 2023/24	Agreed action
	Corporate Director – Governance & Business by 31/03/2024
Address exceptions, exemptions and variations from Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs)	This was not reviewed due to restructuring / recruitment issues. Once the service has been restructured and a manager appointed, Internal Audit will review progress report the findings to the next Governance & Audit committee.
Continuing budget pressures and uncertainty over funding. Also, address any actions arising from the review of the Financial Management Code	<p>Welsh Government provided a one-year indicative settlement figure in 2023/24 for 2024/25. We will lobby for the return of multi-year indicative settlement figures.</p> <p>We reviewed the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and will continue to review on an annual basis.</p> <p>Work on the following areas are continuing and will be rolled over to 2023/24:</p> <p>Develop the Council's Project Management system to integrate with Capital Business Plan process.</p> <p>Further develop the Budget Process to embed long term decision-making and consultation as core principles.</p>
Uncertainty over future funding arrangements following EU Exit.	<p>Denbighshire has been successful in applying for the various funds available and we have been working with the services to ensure appropriate controls around diligence checks are in place to safeguard the monies and ensure the projects are completed.</p> <p>The next stage will be to provide support to services around maintaining appropriate financial records and where required, completing an audit of the completed accounts to comply with funding regulations.</p>

The areas for improvement that we have identified will be monitored by the Governance & Audit Committee and the Corporate Governance Officers Group. This plan also includes any issues raised in last year's action plan that have not yet been fully addressed.

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Certification

We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the issues identified in our Governance Improvement Action Plan to enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Name Cllr Jason McLellan, Leader of the Council

Signed

Dated

Name Graham Boase, Chief Executive

Signed

Dated