



Annual Governance Statement

2022-2023

Basildon Borough Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Basildon Council is committed to creating a borough with inclusive communities, a high quality of life and a thriving economy, and to ensure good governance principles and management practices are adopted in all business activities to ensure public trust. These commitments are set out in the council's Corporate Plan that describes how the council will meet the challenges ahead and make the most of opportunities.

To be successful the council must have a solid foundation of good governance and sound financial management. Basildon's Local Code of Corporate Governance ensures that we are doing the right things, in the right way, in line with our values. The Local Code is supported by an Assurance Framework that sets out how and what the council will seek to obtain assurance on.

A copy of the Council's Local Code and Assurance Framework is available on our website at <http://www.basildon.gov.uk/governance>.

Each year the council is required to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which describes how its corporate governance arrangements set out in the Local Code have been working. This Statement gives assurances on compliance for the year ending 31 March 2023.

The Leader of the Council and Chief Executive both recognise the importance of having a solid foundation of good governance and sound financial management. They pledge their commitment to address the matters highlighted in this Statement, and to further enhance our governance arrangements to enable delivery of our Corporate Plan.

The Leader and Chief Executive confirm they have been advised of the implications of the review by Senior Management and the Audit & Risk Committee and are satisfied that the steps outlined in this document will ensure that our governance arrangements remain fit for the future.

Signed on behalf of Basildon Borough Council



Leader of the Council

Date: 29 June 2023



Chief Executive

Date: 29 June 2023

REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Throughout the year, the council regularly reviews the effectiveness of its governance framework to streamline and improve our processes to ensure these arrangements remain effective, now and into the future. This is informed by individual service leadership and management, corporate oversight functions (including statutory officers), internal audit, external audit, and other review agencies. In reviewing the effectiveness of the council's governance framework, the commitments detailed within Appendix A of the Local Code are assessed.

Similar and proportionate oversight and governance arrangements should also be put in place in respect of services outsourced to external suppliers, trading partnerships, shared service arrangements and arm's length bodies.

The Annual Governance Statement incorporates the continuous review of the effectiveness of our governance arrangements throughout 2022/23. It identifies those areas where we can and will do more to ensure that we have effective governance arrangements that enable the organisation to deliver on its commitment to creating a borough with inclusive communities, a high quality of life and a thriving economy.

This Statement is an objective appraisal of our governance framework and shows that we have **adequate** arrangements which continue to be regarded as fit for purpose and comply with the council's Local Code of Corporate Governance. It shows that we have met our legal and statutory obligations to our residents. While the council has good foundations in relation to its governance arrangements, the council recognises that further work is required to continue to embed and strengthen its governance culture. It also acknowledges that due to the complex and dynamic environment in which it operates, the governance arrangements will need to continually evolve to respond to changing circumstances.

Under regulations 10 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended), the council is required to publish the audited Statement of Accounts on or before 30 September for the 22/23 accounts and 30 November for 20/21 and 21/22 accounts.

At this time, the council is unable to issue an audited statement of accounts for 2020/21 together with any certificate or opinion as the audit is yet to be concluded due to resource limitations of the external audit team.

The 2020/21 statement of accounts will be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the auditors make available the report of their final findings.

The external auditors have also advised that the audit of the statement of accounts for 2021/22 is not expected to commence until September 2023 at the earliest. This will also impact the completion of the 2022/23 accounts to which this AGS relates.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The council recognises that there are areas where we wish to enhance our arrangements to ensure that we continue to do the right things, in the right way, in line with our values and to consider significant challenges we face.

The council is facing new economic challenges that could also affect its financial position such as, but not limited to, rising inflation, increased interest rates, increasing energy costs, increasing demand on services, insurance claims,

¹ There are areas for improvement, but most key controls are in place and are operating effectively. Adequate assurance can be given that the system, process, or activity should achieve its objectives.

planning appeals, appeals against housing/homeless decisions, business rates appeals, enforcement and uncertainties over central government funding.

Compliance with CIPFA Financial Management Code

CIPFA published the first edition of their 'Financial Management Code' for local authorities in October 2019. CIPFA considers that compliance with this code is mandatory for all local authorities but it is important to note that such compliance is not specifically mandated by statute.

The code is essentially a best practice guide to financial management in the local authority sector. It covers the following areas:

- The responsibilities of the chief financial officer and the leadership team (including members)
- Governance and financial management style
- Medium to long term financial management
- The annual budget
- Stakeholder engagement and business plans
- Monitoring financial performance
- External financial reporting

Officers have undertaken an assessment of the extent of compliance with the requirements of the code. In general terms the council's arrangements follow the recommended best practice.

Subsidiary Companies

The council had three subsidiary companies (Sempra Homes Ltd, Acorn House Developments (Basildon) Ltd, and Basildon Borough Enterprises Ltd) which were set up to deliver opportunities for the council, specifically relating to building and providing quality homes for local people. Acorn House Developments (Basildon) Ltd is no longer an operational company and officers are in the process of winding the company up; the company is anticipated to be dissolved in 2023/24 unless it is utilised for another purpose. BBE Ltd is a holding company and holds all the shares in the other companies.

Governance arrangements for all companies have been put in place and were recently reviewed. The council has approved and monitors the business plans. Regular update reports are submitted to appropriate Committees. All Company Directors are either Elected Members or officers of the council and have all received appropriate training.

During the year, the council's former Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO) for housing, St Georges Community Housing Ltd., was dissolved. There were no outstanding liabilities or assets and the company had been dormant for ten years before dissolution.

Statutory Assurances

Whilst a number of assurances have been obtained to support the conclusion that the council's governance arrangements are adequate, it is important that the following specific assurances are considered to support this Statement:

1. Head of Paid Service

The Head of Paid Service is responsible for the overall corporate and operational management of the council. These responsibilities have been considered within the context of this Statement and the Head of Paid Service can confirm that proper arrangements have been put in place for the overall operation and management of the council.

The Head of Paid Service has no significant concerns to report and continues to evolve the senior management structure and organisational strategy to align responsibilities and resources to deliver the councils ambitions and priorities.

2. Chief Financial, Section 151 Officer

The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the development and maintenance of the council's governance, risk, and control framework, ensuring lawfulness and financial prudence of decision making and the administration of financial affairs, in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. These responsibilities have been considered within the context of this Statement and the Chief Finance Officer can confirm that the council's arrangements conform to Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the council complies with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in Local Government (2016).

While the council has robust financial management arrangements in place it is important to note that the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) identifies resource shortfalls of £1.5 million in 2024/25, £3.5 million in 2025/26 and £3.1 million in 2026/27. The council is continuing to develop the MTFS to deliver the Corporate Plan outcomes while addressing the budget gap and reducing risk. The deficit is planned to be managed through a combination of service efficiencies, process reviews, digital and IT transformation, creating new income streams and embedding a commercial culture. These are underpinned by key corporate programmes including the organisational, waste, customer, and commercial strategies.

It should be noted that the medium-term funding for local government and consequently this authority, remains unclear given the single year financial settlement for 2023/24, with this approach expected to continue into 2024/25. Any wider local government funding review undertaken by the Government is not anticipated to take effect until after the next general election. The council continues to be exposed to significant financial risk with regard to utility costs, interest rates and high levels of wider inflationary pressure. Provision has been made to manage these as far as possible, but they remain an area of concern.

3. Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer is required to report to the council in any case where it appears that any proposal, decision, or omission by the authority has given rise to or is likely to or would give rise to any contravention of any enactment, rule of law or code of practice or maladministration or injustice in accordance with Sections 5 and 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989; (LGHA 89).

These responsibilities have been considered within the context of this statement and the Monitoring Officer has no significant concerns to report. The Monitoring Officer did formally report to the council as required, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's annual letter identifying instances of service failure/maladministration arising from complaints they had investigated.

The Monitoring Officer also has no significant concerns regarding overall Member conduct. Training sessions have been held during the course of the year for both Members of the council and the Leadership Team regarding Member/Officer relations recognising the importance of maintaining effective relationships and ensuring this key area is subject to regular review.

The Monitoring Officer also considers that the council has an effective Joint Standards Committee in place who continue to report to Full Council annually on the work they have undertaken during the year and provide council with assurance.

In July 2022, the council adopted the new Model Member Code of Conduct developed by the Local Government Association which has also been adopted by all local councils in the borough. Training has been provided and will continue to be provided annually to ensure there remains good awareness of the requirements of the Code of Conduct and lessons can be learned from experiences across the country. The council has good procedures in place for review of both Members and Officers Register of Interests and will strengthen these further having regard to the recommendations and agreed actions arising from an internal audit review. There has continued to be a relatively low number of complaints alleging a breach of the Member Code of Conduct during the past year which have all been dealt with in accordance with the Council's adopted procedures for handling such complaints.

4. Chief Audit Executive

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (PSIAS), the Head of Governance and Assurance, who is the Chief Audit Executive for the council is required to provide independent assurance and opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the councils' risk management and control framework, and through the internal audit service deliver an annual programme of risk based audit activity, including counter fraud and investigation activity and make recommendations for the improvement of the management of risk and control.

Despite delivering a reduced audit plan for 2022/23 the Chief Audit Executive is satisfied that sufficient work has been undertaken to draw a reasonable conclusion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's arrangements. Based on the work performed during 2022/23 and other sources of assurance the Chief Audit Executive is of the opinion that adequate assurance can be taken that the council's risk management, internal control, and governance processes, in operation during the year to 31 March 2023, generally accord with proper practice and are fundamentally sound, although there are opportunities to improve the arrangements to enhance the council's governance framework.




Despite the continued challenges faced by local authorities, the council has continued to respond in an agile and effective way, which reinforces Basildon's strong governance and leadership arrangements.


The council has in place a detailed improvement and development plans for the areas where we can and will do more to ensure that our arrangements remain fit for purpose. Although progress has been made regarding this, there are still a number of areas where agreed actions are yet to be fully addressed and embedded.

Full details of the assurance provided in this Statement can be found within the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2022/23, submitted to the Audit and Risk Committee on the 29 June 2023.



Under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the PSIAS, the council is required to undertake a review of the effectiveness of its Internal Audit function and to report the results in the Annual Governance Statement. An independent review was undertaken in January 2022 which has reinforced our opinion that the council has effective arrangements in place for the provision of the Internal Audit Service and is fully compliant with the PSIAS.


RATIONALE FOR 'ADEQUATE ASSURANCE' OPINION


Definition	Description
<p>Adequate</p> 	<p>There are sound policies and processes in place, which are working effectively across services that provide for good governance arrangements and support compliance with requirements of this Principle and the achievement of the councils' aims and objectives.</p> <p>There may be minor areas for continuous improvement, but these do not represent a significant or material risk to the council's overall governance framework.</p>
<p>Some development or areas for improvement</p> 	<p>Whilst there are policies and processes in place, there are some areas which remain a challenge for the council or require further improvement, which may impact the effectiveness of elements of the council's Governance Arrangements, compliance with this principle and achievement of the council's aims and objectives. The council has in place an action plan to address challenges and improvement matters.</p>
<p>Key development or many areas for improvement</p> 	<p>The council has significant challenges in relation to the policies and processes which may impact the effectiveness of elements of the council's Governance Arrangements, compliance with this principle and achievement of the council's aims and objectives. We have implemented plans for corrective actions to manage these risks.</p>


What's working well and how can we improve			
Core Principles of the Framework	Overall Assessment	Strengths	Challenges
<p>Principle A:</p> <p>Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities are set out for delivering council services and holding the council to account. There are defined roles throughout the organisation, with a clear structure from Chief Executive down, including the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Service/Managers. • The council has defined its corporate, statutory, and mandatory development areas and has up to date eLearning programmes available for staff to access. • The council has a detailed constitution covering the powers of committees, members and senior officers, statutory officers, and decision-making processes. • Legal framework (constitution, policy & procedures) that effectively sets out the rules and procedures to be followed by members and officers, including Gifts and Hospitality and Declarations of Interests. • The council's arrangements for member induction and training are appropriate to support members in effectively executing their duties and help ensure robust decision-making • The council ensures that its values are embedded within council policies and procedures, and that there 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further work is required to set out and embed the specific tasks, responsibilities and behaviours relating to the role of the manager.

What's working well and how can we improve				
Core Principles of the Framework	Overall Assessment	Strengths		Challenges
			<p>is an expectation that those who work with the council will respect these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council maintains a policy framework to ensure effective delivery of the council's objectives • Effective ethical framework built on the Seven Principles of Public Life that set out the standards of behaviour, conduct and values the council expects of its members, officers and those who work with the council. • Effective whistleblowing policies and procedures • The council has effective complaint handling procedures and processes which have been enhanced through centralising the management of cases to ensure consistency. • Procurement arrangements to demonstrate good practice, compliance with legislation, realise social value, value for money and public accountability are in place. • Company structures and governance arrangements are in place for council wholly owned companies. 	

What's working well and how can we improve			
Core Principles of the Framework	Overall Assessment	Strengths	Challenges
<p>Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council has a partnership framework to support formation and operation where partnership arrangements are considered necessary to help the Council deliver its corporate ambitions. The Council has a detailed constitution covering the powers of committees, members and senior officers, statutory officers, and decision-making processes. The council has a Consultation and Engagement Policy in place and adequately consults with its residents and stakeholders. Effectively recognises and values the diversity of our communities and workforce, supported by an Inclusion and Diversity Policy and Strategy. Webcasting of meetings and effectively recording decisions made through Committees and publish those appropriately. 	
<p>Principle C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council has developed a new performance management framework which was approved by Policy Executive and Full Council in July 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Revised Publication Local Plan (2014 – 2034) was withdrawn by Full Council at a meeting on 3 March 2022 and there is now a requirement to prepare an up to


What's working well and how can we improve					
Core Principles of the Framework	Overall Assessment	Strengths			Challenges
		economic, social, and environmental benefit			
Principle D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An approved Corporate Plan setting the priorities, values, and strategic direction of the council. The corporate plan is now subject to annual review. The council has developed a new performance management framework which was approved by Policy Executive and Full Council in July 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is planned in 2023/24 to further develop alignment of strategic planning and the budget setting process by ensuring the corporate plan and the key desired outcomes and deliverables arising from this and the budget setting process and allocation of resources are reviewed concurrently with clearer alignment. The council has a performance management framework which was approved by Policy Executive and Full Council in July 2021. Further work is required to 		

What's working well and how can we improve					
Core Principles of the Framework	Overall Assessment	Strengths			Challenges
<p>Principle E. Developing the entity's capacity including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities are set out for delivering council services and holding the council to account. There are defined roles throughout the organisation, with a clear structure from Chief Executive down, including the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Service/Managers. • The council has further strengthened its security systems and technology to support delivery of services and support members and officers in performing their roles. • The council has reviewed the approach to individual performance management to ensure consistency in holding staff to account for their performance and behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is planned in 2023/24 to further develop alignment of strategic planning and the budget setting process by ensuring the corporate plan and the key desired outcomes and deliverables arising from this and the budget setting process and allocation of resources are reviewed concurrently with clearer alignment. • The council has an Asset Management framework and a 		

What's working well and how can we improve			
Core Principles of the Framework	Overall Assessment	Strengths	Challenges
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council has an approved Workforce Strategy that ensures that the council recruits and retains staff, develops skills, and ensures those skills are deployed effectively to improve resilience across the organisation The council has an approved Organisational Strategy which ensures the organisation is fit for the future to deliver its ambitions. 	<p>positive direction of travel in terms of embedding the principles in the organisation. The council will undertake an Asset review in order that the council can consider the services it delivers and those that it may wish to deliver (and can afford to deliver) in the future to ensure that the appropriate property, staff, and finance are available to deliver that service for the period required.</p>
<p>Principle F.</p> <p>Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective system of internal audit delivered in line with the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards. Effective business continuity/emergency planning processes in place to continue to provide services and respond to an emergency or event The council has effective Risk Management arrangements in place which is working well across the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council has made significant progress to develop the building blocks for effective information governance. However, further work is required to embed these across the council. A significant amount of work has been undertaken to define the council's approach to project and

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective counter fraud and corruption arrangements and whistleblowing policies and procedures. • Effective health and safety management framework which seeks to ensure compliance with the law. • Actively promotes safeguarding to prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect. • The council has robust financial management arrangements in place however, it is important to note that the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) identifies resource shortfalls. The council's Corporate Programme outlines plans to manage this deficit through a combination of service efficiencies, process reviews, digital transformation, creating new income streams and delivery of a commercial programme. • The council has defined its approach to project and programme management. The Programme Assurance Office promotes the use of the project management toolkits and methodology as part of induction and regular engagement sessions with Directors and lead officers. • The council has a performance management framework which was approved by Policy Executive and Full Council in July 2021. 	<p>programme management. However, there is still work required to implement and embed the governance arrangements to ensure projects are being run in accordance with all necessary processes and procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has a performance management framework which was approved by Policy Executive Committee and Full Council in July 2021. Further work is required to establish a regular and rigorous system of data collection and usage to provide a comprehensive picture of the council's progress towards achieving its performance targets/goals and provide early indication of emerging issues/pressures that may require remedial action. 	
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<p>Principle G.</p> <p>Implementing good practices in transparency reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Audit & Risk Committee that provides a source of assurance and complies with guidance. • The council demonstrates its commitment to openness by producing an annual report covering the performance of the council, value for money and stewardship of resources. • Effective arrangements in place to produce the Annual Governance Statement, with Local Code of Corporate Governance and Combined Assurance Framework reviewed and updated annually. • The council's shared service arrangements are appropriately governed to ensure accountability in terms of achieving outcomes and managing risks • The council's webcasting of meetings attracts good numbers of viewers and increases public scrutiny. • The council has reviewed and updated its Publication Scheme to provide transparency in access to information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has a performance management framework which was approved by Policy Executive Committee and Full Council in July 2021. Further work is required to establish a regular and rigorous system of data collection and usage to provide a comprehensive picture of the council's progress towards achieving its performance targets/goals and provide early indication of emerging issues/pressures that may require remedial action. • At this time, the Council is unable to issue an audited statement of accounts for 2020/21 and 2021/22 together with any certificate or opinion as the audits are yet to be concluded due to resource limitations of the external audit team. 	
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PROGRESS ON ADDRESSING GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT AREAS FROM 2022/23

What we said we would do	Progress
<p>Decision Making and Evidence and Delegations of Duties - To complete the actions that have arisen from the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge</p>	<p>Following the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) in November 2021 a progress review was completed in September 2022. The peer review recognised that the environment that the council were operating in had changed since the CPC. It was clear that the council were mindful of current challenges e.g. cost of living and rising inflation as well as changes in national government. It was clear that the council had an enhanced credibility and standing within the county and sub region space. Relationships with key stakeholders had developed and dynamics had shifted at both an officer and leader level. This was a positive for the council and their role and influence.</p> <p>The council have taken on board the recommendations and findings from the Corporate Peer Challenge and recognised areas of focus and improvement.</p> <p>The narrative for the Borough was approved by Cabinet 07 July 2022. This has helped provide consistent messaging when communicating with residents, partners, and the workforce.</p> <p>The council has looked at its processes to managing change, including revitalising the Heads of Service network which now meet weekly. Quarterly facilitated Leadership Conferences have been held, focussing on values and behaviours, issues and opportunities facing the council in 2023, our plans, actions, and proposals for 2023 and how we will work together as the leadership of the council.</p> <p>The councils change from a Committee system to a Cabinet model has been a smooth transition to the new system, which comprises of a Cabinet and four scrutiny Committees based on the council's corporate plan themes People, Place, Prosperity and Fit for Purpose Organisation. Training was offered to officers and Members on the new system, working in a political environment and Member and officer relationships. The council has adopted the LGA Model Code of Conduct following a recommendation by its Joint Standards Committee in April.</p>

	<p>Both Members and officer relations have improved since the peer challenge through the change in the governance cycle and support, continued training opportunities and through a focus on shared values and improved ways of working agreed at a joint away day by Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny Chairs.</p> <p>The council has established a 'golden thread' from the Corporate Plan and the themes set out therein of people, place, prosperity, and a fit for purpose organisation through its governance arrangements including alignment of cabinet member portfolios, scrutiny committees and internal thematic boards. These arrangements, and enhanced performance management arrangements, have ensured a clear focus on the agreed key deliverables and enabled the oversight and management of resources to deliver against these.</p> <p>These actions have now been completed.</p> <p>The corporate plan is now subject to annual review. Work is planned in 2023/24 to further develop alignment of strategic planning and the budget setting process by ensuring the corporate plan and the key desired outcomes and deliverables arising from this and the budget setting process and allocation of resources are reviewed concurrently with clearer alignment. As such, this area remains a key action for 2023/24.</p>
<p>Roles and Responsibilities - To set out the requirements and behaviours relating to the role of the manager.</p>	<p>The Role of the Manager site as part of the Learning and Development Hub has been launched and Heads of Service have committed to reviewing this site on a regular basis. The site contains four key topics; Clarity, Skills, Tools, and Support, and is supported by our Management Development programme which will be aligned to the Chief Executives 3 priorities.</p> <p>Further work is required to set out the tasks, responsibilities and behaviours relating to the role of the manager. As such, this area remains a key action for 2023/24.</p>
<p>Officer Induction, Training & Development - To embed the new employee induction and training requirements</p>	<p>The new Learning and Development Hub has now been launched to staff, including all training provision, a new face to face induction programme, e-learning suite, function to request external training and a hub of resource. The site allows for staff to access available training and development in a more accessible manner. Our offer is a combination of face to face and remote learning events plus eLearning.</p> <p>Mandatory and statutory training has been defined and a scheduled program is available for staff to access with reminders on expiry. Bespoke accredited project management training has been delivered, hybrid working sessions have been delivered to support staff in new ways of working, specialist training to support managers has commenced, e.g. Investigator and Hearing training, and a bespoke management development program was launched in June 22.</p> <p>This action has now been completed.</p>



<p>Effective Information Governance - To develop an action plan to ensure effective information governance arrangements are embedded across the whole organisation.</p>	<p>Basildon Borough Council prides itself in effective leaders who are in support of ensuring compliance with Data Protection Regulations and the UK GDPR. To date, efforts continue to be placed on the importance and value of information governance across the organisation. Progress have been made in some areas such as the review of information governance documents, and a process in place for better understanding of how and when to involve the Information Governance and Data Protection team. Continual improvements are being made with embedding data protection by design and default as part of the culture. Relevant compliance and data protection documents are now being generated on time. Work is in progress to simplify the processes associated with compliance which will be communicated to IAO's in the next quarter, the IG toolkit has been produced and is currently in draft awaiting finalisation.</p> <p>Further work is required to embed these across the council, and to address areas that still need improvement. As such, this area remains a key action for 2023/24.</p>
<p>Asset Management - To continue the programme of reviews on all council assets to ensure they are compliant, sustainable, fit for purpose and support the delivery of Council services and strategic objectives</p>	<p>An asset management policy was approved by Cabinet on 5 December 2022. The Policy has two sister strategies in development to deliver the policy principles. One is the HRA Housing Asset Management Strategy that is being developed alongside the Housing Strategy. The other is the Corporate Asset Management Strategy.</p> <p>At the heart of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy is service delivery and the allocation of adequate resources to deliver services at the desired quality and quantity. Corporate aims and vision drive operational plans which support service delivery.</p> <p>The council will undertake an Asset review in order that the council can consider the services it delivers and those that it may wish to deliver (and can afford to deliver) in the future to ensure that the appropriate property, staff, and finance are available to deliver that service for the period required. A key part of the review of property assets is to ensure that a clear contribution to the vision and aims of the Council can be identified. As such, this area remains a key action for 2023/24.</p>
<p>Local Plan - To create a programme for the new plan for adoption as a new Local Development Scheme by Summer 2022.</p>	<p>A decision was taken on 3 March 2022 to withdraw the emerging local plan. On 4 March, the required notice was issued and all relevant stakeholders and relevant other parties, including the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities were notified of this decision. On 10 January 2023, the Prosperity Scrutiny Committee considered and commented on the Draft Issues and Options Consultation Document. On 5 February Cabinet considered and commented on the revised Draft Issues and Options Consultation Document and recommended to Council that it be approved for the purposes of public consultation, under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>The Issues and Options Consultation Documents will be presented to the first Full Council meeting following the May 2023 local elections. The Planning Strategy and Implementation Team continue to prepare for an Issues and Options consultation (Regulation 18) to commence in late June 2023 and to develop the Local Plan evidence base. As such, this area remains a key action for 2023/24.</p>

<p>Performance Management - To continue to embed the council's Performance Management framework across the organisation to enable us challenge underperformance, monitor delivery of the corporate programme and service plans, improve decision making and allow us to report our performance publicly.</p>	<p>Following the approval of the performance management framework by Policy Executive and Full Council in July 2021, the service has continued to be embed the framework across the organisation to enable members, senior leadership team, and managers to challenge underperformance, monitor delivery of the corporate programme and service plans, improve decision making and allow us to report our performance publicly.</p> <p>Further work is required to establish a regular and rigorous system of data collection and usage to provide a comprehensive picture of the council's progress towards achieving its performance targets/goals and provide early indication of emerging issues/pressures that may require remedial action. As such, this area remains a key action for 2023/24.</p>
<p>Programme and Project Management - To continue to embed the council's project management culture, methodologies, skills, and arrangements to ensure the project objectives are effectively met</p>	<p>Significant work has been undertaken during 2022/23 to embed project management at Basildon.</p> <p>The Programme Assurance Office provide oversight, assurance, and report on the delivery of the corporate plan deliverables to the Council's Themed Programme and Performance Boards, SLT and both Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Scrutiny Chairmen.</p> <p>Further work is required to implement and embed the governance arrangements to ensure projects are being run in accordance with all necessary processes and procedures. As such, this area remains a key action for 2022/23.</p>

DRAFT

ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS THE AMBER GOVERNANCE AREAS IDENTIFIED ABOVE AS PART OF THE 2022/23 ANNUAL REVIEW

Governance Area	Activity Description	Target Due Date	Responsible Officer
Decision Making and Evidence and Delegations of Duties	To further develop alignment of strategic planning and the budget setting process by ensuring the corporate plan and the key desired outcomes and deliverables arising from this and the budget setting process and allocation of resources are reviewed concurrently with clearer alignment	31 March 2024	Director of Strategy and Governance
Roles and Responsibilities	To set out and embed the specific tasks, responsibilities and behaviours relating to the role of the manager.	31 March 2024	Director of People and Change
Effective Information Governance	To further embed the importance and value of information governance across the organisation and to address areas that still need improvement.	31 March 2024	Director of People and Change
Asset Management	To undertake an Asset review in order that the council can consider the services it delivers and those that it may wish to deliver (and can afford to deliver) in the future to ensure that the appropriate property, staff, and finance are available to deliver that service for the period required. A key part of the review of property assets is to ensure that a clear contribution to the vision and aims of the Council can be identified, including climate ambitions.	TBC	Director of Housing and Property
Local Plan	To prepare an up to date plan to provide a positive vision for the future of the borough; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social, and environmental (Including biodiversity) priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.	31 March 2028	Director of Growth
Performance Management	To establish a regular and rigorous system of data collection and usage to provide a comprehensive picture of the council's progress towards achieving its performance targets/goals and provide early indication of emerging issues/pressures that may require remedial action.	31 March 2024	Director of Strategy and Governance
Programme and Project Management Methodology	To implement and embed the governance arrangements to ensure projects are being run in accordance with all necessary processes and procedures.	31 March 2024	Director of Strategy and Governance