RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

at the Council Offices, Farnborough on
Thursday, 23rd May, 2024 at 7.15 pm

To:

Cllr A.H. Crawford
Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Cllr A. Adeola
Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr Rhian Jones
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr M.D. Smith
Cllr Sarah Spall
Cllr P.G. Taylor
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Non-Voting Member:
Mr Tom Davies – Independent Member (Audit)

Standing Deputies:
Conservative Group: Cllr S.J. Masterson, Cllr M.J. Tennant
Labour Group: Cllr Lisa Greenway, Cllr Julie Hall
Liberal Democrat Group: Cllr T.W. Mitchell, Cllr Leola Card

Enquiries regarding this agenda should be referred to adele.taylor@rushmoor.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1. **MINUTES –** (Pages 1 - 6)

    To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th March, 2024 (copy attached).

2. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2023/24 –** (Pages 7 - 52)

    To consider the Audit Manager's Report No. AUD2404 (copy attached) which presents the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 for review and approval.

3. **INTERNAL AUDIT - AUDIT UPDATE –** (Pages 53 - 56)

    To receive the Audit Manager's Report No. AUD2405 (copy attached) which provides an update on the 2023/24 Audit Plan.

4. **APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES, LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEES AND CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP –** (Pages 57 - 74)

    (1) **Outside Bodies**

    To consider the appointment of representatives to outside bodies. A list of those bodies on which the Council is represented, which includes details of proposed nominations for 2024/25 is attached.

    (2) **Appointments and Appeals Panels –**

    To confirm that the Corporate Manager - Democracy is authorised to make appointments to Appointments and Appeals Panels in accordance with the membership criteria set out in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in the Constitution.

    (3) **Licensing Sub-Committee**

    To confirm the Members of the Licensing Sub-Committee for the 2024/25 Municipal Year on the basis of five Members (Proposed: 3 Lab: 2 representatives of other groups).

    (4) **Licensing Sub-Committee (Alcohol and Entertainments)**

    To confirm that the Corporate Manager - Democracy is authorised to make appointments from the membership of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee in accordance with the procedure agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 21st May, 2009 and detailed in the Licensing Sub-Committee (Alcohol and Entertainments) Hearings Protocol and Procedure.

    (5) **Licensing Sub-Committee (Taxis)**

    To confirm that the Corporate Manager – Democracy is authorised to make appointments from the membership of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee in accordance with the procedure agreed by the Committee at

its meeting on 27th June 2021 and detailed in the Licensing Sub-Committee (Taxis) Hearings Protocol and Procedure.

(6) **Constitution Working Group** –

To appoint a cross-party Constitution Working Group for 2024/25. The appointments to be made on the basis of six Members including two Cabinet Members, the Chairman of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee, and representatives of other groups.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

Members of the public may ask to speak at the meeting on any of the items on the agenda by writing to the Committee Administrator at the Council Offices, Farnborough by 5.00 pm two working days prior to the meeting.

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CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Wednesday, 20th March, 2024 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr P.J. Cullum (Chairman)
Cllr S. Trussler (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr D.E. Clifford
Cllr Christine Guinness
Cllr Nadia Martin
Cllr Sarah Spall
Cllr Jacqui Vosper
Cllr Gareth Williams

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr A.H. Gani and Cllr Nem Thapa.

Cllr S.J. Masterson attended the meeting as a Standing Deputy.

Non-Voting Member

Mr Tom Davies (ex officio)

38. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st January 2024 were agreed and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

39. **RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS 2023/24**

The Committee received the Assistant Chief Executive's Report No. ACE2402, which provided an update on the ongoing development and maintenance of the Council's risk management process over 2023/24.

It was noted that, as in previous years, 2023/24 had continued to be a period of significant uncertainty across a broad range of economic, social and political matters. The wider financial implications for the Council had been a focus in recent times, with mitigation plans adapting to meet the ongoing challenges presented. The Council, however, continued to embed risk management within the organisation successfully and the Risk Management Policy and arrangements continued to be reviewed and developed in order to remain effective, and to provide continual improvement. An updated draft was expected to be published in Quarter 1/2 of the 2024/25 Municipal Year, this would incorporate improvements in the way that the Council carried out its annual strategic analysis, determined its risk appetite and

would more closely link the risk management process with the Council Plan and performance management arrangements. It was also noted that further work was planned to investigate how the Council could establish an effective high level risk appetite policy (or policies), in addition to risk appetite being determined on a risk-by-risk basis.

It was noted that, as set out in the Risk Management Policy, reports on risk had been presented to the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) on a quarterly basis and presented to the Cabinet, alongside the quarterly performance report. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also considered performance and risk as part of their work plan.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Incorporate into the Committee's Work Plan quarterly reporting on the Risk Management Process.	The Lead Officer, Assistant Chief Executive and Committee Administrator	May 2024

RESOLVED: That the Assistant Chief Executive's Report No. ACE2402 be noted.

40. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND NON-TREASURY INVESTMENT OPERATIONS 2023-24**

The Committee considered the Executive Head of Finance Report No. FIN2404 which set out the activities of the Treasury Management Strategy and Non-Treasury Investment Operations as at 31st December, 2023 and reported on compliance with Prudential Indicators. These were a statutory requirement under the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

The Committee noted that total borrowing, to fund pervious and current years' capital programmes, on 31st December 2023 had been £162 million, which was a £42 million increase from 31st March 2023.

It was advised that the Council invested surplus cash as part of its day-to-day cash flow management. Investment was made in Money Market Funds, which had a same day maturity and Pooled Funds that had no defined maturity date, but were available for withdrawal after a notice period of a week (with the exception of CCLA funds which had a notice period of six months). It was noted that £21.9m of the Council's investments were held in externally managed strategic pooled funds spread across equity, multi-asset, bond and property funds. The value of the pooled fund portfolio had decreased to £19.28m as reported at the end of Quarter 2 (September 2023), this had since improved to £19.49m an increase on value of £212,000 since March 2023.

The Committee discussed the report and asked questions around the impact of a 1% increase in interest rates, affordable borrowing limits and choices around where funds are invested. The timetable for the disposal of assets was also discussed and

it was noted that the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee would consider the process and timescales as required.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Head of Finance Report No. FIN2404 be noted.

41. **ACCOUNTING POLICIES FOR THE YEAR**

The Committee considered the Executive Head of Finance's Report No. FIN2403 which reviewed the proposed accounting policies to be applied for the closure of the 2023/24 accounts and provided an update regarding the 2024/25 accounts. These were prepared in line with Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK.

The report stated the changes to the accounting policies and informed members of additional/amended disclosures and the level of internal materiality to be applied in the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2023/24.

It was also noted that an approved set of accounting policies enabled the Finance team to complete the Annual Statement of Accounts with considered rules and assumptions and provided clarity to the readers of the Accounts as to how they have been prepared.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Head of Finance Report No. FIN2403 be noted.

42. **ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS/EXTERNAL AUDIT OPTIONS**

The Committee received a verbal report on the current position concerning the Annual Statement of Accounts/External Audit Options.

The Committee were apprised of the current national picture, which evidenced that over 900 sets of accounts remained unaudited, an average of three years of accounts per council. Unaudited accounts for Rushmoor included 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. An agreement had been made between the Government, Financial Reporting Council, CIPFA and the National Audit Office, with formal legislation due in June 2024 which would state that all local authorities, in agreement with their auditors, should sign off their outstanding accounts with a disclaimer highlighting the national audit issues.

An agreement had been made with the Council's auditors, Ernst Young, to sign off the outstanding accounts by 30 September, 2024 and to complete the external audit opinion of the 2023/24 accounts by December 2024.

During discussions, it was advised that local authorities had been consulted on the proposed process for dealing with the outstanding accounts.

In response to a query regarding the delay in finalising the 2019/20 accounts, due to issues around asset values, it was advised that since a point of agreement was achieved with the auditors, the starting point for any future audits was clearer.

The report was NOTED and the approach ENDORSED.

43. **INTERNAL AUDIT - AUDIT UPDATE ON 2023/24**

The Committee received the Audit Manager's Report No. AUD2402 which provided a progress update on the 2023/24 Audit Plan.

The Committee were advised of an update to the table at 3.2 of the report where the figures had changed since publication to, six draft reports and four in progress. It was noted that all audits were on track to be completed during 2023/24.

A query was made on data relating to raised invoices, and it was advised that the system had been updated and the issue was now resolved. A query regarding Temple Lifts was also made and enquiries would be made and reported back to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Audit Manager's Report No. AUD2402 be noted.

44. **OUTSTANDING AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee received a verbal update on outstanding audit recommendations from the Executive Head of Finance.

It was advised that the majority of the outstanding recommendations were low level and the few high level ones had been looked at by the Corporate Management Team and themes identified. It was noted that there were around 30 outstanding audits over a three year period, the majority of which were from the 2022/23 financial year.

In response to a query it was advised that there was a risk and the position was recorded on the Risk Register. In addition, consideration was being given to advancing the financial system (Integra) to allow for a great ability to challenge data across the organisation on a more regular basis.

The Report was NOTED.

45. **INTERNAL AUDIT - AUDIT PLAN 2024/25**

The Committee received the Audit Manager's Report No. AUD2403 which sets out the Annual Audit Plan for 2024/25. The Audit Plan was produced annually to provide a framework for the use of Audit resources and to ensure that resources were focused on activities that would enable the Audit Manager to provide the Council with an overall assurance level on the Council's governance, risk management and internal control (GRC) environment.

The Committee were advised that the delivery of the internal audit plan for 2024/25 would be carried out by contract auditors, with all work being signed off by the Audit Manager. It was noted that the use of external auditors resulted in a cost saving.

RESOLVED: That the Audit Manager's Report No. AUD2403 be noted.

46. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

It was noted that an informal session had been held before the meeting to provide an overview on the Annual Governance Statement. A number of actions had been noted during the informal discussion for consideration going forward and the establishment of an informal Working Group would be considered in the new Municipal Year.

The meeting closed at 8.24 pm.

CLLR P.J. CULLUM (CHAIRMAN)

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CORPORATE GOVERNANCE   **AUDIT MANAGER**
AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE   **REPORT NO. AUD 24/04**

23RD MAY 2024

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ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT – 2023/24

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SUMMARY:
The purpose of this report is to present the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 for review and approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Members are requested to approve the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2023/24.

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1   Introduction

1.1   In July 2017 the Council adopted a revised Code of Corporate Governance prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/ SOLACE framework document entitled 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016 Edition)'.

1.2   Regulation 6(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, provides that each financial year the Council must:

         a) Conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control; and

         b) Prepare an annual governance statement.

1.3   The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) should be reviewed and approved by this Committee prior to being signed by the Chief Executive and the Leader. The statement will then be published alongside the Statement of Accounts.

2   What is the Annual Governance Statement

2.1   The Council is required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to prepare and publish an AGS, in order to report publicly on the extent to which we comply with our own Local Code of Corporate Governance, including how we have monitored the effectiveness of our arrangements in the year and on any planned changes to our governance arrangements in the coming year.

2.2   The Committee provides essential support for the approval of the AGS and for ensuring that good governance is embedded throughout the Council's activities.

3   Methodology for compiling the AGS

3.1   The existing governance arrangements against the CIPFA/ SOLACE: 'Delivering good governance in Local Government framework – 2016 Edition' have been reviewed.

3.2   Assurance statements were obtained from Heads of Service to demonstrate how governance arrangements within their service meet the CIPFA/SOLACE framework for good governance.

3.3   Furthermore, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the Corporate Governance Group (CGG) has reviewed the AGS to ensure all governance arrangements have been reflected within the statement.

3.4   Actions to improve the governance arrangements are detailed within the AGS. Work undertaken towards implementing these actions will be regularly reviewed by the CGG and updates on the progress will be reported to this Committee.

3.5   The AGS for 2023/24 is contained within Appendix A of this report and the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance is contained within Appendix B.

4.   Requirements of the Committee

4.1   To ensure a meaningful review of the AGS, this Committee should draw on its knowledge of the governance arrangements established and how they have operated during the course of the year, including:

- Reviewing the Local Code of Corporate Governance which is contained within Appendix B of this report;
- Ensure that the AGS is underpinned by a framework of assurance, which has been set out within the AGS;
- Assurances provided by Internal Audit throughout the course of the year for the application of governance arrangements in practice and the monitoring of recommendations to improve governance arrangements; and
- Consider how the Council applies governance principles in practice based on other agenda items reviewed by the Committee throughout the year.

4.2   The Committee needs to be satisfied that the AGS contained in appendix A properly reflects the governance environment and any actions required to

improve it and demonstrates how governance supports the achievement of the Council's objectives.

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References: CIPFA/ SOLACE framework: Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016 Edition)

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Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

Introduction and scope of responsibility

Rushmoor Borough Council (RBC) has approved and adopted a local code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the seven core principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) Framework 'Delivering good governance in Local Government'. A copy of RBC's adopted Code is on the Council's website: (Local Code of Corporate Governance) RBC updates it's code annually and evidence is collated and assessment for compliance by the Corporate Governance Group (CCG) and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2023/24 states how the Council has complied with the Code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, regulation 6 (1b), and as amended by the Accounts and Audit (coronavirus) (Amendment) regulations 2020, which requires all relevant authorities to prepare an Annual Governance Statement. It is subject to detailed review by the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee (CGAS Committee) and approval in advance of them agreeing the Statement of Accounts, into which the AGS is referred.

RBC is responsible for ensuring its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, which include arrangements for the management of risk, whist facilitating the effective exercise of its functions.

The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which the authority is directed and controlled. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate and cost-effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that 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 system of internal control is based on an on-going process, designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risks being realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
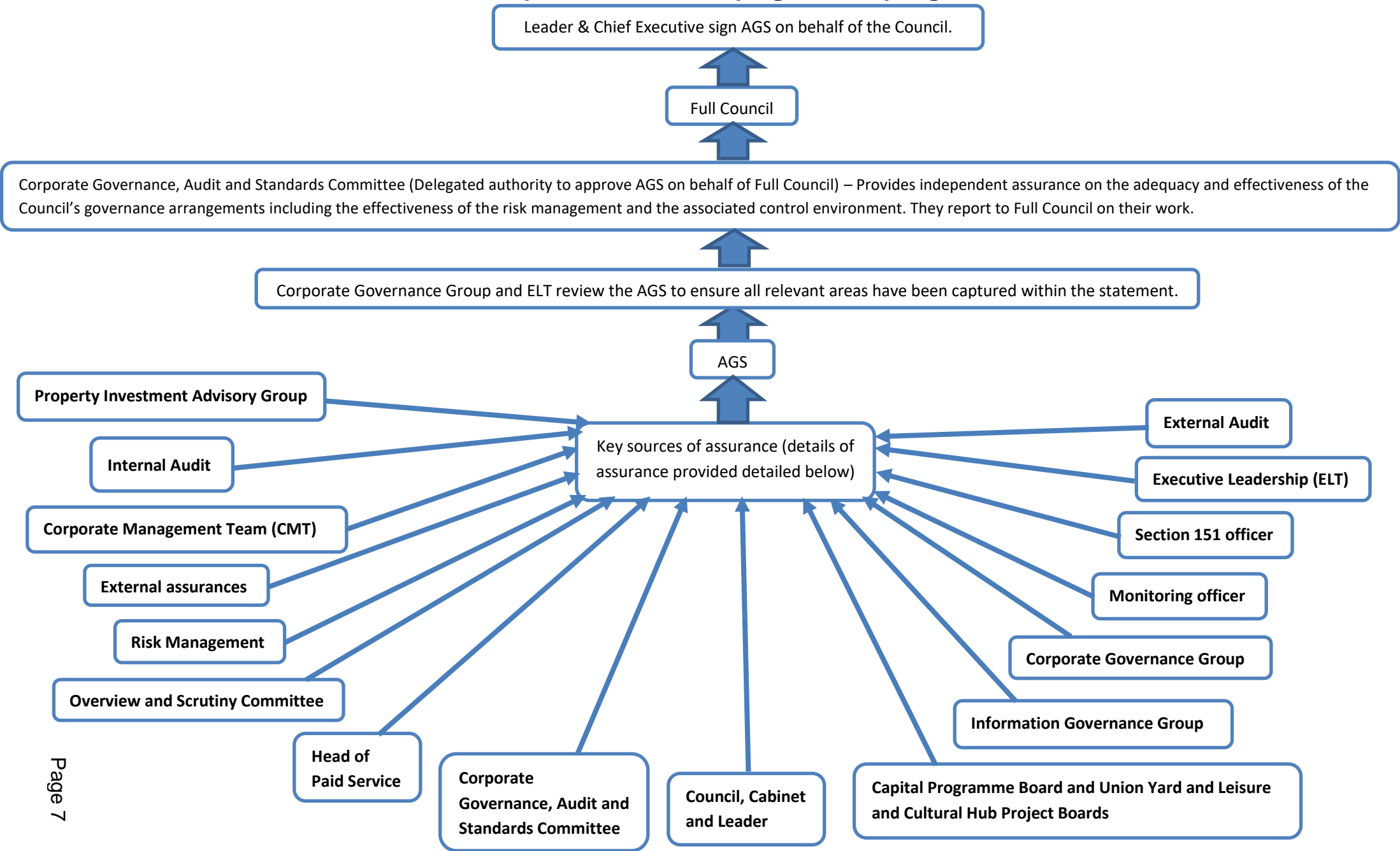
What is the Annual Governance Statement (AGS)?

The Council is required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to prepare and publish an AGS, to report publicly on the extent to which we comply with our own local Code of Corporate Governance including how we have monitored the effectiveness of our arrangements in year and on any planned changes to our governance arrangements in the coming year. In this document the Council:

- acknowledges its responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance;
- summarises the key elements of the governance framework and the roles of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;
- describes how the Council has monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the year, and on any planned changes in the coming period;
- provides details of how the Council has responded to any issue(s) identified in last year's governance statement; and
- reports on any key governance matters identified from this review and provides a commitment to addressing them.

The Council's Governance Assurance Framework, which underpins the AGS, has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2023 and up to the date of approval of the AGS and Statement of Accounts.

The Council's process for developing and adopting the AGS

Leader & Chief Executive sign AGS on behalf of the Council.

Full Council

Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee (Delegated authority to approve AGS on behalf of Full Council) – Provides independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements including the effectiveness of the risk management and the associated control environment. They report to Full Council on their work.

Corporate Governance Group and ELT review the AGS to ensure all relevant areas have been captured within the statement.

AGS

Key sources of assurance (details of assurance provided detailed below)

Property Investment Advisory Group

Internal Audit

Corporate Management Team (CMT)

External assurances

Risk Management

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Head of Paid Service

Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee

Council, Cabinet and Leader

Capital Programme Board and Union Yard and Leisure and Cultural Hub Project Boards

Information Governance Group

Corporate Governance Group

Monitoring officer

Section 151 officer

Executive Leadership (ELT)

External Audit

Corporate Governance

Council, Cabinet and Leader	• Adopting and making substantive changes to the constitution • Approving or adopting the annual budget • Agreeing and/or amending the Terms of Reference for Committees, deciding on their composition and appointing.
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	• Pre and post decisions made are subject to scrutiny/ call in for review by the Committee.
Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee (CGAS)	• Provides independent assurance to the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance arrangements, risk management framework and internal control environment. • Promotes high standards of Member conduct. • Approves the Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement. • Independent Member
Risk Management	• The corporate risk register is regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure appropriate mitigation is in place. • Service risk registers are regularly maintained and updated which are fed into the corporate risk register. • Regular updates on risk management and the risk environment is provided to CGAS.
Corporate Governance Group (CGG)	• Officers with statutory roles within the Council e.g., the Monitoring officer and Section 151 officer, review and provide assurance over the governance arrangements within the Council including any constitutional changes or issues.
External assurances	• Assurances are obtained from external bodies e.g. compliance with PSN. • Peer reviews • Engagement with LGA and encourage reviews
Information Governance Group (IGG)	• IGG develops and maintains an information governance framework for effective management of information. • Authority to decide/recommend operational matters around all aspects of information governance and reports to CGG. • Oversight of the Council's Cyber Security treatment plan.
Capital Programme Board	• Review of governance and risk management over major projects, for example Civic Quarter and Union Yard.

Corporate Governance		
Head of Paid Services	• The Chief Executive carries the responsibility for the proper management of RBC and for ensuring that the principles of good governance are reflected in sound management arrangements. • Leads the Council's Management team in driving forward the Council's Strategic objectives.	
Monitoring Officer	• Ensures compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations. • Monitors ethical standards. • Reports actual or potential breaches of the law.	
Section 151 Officer	• Develops a medium term financial strategy that is aligned with strategic priorities. • Safeguards public money • Promotes and deliver good financial management.	
Executive Leadership Team (ELT)	• Implements the policy and budgetary framework set by the Council and provides advice to Committees and the Council on the development of future policy and budgetary issues and oversees the implementation of Council policy. • Influences a corporate culture and fostering a culture of high ethical standards and integrity. • Identifies and addresses cross cutting and strategic issues that may impact on the Council's control environment and risk.	
Corporate Management Team (CMT)	• Responsible for developing, maintaining and implementing the Council's governance, risk and control framework. Including maintaining service risk registers. • Contribute to the effective corporate management and governance of the Council. • Provide assurance statements for the governance arrangements within their services which inform the Local Code of Corporate Governance and the AGS. • Performance Management	
External Audit	• Audit/ review 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, efficency and effectiveness in the use of resources (the value for money conclusion).	
Internal Audit	• Provides independent assurance and annual opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and control framework. • Delivers an annual programme or risk-based audit activity. • Makes recommendations for improvements in the management of the Council's risk, governance and control environment.	
Property Investment Advisory Group	• Oversees the Council's commercial property.	

Key Governance Changes

Financial

Following an update to the MTFS the Council was aware it was facing a difficult financial situation going into 24/25. While the Council was able to set a balanced budget with the use of reserves for 23/24 there is a £19.152 million deficit over the MTFS term and without significant mitigation in 24/25 the Council will not be able to set a balanced budget in 25/26. A Financial Resilience Plan was developed to address the challenge. To achieve this the budget will require the implementation of cost reduction, efficiency savings and capital receipts to reduce capital costs whilst drawing down reserves.

The development of the Financial Resilience Plan, management and delivery of the short-term savings will require additional capacity from a range of specialisms and experienced professionals to compliment the current officer capacity. It is vital the Council does not lose sight of its core purpose delivering services in business as usual.

The Outcomes Based Budget work which commenced in 2022/23 to address the Council's funding gap is continuing to be implemented.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) was engaged in Quarter 4 as a critical friend to support the Council by providing constructive challenge, advice, and insight, as appropriate, through a financial resilience review with the formal report due in May 2024. The review focused on 5 key areas:

- Financial Management/Sustainability: An assessment of the Council's financial management and management of risk, financial pressures, deliverability of savings plans and efficiency in delivering services.
- Commercial Assets/Debt: An assessment of the Council's assets and investments including dependence on commercial income, debt costs and other risks.
- Capital Programme/RHL: An assessment of the Council's capital programme and management of related risks including arrangements with the wholly owned RHL and recommendations on how the Council could use the proposed new flexibilities to address its financial challenges.
- Governance: An assessment of the Council's governance/management processes, leadership, operational culture, whether it has the appropriate governance procedures in place, and the capability and capacity to make any necessary transformation.
- An Improvement Plan: Recommendations to provide the Council with tangible actions to guide design, and implementation of an Improvement plan to address identified risks and issues. Assist in the development the improvement plan.

Political changes and developments in Member briefing and engagement

There have been various political changes during 2023/24 including:

- A reduction in the size of the conservative majority
- The Leader of the Council stepped down and a new Leader was appointed
- Changes to the portfolio structure and portfolio holders
- An additional Member joined the Cabinet

Due to the changes in 23/24, it was recognised that there was less experience across Cabinet Members which resulted in increased briefings being needed. In addition to this, training has been carried out for Members across various topics to strengthen the quality of decision making.

Significant Cross party working was undertaken during 23/24 including on the leisure and cultural hub, Union Yard and the crematorium refurbishment project. All Member briefings have also been carried out and written updates provided to ensure consistent communications to all Members.

The Elections Act 2022 introduced changes to the UK electoral system which impacted the Council's delivery of elections, including the following:

- Voters now need to show photo ID at polling stations.
- Voters can apply online to vote by post and proxy and must prove their identity.
- Voters cannot hand in more than five postal ballots to the Council.
- People cannot act as a proxy for more than two voters (or four if this includes two who live overseas).
- Overseas voters can now register to vote no matter how long they have lived outside the UK.
- There are increased accessibility requirements for polling stations.

Staffing

Due to the financial issues the Council is facing the senior management team was restructured and reduced in the year. Since the Executive Head of Finance/ S151 Officer left in 2022 the Council has had two interims. In September 2023 a permanent Executive Head of Finance/ S151 Officer was appointed providing more consistency in this statutory role for the Council. A dedicated Head of Regeneration and Development was also appointed reflecting the Council's regeneration priorities. The overall workforce size has reduced from 271 (243 FTE) in 2022 to 247 (220 FTE).

The recruitment environment continued to prove challenging for some services needing to recruit to vacant posts, particularly for professionally qualified roles in property and legal services. This in turn has an impact on the delivery of some services and projects.

Joint working has been carried out with service managers and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) aimed at developing various leadership skills and awareness, including political awareness, and deeper consideration of decision-making processes.

Following the hybrid working introduced during covid the different model of working with reduced physical customer access via walk in but improved access through appointments, telephone and digital channels has continued to work effectively and governance processes have also continued to work as part of the new model.

External Audit

The government has proposed that all outstanding external audit of accounts prior to 23/24 would remain unaudited and published on the website with a national disclaimer explaining the situation. The next audit of accounts will be carried out in the Autumn of 2024.

External environment/ stakeholder engagement

Strategic relationships have been developed to acquire knowledge and enable influence including:

- DCN Chief Executive Group,
- Chair the SE Asylum Disposal Accommodation Board with Home Office colleagues,
- the County Chief Executive's Group
- Peer challenge visits
- With the NHS, Hampshire Public Health and other health providers including Frimley Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership.

It has been recognised that whilst majority of partnerships are working well with external stakeholders engagement with Hampshire County Council is not as effective as it has been in the past with particular pressures relating to HCC's budget reductions. Despite this a joint regeneration and growth partnership is to be considered and council officers work hard to maintain critical relationships with key officers across the County Council.

Union Yard has been one of the Council's biggest projects with increased risks involved given the rapid changes to the external financial conditions. The project delivery has remained on track and the scheme will open as planned in 2024. The economic environment does mean that other planned regeneration activities and projects will need to be carefully considered during 24/25.

The Corporate Governance Group has reviewed the seven characteristics from the Governance Risk and Resilience framework from the Centre for governance and scrutiny to assist with identifying any areas of improvement for governance across the Council. This is currently being compiled for review by ELT.
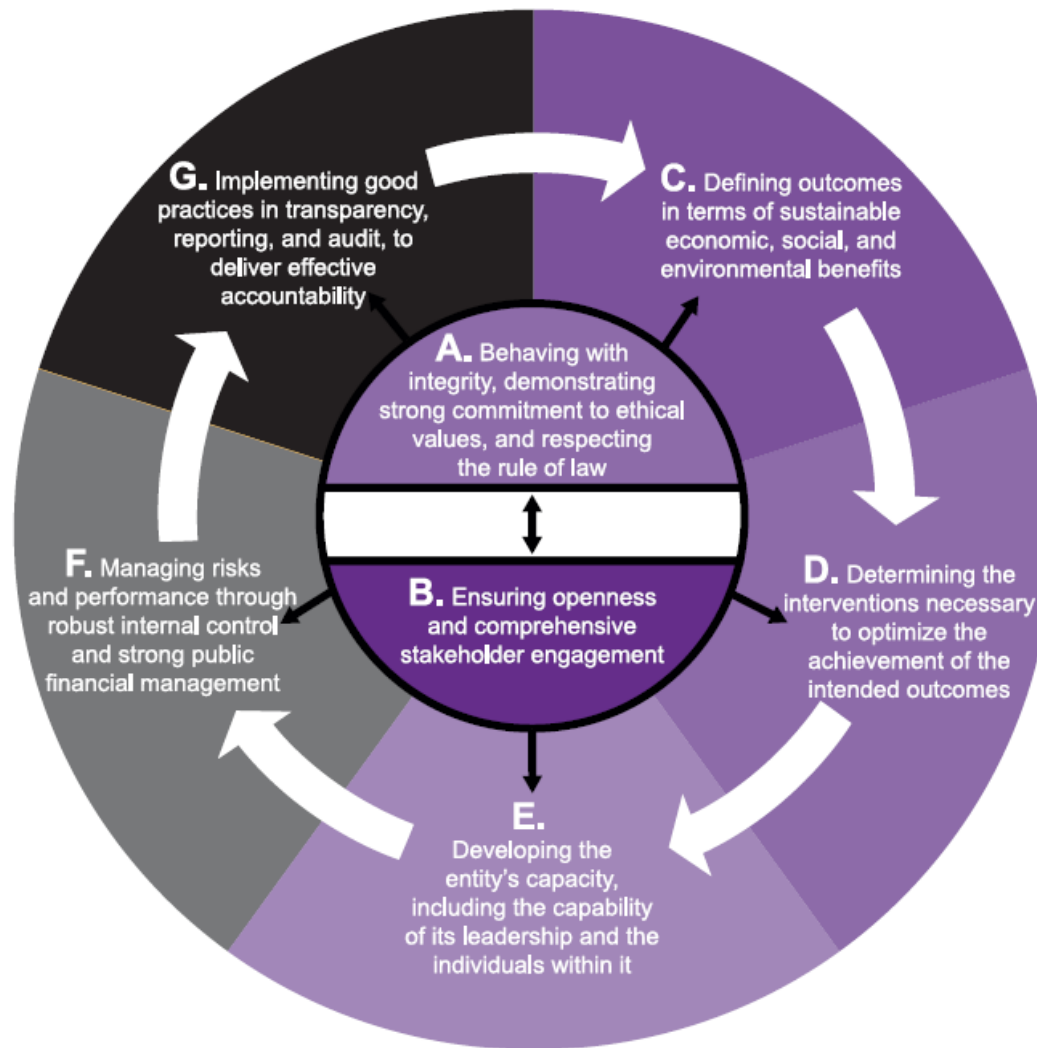
How does the Council monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its governance arrangements?

The Council reviews the effectiveness of its governance arrangements annually. The key sources of assurance that informs this review are:
- The work of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee (CGAS), Members and Senior Officers of the Council who have responsibility for good governance, as set out above in the diagram showing the overview of the Council's corporate governance framework.
- A statement of assurance is obtained from Heads of Service to confirm the governance arrangements in place within their service and any actions to be included within the AGS.
- Risk management reports and the corporate risk register is maintained and scrutinised by Corporate Management Team (CMT) quarterly and subsequently communicated to CGAS, the Corporate Governance Group and Cabinet.
- The Audit Manager's update reports on the internal audit activity, which provides an independent assurance that Governance, Risk management and internal Control is in place and provides an opinion on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
- Half yearly updates to the CGAS Committee monitoring the work carried out towards the governance actions identified in the previous year's AGS.
- Any comments made by External Audit or other external reviews.
- Internal Corporate Governance Group provides assurance over the governance arrangements within the Council.

What are the key elements of RBC's Governance Framework?

The Council aims to achieve good standards of governance by adhering to the seven core principles, detailed below, which form the basis of the Council's code of Corporate Governance:

A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits

D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimize the achievement of the intended outcomes

E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit, to deliver effective accountability

The following pages provide a summary of actions and behaviours taken by the Council in relation to each of these seven core principles and associated sub principles.

Sub principles	Demonstrated by
Behaving with integrity	• A code of conduct is in place for both Councillors and staff, both are contained within the Council's constitution. The codes outline the ethical standards and behaviours to be adopted and observed by elected Members and officers to ensure that Council business is conducted with fairness and integrity. In addition to this the Council has a protocol for Member/Officer relations. There are processes in place to ensure that Members and Officers are adequately trained in matters relating to the Constitution. • A Member Constitution review group is in place to assist and review the Constitution as and when required. • The Council also has in place various policies, procedures and guidance including HR policies, Anti-fraud, Acceptable Use of IT, Declarations of Interest, and Gifts and Hospitality. All colleagues are made aware of any new policies or changes and training is provided as necessary and the Council has commenced a programme to ensure policies are reviewed on an annual basis. • Specific legal and regulatory requirements and/or Standards and Codes of Practice are maintained by staff for Membership of relevant professional bodies, including continuing professional development. • Where necessary the Council collaborates with other professionals for advice and guidance. For example, the Council appointed external professional advice from solicitors to support the legal work around property and construction for regeneration of Aldershot and Farnborough town centre. • Records of Executive Decision to evidence delegated authority are maintained. • A register of Member interests is published on the Council's website to ensure that any conflicts of interests are open and transparent. Furthermore, these are reviewed by the Corporate Governance Group on an ad hoc basis. • The Corporate Management Team has responsibility to ensure that decisions are made properly and that these are monitored by the Governance Group and Deputy Monitoring Officers. • Financial reports are reported to relevant committees.
Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values	• The Council has established a Governance Group, which includes the Monitoring Officer, Deputy Monitoring Officers, the Chief Financial Officer, the Assistant Chief Executive, IT Service Delivery Manager, the Information Governance Officer and the Audit Manager, to ensure that the Council works within its rules and that the necessary governance provisions are followed, and associated guidance, advice and training is provided. • The Council has adopted a Corporate Values and Behaviours Framework which sets out the attitudes and behaviours expected from staff. The four corporate values are Collaborate, Innovate, Brave and Integrity. • Procurement processes are currently being reviewed to be made more robust to ensure high quality suppliers are selected and value for money is obtained. • The Member Development Group maintains a programme for Member training and development and the Council has secured the Charter for Member Development, managed by South East Employers. Re-accreditation was achieved in March 2020. Furthermore, specific training has been provided by South East Employers to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on effective scrutiny.

	• Training has been provided to the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards (CGAS) Committee to strengthen their focus. In addition to this an independent member has been appointed with an audit background to provide further support to the Committee and scrutiny of the Council's governance arrangements.
	• Member training is provided for Members to support them in their roles, and they are encouraged to attend training including on good data management and information governance. Various training topics are provided to assist with a higher quality decision making.
	• A Champion for Equality and Diversity has been appointed for Cabinet and Equality & Diversity Action Plan has been put in place as an outcome from the peer review work.
Respecting the rule of law	• The Constitution sets out responsibilities within the Council. This is maintained by the Corporate Manager – Democracy together with the Governance Group, to ensure that the Council's legal requirements are met, and the provisions are up to date. The last major review of the Constitution was carried out in 2019/20, and since then the Constitution has been updated on a regular basis as documents are reviewed and kept up to date. The Corporate Manager – Democracy maintains a schedule of updates made to the Constitution. During 2022/23 a Constitution Working Group considered a number of proposals for change to ensure that the Constitution continues to facilitate council business. On the recommendation of the CGAS Committee, the Council approved these changes and the adoption of a revised and updated Constitution in February 2023.
	• The Council has appointed the following officers as required:
	- **The Head of Paid Service** (Chief Executive) – Overall accountability for the governance arrangements operating within the Council
	- **The Monitoring Officer** – Ensures decisions taken are within the law and the Council complies with the provisions of its Constitution.
	- **The Chief Financial Officer** – Principal finance adviser to the Council and is responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs and financial control environment.
	• The Council's in-house legal service identifies and advises the Council on key elements of the law and their application. External legal advice is sought where necessary, for example, on specialist areas of law and high value matters.
	• The Council has commenced a programme to ensure compliance with all the mandatory publication requirements of the Local Government Transparency code. The Corporate Management Team own the elements of the code which are specific to their services while the Corporate Governance group have oversight.
	• The Corporate Health and Safety team collate breaches and liaise with appropriate partner organisations and authorities e.g. HSE
	• The Council is compliant with the governments Public Services Network (PSN) and the Council is working towards completing the implementation of a Cyber Security treatment plan in line with the 10 steps guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), with work to enhance ransomware defences, backup solutions, cloud delivery, identity management, business continuity and incident management for cyber security.
	• The Council has in place a specific Data Protection Officer and breaches are reported to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) as appropriate.
	• Successful Health and Safety prosecution in the public interest.

Sub principles	Demonstrated by
Openness	- The Council's policies and governance framework are published on the Council's website – this includes: - The Constitution - Agenda and reports for all meetings within the Council's decision-making framework - Cabinet work programme - Annual budget - Pay Policy and Gender Pay Gap Statements - Record of Executive Decisions - Information required under the Transparency Code - Annual Statement of Accounts - The Council's 3-year business plan is published on the council's website along with the monitoring of the actions towards the plan. - The Council regularly carry out consultations on major policy initiatives which is conducted in an open way with all consultations available on the Council's website. - Equality position statement reinforces how we will publish information to demonstrate compliance with the equality duty. - The Council has an up-to-date Freedom of Information Act 2000 publication scheme in place on its website with links to information and guidance for stakeholders. - The Council publishes the Arena magazine, to inform the community of the work and services carried out by the Council. - Contracts are managed with a partnership approach and decisions are made in an open and transparent way, including open book accounting processes.
Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	- The Council engages with institutional stakeholders on key aspects, for example the Council engaged with the Citizens Advice (CA) who produced a report on the cost of living in Rushmoor. - The Council regularly engages with other public services to a line our outcomes. - Regular informal consultation is undertaken with representatives of all public sector partners that have a presence or footprint within the Borough's area. - A statement of community involvement is published on the Council's website. - Formal and informal consultation is carried out with Members through a range of working groups. - As part of delivering regeneration projects and better use of assets there are regular interactions with organisations such as Homes England, Hampshire County Council, Enterprise M3 LEP, Defence Estates and major local landowners and appropriate services within the Council.

	- The Council adopted the Local Plan 2014-2032 on the 21 February 2019, which involved participation from numerous stakeholders. Details are published on the Council's website. - A relationship management approach and system is in place. We now have an audit trail on contacts and have increased our levels of engagement through visits, meetings and working through partners. As part of the development of the Strategic Economic Framework strategic engagement to inform the framework was completed. - The Council supports the Prospect Estate Big Local (PEBL) - Re-negotiation of contracts based on open-book reviews for example on the Council's waste contract, which has regular involvement from the Portfolio Holder, the Cabinet and other elected members.
Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively	- The Council has invested in a range of traditional, digital, and social media channels to enable regular contact, engagement, and consultation with its key stakeholder groups, including customer feedback surveys, workshops, consultation items on the Council's website and regular citizen consultation on both Borough-wide and place specific issues. There has been extensive consultation for the regeneration function including direct mailshots, public exhibitions, group meetings and presentations. - The new Council's website has been launched, which was informed by resident engagement and feedback on the old website. - We have effective arrangements in place to communicate and consult with relevant key stakeholders where appropriate and to fully consider/ use their feedback and/or complaints to help inform decisions. Furthermore, following a Peer Review the Council has established a process for undertaking regular citizen consultation on both Borough-wide and place specific issues. - The Council has actively engaged with the local community in the development of major regeneration projects across Aldershot (Union Yard) and Farnborough (Civic Quarter) via the Rushmoor Development Partnership through digital channels and drop-in sessions as part of the planning pre-application process. - Working with Ukrainian refugees who have arrived in the Borough since March 2022 to shape the offer of the Council to support the Homes for Ukraine scheme. - Business engagement – the council seeks to engage directly with local businesses to ensure that there is an understanding of local business needs. Underpinned by the aims and objectives of the council's Strategic Economic Framework, this engagement includes bi-annual business surveys, quarterly business forums with businesses and membership of/ regular engagement with, business representative organisations such as the Federation of Small Businesses and Hampshire Chambers of Commerce. A monthly business newsletter has also been developed to engage with local businesses and to provide a consultation mechanism. - Through the development of the Rushmoor Cultural Strategy and in its enabling role in seeking to increase arts and cultural engagement in Rushmoor, the council also engages with arts organisations, creative practitioners and artists directly. This has included consultation on the Rushmoor Cultural Strategy itself. - The Council has facilitated a cost of living workshop with key partners to understand the level of impact on residents, and identify where we can support and collectively make the biggest difference.

	- The Community & Partnerships team have visited several warm hubs and food banks across the borough to talk to local people and organisers and see where can provide further support. In addition, we have shared cost of living information/where to get help on the website and provided leaflets and other information at local GP surgeries, libraries, and job centres.
	- The Cost of living continues to be a regular agenda item for the Supporting Communities working group.
	- Examples of consultation exercises carried out during 2023/24 included:

	- Cove green recreation ground playground
	    - Aldershot and Farnborough markets consultation
	    - Residents' survey
	    - Tennis Courts in Rushmoor Park consultation
	    - Polling districts and polling places review
	    - Council Tax support scheme for 2024/25
	    - Community safety survey

	- A scheme is in place within the Council's Constitution to have public participation at Member meeting. Therefore, meetings of the Council and its Committees are open to members of the public to attend, with agendas and minutes being publicly available on the Council's website.
	- Principle Committee meetings are webcasted to engage with stakeholders via different mediums. Full Council is the only meeting which is not webcasted.

Sub principles	Demonstrated by
Defining outcomes	- The Council's plan has been developed with a 10 year 'vision' and a 3-year rolling business plan with objectives to assist with the achievement of the vision. The plan is shown on the council's website along with the monitoring of the actions towards the plan, which is updated and published on a quarterly basis. The results of the Residents Survey 2021 were considered as part of the 'evidence base' for the Council Plan 2022-25. A Regeneration & Major Projects Programme is established and aligns to the Council Plan. - The Council plan draws upon key strategic documents which underpin the Council's work. The key strategies and plans are monitored, and performance reported to Cabinet on a half yearly basis. The key strategies and plans include: - Climate change action plan 2020-2030 - Supporting communities strategy and action plan - Equality, diversity and inclusion action plan - The local plan - Strategic economic framework - Joint municipal waste strategy - Procurement strategy - The People Strategy - Green infrastructure strategy - Farnborough Town Centre strategy - Strategies and plans currently in development include: - Communications and Engagement strategy - Cultural Strategy The following strategies and plans have been developed since the last AGS: - Car Parking Strategy - Customer, Digital & Technology strategy - UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan - Aldershot Town Centre Strategy - Housing and Homelessness Strategy - To realise the delivery of the Council's priorities in line with the Council Plan the Council has developed a People Strategy which encourages the development of all our staff, ensuring that people are developed to realise their potential, that people are engaged and feel valued and supported, as well as the Council being an employer of choice. Underpinning these four themes are a number of outcomes which in turn leads to actions. These actions are reviewed and discussed every sixth months with the Transformation, Task and Finish Group. An example of these actions includes the development and launch of the Council's Values and Behaviours, a Service Manager Leadership Programme, supporting 13 apprentices to

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	gain qualifications, encouraging regular feedback with the Engage 24/7 survey, launching a Menopause Framework for staff and encouraging more flexible working arrangements for staff as well as holding a Staff Showcase. - Following comprehensive resident and stakeholder consultation, the Council developed its priorities and measures of success with Members in a range of ways including discussions with individual portfolio holders, the Cabinet and the Policy and Project Advisory Board. - To ensure a balanced budget for the 23/24 financial year the Outcomes Based Budgeting (OBB) approach was adopted. Governance was established to monitor the savings and reported regularly to the Corporate Management Team and Budget Strategy Working Group. In addition, section reporting on a risk-based approach was included in the quarterly financial monitoring report to Cabinet. - Governance arrangements have been clearly set out for Rushmoor Homes Limited (RHL). There is proper management of Board reporting and relationship with Council. o Service business plans are maintained and linked to the corporate plan to define the key areas for the service to deliver on within the year.
Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	• A template is in place for the Council's reports to Cabinet which require the consideration of business, Strategic, Economic, Legal, Financial and Equalities impact of the decisions being made and how decisions are to be made. All reports requiring executive decisions (except those exempt) are accessible via the Council's website. (Records of Executive Decisions) • A PESTLE analysis was carried out in order to contribute to the 10-year Council vision and rolling 3-year plan. This looks at how external moves will impact on the Council's plans and objectives. The Council's Policy and Performance team monitors place and organisational data to support the work. • Service and Project risk registers are regularly updated. Where necessary service level risks are submitted for inclusion on the Corporate Risk Register. Discussion of the corporate risks, including new risks identified are discussed quarterly at CMT. Services update their risk registers monthly via the central record for risk registers. • The Council has adopted and implemented the Local Plan 2014-2032 (adopted 21 February 2019). Details are published on the Council's website. Consultation was undertaken, and a proactive role was undertaken to engage as many residents and stakeholders as possible. Feedback from the consultation informed the submission of the Local Plan. Social, environmental and economic evidence was obtained to inform the development of the Local plan. The Local Plan is the basis together with the National Planning Policy Framework and associated guidance of all development decisions and therefore all decisions are informed by the consultation and evidence at a strategic level and assessed as to how they meet these requirements based on the specific application. • In July 2023, members of the council's Cabinet approved a new Climate change plan and agreed to the council's Carbon footprint being published and monitored. • The Rushmoor Development Partnership is currently working with the Council to finalise the legal agreements required before the planning permission for the Civic Quarter Scheme can be issued. The company is not currently working on a live development

	project. The Council is looking at a range of options to move the Civic Quarter project forward, one of which includes the RDP. Currently, the approved scheme is not fully viable due to the infrastructure costs including those associated with the proposed highway works. The Council is discussing the situation with Homes England with the hope of securing infrastructure funding that would enable to project to proceed.

Sub principles	Demonstrated by
Determining interventions	• Arrangements are in place to ensure all options are considered before decisions are taken and service changes implemented. External / independent expertise is often used if the decision is of a complex technical nature. An example of this being the use of external experts for the Council's Union Yard Regeneration Project. • The Overview & Scrutiny Committee considers the effective delivery of Council priorities and recommends interventions and remedies as appropriate. • Consideration of alternative courses of action for all decision making is undertaken. • The Corporate Governance Group consider legal/constitutional issues associated with decision making.
Planning interventions	• At service level, priorities and objectives are encouraged to be SMART and these are underpinned by plans and, for major projects, there is significant emphasis on effective project management. The Council is investing in additional project management resources to ensure this. • The Corporate Manager -Legal Services is engaged in wider discussions with client teams on options for resourcing larger legal projects and higher profile actions to ensure these are resourced as efficiently as possible e.g., making use of the EM Lawshare framework discounted rates; considering alternatives to prosecution; considering the terms of a Public Space Protection Order; resourcing and managing external legal support for the regeneration projects.

Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	• Arrangements are in place to monitor operational and financial plans, priorities, KPI's, quality and targets and to report on progress, e.g. quarterly monitoring, budget monitoring.
	
	• The Council has several key partnerships with other local authorities and stakeholders in order to optimise the achievement of the Council's corporate plan.
	
	• The Council has in place more significant arrangements for project development, both internally and through the Member decision making structure. This has been achieved through the revised Member structure to include the following:
	  - Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards (CGAS) Committee, with specific roles to ensure effective governance
	
	  - The Property Investment Advisory Group (PIAG) provides early consideration of projects prior to submission to the Cabinet. This group is supported by LSHIM who provide market-based assessments of acquisition, disposal, and asset performance.
	
	  - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is undertaking both pre- and post-decision scrutiny on a range of issues and projects. Examples of work undertaken by the Committee during 23/24 include:
	    ▪ Public tennis courts

		- The Regeneration and Major Projects Programme Board provides the oversight and key input into the delivery of projects and meets 6-weekly. Each project within the defined programme has an established resource structure across a number of disciplines within the Council to ensure the right course of action is taken.
		- The Rushmoor Development Partnership Board meets bi-monthly (every two months) to provide oversight and scrutiny of the projects being taken forward by the Joint Venture. The partnership is well governed by a partnership agreement, project plans and a decision-making structure culminating in a board made up of 50:50 public: private directors with reports to the Executive Director that are taken to Cabinet/Full Council as required.

Sub principles	Demonstrated by
Developing the entity's capacity	• The Council, where possible, collaborates with other authorities to share information and best practice and third parties, e.g. Hampshire & Isle of Wight Chief Executive group and subsequent groups. • CMT actively carry out reviews of their services and plans during the year. • The Council regularly makes use of 'benchmarking' exercises and other research to support corporate priorities and work. • The People strategy includes four themes which encourages the development of Council staff, ensuring that people are developed to realise their potential, that people are engaged and feel valued and supported, as well as the Council being an employer of choice. • The People team are currently carrying out work on 'succession planning' across the Council. • The Council engages external consultants when additional resources or specialist resources are required to ensure the effective delivery of its services or projects. • The Council regularly supports the attendance of both executive and non-executive councillors at the LGA leadership essential courses and weekend events across a number of topic areas including finance, climate change and equalities. • The Council had shadow cabinet roles in 2023/24.
Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals	• Arrangements are in place to ensure staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis e.g., CPD through attendance at seminars/conferences, mandatory training courses via the Council's E-learning modules etc. • Development reviews are carried out annually. Within these reviews, training needs are identified and communicated to HR in order to ensure individuals are provided with the training they require for their role and identify any Council wide training which may be required. • The Council has engaged in 'learning at work week' encouraging all staff to participate. • The Council has adopted a Corporate Values and Behaviours Framework, which sets out the attitudes and behaviours expected from staff. The four corporate values are Collaborate, Innovate, Brave and Integrity. • The Council is providing leadership programmes and apprenticeship leadership programmes to support the continued professional development of staff. For example, Wavelength and Frimley Health programmes. The Service Manager Leadership programme together with the senior team 360's, 121 coaching and development day are examples of leadership development, knowledge sharing whilst also strengthening collaboration. The annual development reviews and regular one to ones enable the Council to identify development and succession planning opportunities. The Council actively encourages the recruitment of apprentices and as well as promoting apprenticeship programmes to managers and staff. The Council is supporting 11 members of staff to gain apprenticeship qualifications. • Due to the Council working more commercially across services and the regeneration programme and other capital projects a wider range of skills was required which impacted on the required need from senior leaders and service managers. Therefore, the senior leadership team

was reviewed. The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) was broadened to provide a renewed focus on the Council's priorities at an Executive level and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) was broadened to include existing managers to contribute to the leadership of the organisation and improve the diversity of input to corporate decision making.

- The Council has introduced an Employee Assistance Programme to support health and wellbeing. Training courses are also offered for example a recent mental health awareness course through the Council's Occupational Health provider. Wellbeing weeks have also been introduced encouraging staff to participate, which have included a lunch time walk, a Menopause seminar and a choir session.

- Yammer has been introduced to encourage staff communication, promote Council initiatives, knowledge sharing and staff activities and information.

- The Council's constitution defines the statutory and distinctive roles of the Leader and other Councillors and sets out to whom decision making powers are delegated.

- The Member Development Group maintains a programme for Member training and development and the Council has secured the Charter for Member Development, managed by South East Employers. Re-accreditation was achieved in March 2020. Furthermore, specific training has been provided by South East Employers to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on effective scrutiny. Various training topics have been provided to Members throughout the year to strengthen the quality of decision making for Members.

- The Council has a Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee to provide a focus on all matters around corporate governance. The Committee has an independent member to assist with their roles and responsibilities as Members of CGAS.

- The Council subscribes to relevant professional bodies e.g., CIPFA publications

Sub principles	Demonstrated by
Managing risk	• Work will continue to ensure the risk management process is further embedded within the Council. Cabinet receives quarterly reports covering both performance and risk. Heads of Service update their relevant service risk registers monthly and record these on a central database. Any service risks which are appropriate for the corporate risk register are escalated to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) for further review and consideration. Bi-monthly the risk registers are reviewed by CMT. • Where risks materialise the risk register is updated or processes to respond to the risk are updated following lessons learnt. • Furthermore, risks are more specifically considered within activities and decision-making reports taken to Cabinet. • The Council takes into account risks that could impact on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, using scenario planning to understand potential impacts. The Council maintains a General Fund balance to £2m, together with a number of reserves to manage financial risk. • Service and Project risk registers are managed and updated regularly. Risk registers for all major capital projects are presented as part of the Regeneration, Property and Major Works Board. • Internal Audit provides a risk-based audit plan and reports on the effectiveness of risk management to the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards (CGAS) Committee. • In recent years pressure has been placed on the County Council, and some of this pressure has flowed through to Districts. This poses some risks at a social level and within the budgets for the Council. • An exercise was carried out in September 2022 to test the Council's Emergency response plan. The findings found that overall, the exercise was well managed, some recommendations were made to further enhance the response plan. The plan will be updated to reflect the recommendations made. A workshop was also carried out in October 2022 to review the Council's business continuity plan. • IT Disaster Recover business continuity service/ plans have been reviewed and updated – the work was linked to the DLUHC cyber security treatment plan 2021/22 – 2022/23. • A new Cyber Security Stance was presented to the Corporate Management Team (Oct 2021), setting out the threat of cybercrime, the councils technology stance, work plans and mitigations. In addition, all staff attended a specific 'phishing' training and awareness session. IT follows End User Device (EUD) guidance issued by National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) when implementing security solutions and endpoint operating systems. Council IT infrastructure is audited annually, and results passed to NCSC for review and further guidance on actions to take to maintain compliance (including annual PSN assessment). Recently the Council has been awarded funding from the DLUHC to improve its Cyber Security arrangements. A new cyber security programme has been established. The Cyber Incident Response Plan has been developed, tested and updated within 2023/24. Priorities within this area include a review of the Councils supply chain, security policy refresh, further cyber awareness training, cloud strategy development and assessment of the governments new cyber assessment framework.
Managing performance	• Effective performance, financial and risk management arrangements are an integral part of all business activities, examples include: – Option appraisals/ risk assessment – Day to day business / performance / service business planning arrangements/ quarterly reporting – Projects and programme management

Page 28	- Contractual and third-party arrangements (including shared risks) - Business continuity plans are in place, tested and communicated to staff as necessary • The Council's management ensures day-to-day performance management is normal as part of the culture and through the Council's management teams there is a culture of robust challenge in place for all key decisions. • The creation and publication of the Council's 3-year business plan for 2022-25. The plan is published on the council's website along with the monitoring of the actions. • The Council has in place an Overview and Scrutiny Committee to encourage debate on policies, objectives and outcomes before, during and after decisions are made. They also review the quarterly monitoring of the Council plan.
Robust internal control	• All Rushmoor staff are responsible to some degree in the management of risk and adherence to internal controls in their day-to-day activities, from front line staff to Heads of Service (HoS), Executive Directors and the Chief Executive. Employees consider what might go wrong and take steps to reduce the likelihood or impact if it does by the use of internal controls. • Internal Audit provides an annual opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and internal control environment. This assurance is obtained from involvement with relevant governance, risk management and internal review groups and outcomes from audit reviews carried out within the year. Details of these reviews and the annual opinion are reported to ELT and the CGAS Committee. • The Council, through the Audit investigate potential fraud, corruption and maladministration and provide effective counter fraud arrangements within the Council. • The Council carries out relevant external compliance checks e.g., Fire, safety checks etc.
Managing data	• Effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data with other bodies, including processes to safeguard personal data in line with GDPR requirements. • An information Governance Officer is in place and work is currently underway to update the Council's Information Security policies. • Effective arrangements are in place for the disposal, storage of legacy IT equipment. All hard disk-based systems are erased to HMG Infosec Standard 5 prior to disposal using accredited partners. IT equipment is stored in a locked storeroom when not in use\awaiting disposal. • Information governance and data security e-learning modules are mandatory for all staff and Members on how to manage Council data. • Data breach logs are in place to record and enable review of breaches to ensure lessons are learnt and relevant action taken to prevent further breaches. • Data validation is an ongoing process and there are a number of year-end validation processes carried out particularly around the financial systems. • The Finance Manager (deputy S151 officer) is member of Information Governance Group. • The Executive Director is the Council's SIRO.
Strong public financial management	• There are effective mechanisms in place for financial planning, budgetary control and reporting, including the management of financial risk. • External Audit review and report on the Council's financial statements providing an opinion on the accounts. • The Council is developing its programme to ensure compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.

Sub principles	Demonstrated by
Implementing good practice in transparency	• Agendas and minutes of Committee meetings are publicly available on the Council's website. • An Overview and Scrutiny Committee is in place to monitor and review performance, review and/or scrutinise decisions proposed to be made, review policy and strategy with a view to securing continuous improvement. • The Council has commenced a programme to ensure compliance with all the mandatory publication requirements of the code. The Corporate Management Team own the elements of the code which are specific to their services while the Corporate Governance group have oversight. • On the Council's website there is a Freedom of Information Act page to enable members of the public to have access to all recorded information held by the Council. • Committee meetings, where possible, are open to the public for contribution and attendance. • Decisions are recorded and published on the Council's website. • The Council seeks peer reviews in line with the risk framework and implements recommendations made to strengthen the Governance, Risk and control environment. A peer review is due to be carried out in the next financial year.
Implementing good practices in reporting	• The Annual Statement of Accounts is published on the Council's website to give clear information on the income and expenditure of the Council. • The Council publishes an Annual Governance Statement in order to report how we have monitored the effectiveness of our governance arrangements in the year and any planned changes in the coming year. • The CGAS Committee reviews and approves the Annual Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement. • Performance is reported quarterly on a range of indicators, comparing some items with other Local Authorities and public sector bodies. A new performance management framework has been established for use by both Members and Officers. Performance progress is regularly reported on and communicated at Cabinet on a quarterly basis. • Reporting arrangements for RDP/Housing Company have been put in place. Regular update seminar through the Policy and Projects Advisory Board. Formal monitoring reports are provided every six months to the Council's shareholder and the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will enable consideration of these reports by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress and the CGAS Committee on any governance matters.
Assurance and effective accountability	• The terms of reference and working arrangements of the CGAS Committee focus on ensuring transparency and effective audit of processes. Furthermore, an independent member has been appointed with specialist skills in audit to assist with the CGAS Committee. • There are arrangements in place for ensuring all agreed actions from peer reviews, internal audit, external audit, or other inspectorate work are implemented by Management. Work continues towards implement the actions from the peer review. • Risk based internal auditing provides ongoing assurance that the key risks are being managed.

How has the Council addressed the governance improvement actions from 2022/23 AGS?

The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 contained the following key improvement actions. Updates have been provided throughout the year to the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee. Details of the latest update, on actions previously not reported as completed at the September Committee, are detailed below. Where actions are ongoing these will be carried forward into the 2024/25 action plan.

Governance Issue	Action	Current status
Office 365 governance set-up *(Information Governance Officer and IT Services Delivery Manager)*	The main aim of this to ensure that the Council's data is protected, retained and handled appropriately. When Office365 was implemented across RBC governance policies were not developed and applied which needs rectifying. Currently engaging with Silversands to provision a set of activities for a Data Protection Pilot to help focus on how to control sharing of a sample data set stored in Office365, assisting in the definition of internal policies providing technical advice and design of technical controls to implement agreed policies. In addition to provision a set of activities for an Information Governance Pilot that will help to focus on retention requirements for a sample data set from the pilot department which will assist in the development of a corporate retention policy and to map this policy to technical controls available in Office365. Outcomes of these pilots can then be assessed and applied across the rest of RBC, if agreed.	Data Protection pilot with People Team completed in 2023. The outcomes of the pilot have been fully assessed and the item was discussed at CMT in April 2024, with the aim of taking the Office 365 and a data protection wider project forward. The project will need to be carefully resourced and managed and consideration to capacity and/or external assistance. **COMPLETED**
Ensuring comprehensive compliance around cyber security in line with the guidelines provided	Enhancing our Cyber security Strategy and formalisation of a cyber security action plan. This is being actioned by the Cyber Security Treatment Plan.	This continues to progress. This will remain an ongoing task as cyber security and guidelines are continually being updated.

by the National Cyber Security Centre. *(Head of IT)*		Mitigations in place are robust and it remains as a high risk on the corporate risk register where the situation is regularly appraised. Therefore, this has now formulated into business as usual. **COMPLETED**
External Audit to complete work and sign off 2020/21 and 2021/22 accounts. (Executive Head of Finance and S151 Officer)	The Interim Executive Head of Finance will ensure that the necessary information is provided to the external auditors to enable them to finalise their opinion for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 accounts.	The government has proposed that all outstanding external audit of accounts prior to 23/24 would remain unaudited and published on the website with a national disclaimer explaining the situation. The next audit of accounts will be carried out in the Autumn of 2024. **COMPLETED**
Lack of robustness for the response to FOI requests resulting in the ICO judging against the Council due to lack of prompt response rather than the actual decision made not to provide certain information.	Check if automated processes can be introduced and alerts to Service Managers/Heads of Service to avoid missing statutory deadlines. Review the current system for logging FOIs and check whether it can be more robust (assuming no additional budget for 2023/2024)	The initial scoping of work has been completed with the full work programme of moving to MS lists later in the year (September 2024 onwards). **PROGRESSING**
Ensure that all mandatory and statutory training for Elected Members and all staff is undertaken in a timely manner and regularly reviewed to ensure that it is maintained and up to date.	Elected Member induction training programmes will be provided during the first year of a new Member's office to ensure all basic induction training is undertaken and specific training is tailored according to the Members designated roles and identified needs. Established Members needs will be assessed will be reviewed and provided as required. Staff annual mandatory training will be facilitated by the People Team who will record completion rates and report to CMT. Any further compliance actions required will be the responsibility of CMT members to address.	Mandatory Induction Training for Councillors took place during May 2023 and September 2023 with core essential training delivered as a priority early in the civic year. This is in addition to a range of seminars and other learning and development activities that councillors have participated in during 2023/24. Mandatory staff training completion rates are reported to CMT. **COMPLETED**

Governance issues identified for action in 2024/25

The review of the effectiveness of the Council's governance framework has identified the following actions that will need to be addressed during 2024/25, excluding the actions carried forward from 2022/23 as detailed above. The progress against these actions will be reviewed by the Corporate Governance Group and regularly reported to the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee.

Governance Issue	Action	Target date	Lead Officer
Changes to political control	Following the changes in political control in May there are likely to be shifts in priorities which may require existing governance arrangements to be reviewed. This will be taken forward by the ELT supported by the governance group.	September 2024	ELT
	Existing arrangements will have new appointments and training and briefing will be required for new appointees to be able to undertake governance roles effectively	As soon as practicable in new Civic year	MO/ELT
Governance actions arising from the CIPFA review.	The governance actions which transpire from the CIPFA review will be actioned accordingly.	TBC when actions from the report agreed	ELT
CIPFA Financial Management Code	A self-assessment against the CIPFA Financial Management Code will be carried out.	September 2024	Peter Vickers, Executive Head of Finance & S151 Officer
	The actions resulting from the self-assessment will be carried out to ensure compliance with the code.	September 2025	
Seven characteristics of good governance review	A self-assessment against the seven characteristics of good governance has been carried out by the Corporate Governance Group. Actions arising from this review will be taken forward to improve any governance gaps.	TBC when actions agreed	Corporate Governance Group

Certification

To the best of our knowledge, the governance arrangements, as defined above and within the Council's Code of Corporate Governance, have been effectively operating during the year with the exception of those areas highlighted on page 28 above. We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters identified above to further 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 during the year and as part of our next annual review.

Signed:

_____

Gareth Williams
Leader of the Council

_____

Paul Shackley
Chief Executive

Date: xxx 2024

xxx 2024

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Local Code of Corporate Governance

Introduction

Rushmoor Borough Council recognises the importance of effective corporate governance so that local communities can place trust in the way that the Council undertakes and carries out its duties. This document sets out the Council's commitment to corporate governance and identifies the arrangements to ensure its effective implementation and application in all aspects of the Council's work.

What is Corporate Governance?

Rushmoor Borough Council has accepted the definition of Governance as stated within the CIPFA/ SOLACE Framework,

> *'Governance comprises the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.*
>
> *To deliver good governance in the public sector, both governing bodies and individuals working for public sector entities must try to achieve their entities objectives while acting in the public interest at all times.*
>
> *Acting in the public interest implies primary consideration of the benefits for society which should result in positive outcomes for service users and other stakeholders'.*

Core Principles

Rushmoor Borough Council is committed to applying the seven core principles of good governance set out in the CIPFA/ SOLACE framework, which are:

A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.

B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.

D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.

E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.

F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.

G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit, to deliver effective accountability.

This code identifies the actions and behaviours taken by the Council in relation to each of these core principles and associated sub principles. The details are set out in Appendix A and the relevant evidence is detailed within Appendix B.

2

Local Code of Corporate Governance

April 2024

Appendix A

<table>
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Principle A
Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

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Local government organisations are accountable not only for how much they spend, but also for how they use the resources under their stewardship. This includes accountability for outputs, both positive and negative and for the outcomes they have achieved. In addition, they have an overarching responsibility to serve the public interest in adhering to the requirements of legislation and government policies. IT is essential that, as a whole, they can demonstrate the appropriateness of all their actions across all activities and have mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and to respect the rule of law.

Sub Principles	Council actions and behaviours
Behaving with integrity	• Ensure that Members and Officer behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visible and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the Council. • Ensure that Members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the Council and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. They will build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (The Nolan Principles) • Lead by example and use these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions • Demonstrate, communicate and embed the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are operating effectively.
Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values	• Seek to establish, monitor and maintain the Council's ethical standards and performance • Underpin personal behaviour with ethical values and ensure they permeate all aspects of the Council's culture and operation • Develop and maintain robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values • Ensure that external providers of services on behalf of the Council are required to act with integrity and in compliance with ethical standards expected by the Council.
Respecting the rule of law	• Ensure Members and Officers demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations • Create the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders, and Members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory provisions • Strive to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders • Deal with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively • Ensure corruption and misuse of power is dealt with effectively.

Principle B
Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Local government is run for the public good, organisations therefore should ensure openness in their activities. Clear, trusted channels of communication should be used to engage effectively with all groups of stakeholders, such as individual citizens and service users, as well as institutional stakeholders.

Sub Principles	Council actions and behaviours
Openness	• Ensure an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the Council's commitment to openness • Make decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption will be for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential will be provided. • Provide clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and will be explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, the Council will ensure that the impact and consequence of those decisions are clear • Use formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action.
Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	• Effectively engage with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably • Develop formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively • Ensure that partnerships are based on trust, a shared commitment to change, a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit.
Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users	• Establish a clear policy on the type of issues that the Council will meaningfully consult with or involve communities, individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes • Ensure that communication methods are effective and that Members and Officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement • Encourage, collect and evaluate the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs • Implement effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account • Balance feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity • Take account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users.

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

The long-term nature and impact of many of local government's responsibilities mean that it should define and plan outcomes and that these should be sustainable. Decisions should further the authority's purpose, contribute to intended benefits and outcomes, and remain within the limits of authority and resources. Input from all groups of stakeholders, including citizens, service users, and institutional stakeholders, is vital to the success of this process and in balancing competing demands when determining priorities for finite resources available.

Sub Principles	Council actions and behaviours
Defining outcomes	• Have a clear vision, which is an agreed formal statement of the Council's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the Council's overall strategy, planning and other decisions • Specify the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer • Deliver defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available • Identify and manage risks to the achievement of outcomes • Manage service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available.
Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	• Consider and balance the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision • Take a longer term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the Council's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints • Determine the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs • Ensure fair access to services.

Principle D
Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

Local government achieves its intended outcomes by providing a mixture of legal, regulatory, and practical interventions. Determining the right mix of these courses of action is a critically important strategic choice that local government has to make to ensure intended outcomes are achieved. They need robust decision-making mechanisms to ensure that their defined outcomes can be achieved in a way that provides the best trade-off between the various types of resource inputs while still enabling effective and efficient operations. Decisions made need to be reviewed continually to ensure that achievement of outcomes is optimised.

Sub Principles	Council actions and behaviours
Determining interventions	- Ensure decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore, ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided - Consider feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land, and assets and bearing in mind future impacts.
Planning interventions	- Establish and implement robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets - Engage with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered - Consider and monitor risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks - Ensure arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances - Establish appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured - Ensure capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly - Prepare budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan - Inform medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy.
Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	- Ensure the medium term financial plan integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints - Ensure the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term - Ensure the medium term financial plan sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage - Ensure the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 states that this is "the additional benefit to the community….over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes".

Principle E
Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Local government needs appropriate structures and leadership, as well as people with the right skills, appropriate qualifications and mindset, to operate efficiently and effectively and achieve their intended outcomes within the specified periods. A local government organisation must ensure that it has both the capacity to fulfil its own mandate and to make certain that there are policies in place to guarantee that its management has the operational capacity for the organisation as a whole. Because both individuals and the environment in which an authority operates will change over time, there will be a continuous need to develop its capacity as well as the skills and experience of the leadership of individual staff members. Leadership in local government entities is strengthened by the participation of people with many different types of backgrounds, reflecting the structure and diversity of communities.

Sub Principles	Council actions and behaviours
Developing the Council's capacity	• Review operations, performance use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness • Improve resources use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options to determine how the Council's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently • Recognise the benefits of partnership and collaborative working where added value can be achieved • Develop and maintain an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources

Developing the capability of the Council's leadership and other individuals	• Develop protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained
	• Publish a statement that specifies the type of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body
	• Ensure the Leader and the Chief Executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the Chief Executive leads the Council in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by Members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority
	• Develop the capabilities of Members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risk by:
	    - ensuring Members and Officers have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged
	    - ensuring Members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis
	    - ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external
	• Ensure that there are structures in place to encourage public participation
	• Take steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensure leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections
	• Hold staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs
	• Ensure arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing.

Principle F
Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Local government needs to ensure that the organisations and governance structures that it oversees have implemented, and can sustain, an effective performance management system that facilities effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Risk management and internal control are important and integral parts of a performance management system and crucial to the achievement of outcomes. Risk should be considered and addressed as part of all decision making activities. A strong system of financial management is essential for the implementation of policies and the achievement of intended outcomes, as it will enforce financial discipline strategic allocation of resources, efficient service delivery, and accountability. It is also essential that a culture and structure for scrutiny is in place as a key part of accountable decision making, policy making and review. A positive working culture that accepts, promotes and encourages constructive challenge is critical to successful scrutiny and successful delivery. Importantly, this culture does not happen automatically, it requires repeated public commitment from those in authority.

Sub Principles	Council actions and behaviours
Managing risk	• Recognise that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making • Implement robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensure that they are working effectively • Ensure that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated.
Managing performance	• Monitor service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review • Make decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the Council's financial, social and environmental position and outlook • Ensure an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the Council's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible • Provide Members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement • Ensure there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements)

Robust internal control	• Align the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives
	• Evaluate and monitor the Council's risk management and internal control arrangements on a regular basis
	• Ensure effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place
	• Ensure additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the Audit Manager
	• Ensure and Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee, which is independent of the executive and accountable to the Council:
	  - Provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment
	  - That its recommendations are listened to and acted upon.

Managing data	• Ensure effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data • Ensure effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies • Review and audit regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring
Strong public financial management	• Ensure financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short term financial and operational performance • Ensure well developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls.

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

Accountability is about ensuring that those making decisions and delivering services are answerable for them. Effective accountability is concerned not only with reporting on actions completed, but also ensuring that stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the organisation plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner. Both external and internal audit contribute to effective accountability.

Sub Principles	Council actions and behaviours
Implementing good practice in transparency	• Write and communicate reports for the public and other stakeholders in a fair, balanced and understandable style appropriate to the intended audience ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate • Strike a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand.
Implementing good practices in reporting	• Report at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of the Council's resources. • Ensure Members and senior management own the results • Ensure robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publish the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (Annual Governance Statement – AGS) • Ensure that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate • Ensure the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other similar organisations.
Assurance and effective accountability	• Ensure that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon • Ensure an effective internal audit service with direct access to Members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and that recommendations are acted upon • Welcome peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implement recommendations • Gain assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and evidence this in the annual governance statement • Ensure that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met.

Appendix B

'The International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector' defines 'governance' as comprising the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved. The framework also states that to deliver good governance in the public sector both governing bodies and individuals working for them must try to achieve the Council's objectives while acting in the public interest at all times.

Core Principles	(A) Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law	(B) Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	(C) Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	(D) Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes	(E) Developing the Council's capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it	(F) Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management	(G) Implementing good practice in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability
Evidence of Good Governance	The Constitution Whistleblowing policy Anti-money laundering policy Anti-fraud, bribery and corruption policy – (Part 5 of the Constitution section 10) Member Code of Conduct – (Part 5 of the Constitution section 1) Officer Code of Conduct – (Part 5 of the Constitution section 8) Gifts and Hospitality policy Statutory Officer Roles – Head of Paid services (Chief Executive), Chief Financial Officer (S151), Monitoring Officer and Data Protection Officer. Contract Standing Orders – (Part 4 of the Constitution section 10) Financial Regulations – (Part 4 of the Constitution section 9) Decision Making/ Schemes of Delegations – (Part 3 of the Constitution section 3 & 4) Member interests register (shown against each Councillor) Council corporate values Corporate Governance group	Council website Council Plan and monitoring Freedom of Information Public consultations Committee meetings – Agenda & Minutes Records of Executive Decisions Decision Making/ Schemes of Delegations – (Part 3 of the Constitution section 3 & 4) Annual statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement Open data/ Transparency Code Local Plan Arena Magazine Strategic Economic framework	Council Plan and monitoring Committee meetings – Agenda & minutes Service business plans Financial/ capital programme reporting Decision Making/ Schemes of Delegations – (Part 3 of the Constitution section 3 & 4) Records of Executive Decisions Contract Standing Orders – (Part 4 of the Constitution section 10) Local Plan People Strategy Corporate and Service Risk Registers Climate Change Action plan	Council Plan and monitoring Decision Making/ Schemes of Delegations – (Part 3 of the Constitution section 3 & 4) Medium Term Financial Strategy Committee meetings – Agenda & Minutes Service business plans PIAG Overview and Scrutiny Committee Union Yard Project group Property, Major works and Regeneration Programme Board	The Constitution Decision Making/ Schemes of Delegations – (Part 3 of the Constitution section 3 & 4) Development reviews – highlighting any training needs for employees. Member development Member and employee induction programmes Council wide training e.g. Health and Safety, Data Protection Staff development including, Action Learning sets, Apprenticeships, and Leadership and management development Peer review – Corporate and Service reviews HR policies and wellbeing promotion	The Constitution Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee Financial Regulations – (Part 4 of the Constitution section 9) Contract Standing Orders – (Part 4 of the Constitution section 10) Information Governance Group Corporate Governance Group Risk based audits Annual Audit Opinion External Audit of Accounts Overview & Scrutiny – Agenda & Minutes Annual Governance Statement Budget monitoring reports Anti-fraud, bribery and corruption policy – (Part 5 of the Constitution section 10) Anti-money laundering policy Whistleblowing policy Corporate and Service Risk Registers PSN compliance and Cyber Security treatment plan	Council website Council plan and monitoring Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement Open data/ Transparency Code Freedom of Information Annual Audit Opinion Audit update reports Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee Peer review External Audits

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CORPORATE GOVERNANCE   **AUDIT MANAGER**
AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE   **REPORT NO. AUD 24/05**

23RD MAY 2024

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INTERNAL AUDIT –AUDIT UPDATE

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SUMMARY:

This report describes:
- The work completed by Internal Audit during 2023/24;
- A progress update on the audits from 2023/24 Audit Plan completed since the last update report to Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

Members are requested to:
- i. Note the audit work completed since the last update report to Committee.
- ii. Note the completion of work against the plan.

---

1 Introduction

1.1 This report is to provide Members with:
- An overview of the work completed since the update provided to the Committee in March 2024;
- An update on completion of work against the 2023/24 Audit Plan.

2 Audit Work Completed

2.1 The table below provides an overview of the assurance opinion, given to the completed audit since the last update:

Audit Title	Assurance Opinion	Recommendations by Priority		
		High	**Medium**	**Low**
2023/24 Internal Audit Plan				
Cloud CRM	Reasonable	0	5	1

2.2 Below is a summary of the key findings from the audit.

Cloud CRM

This audit focused on arrangements to manage RBC's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

The overarching finding from fieldwork is the general lack of formality in how RBC's CRM system is currently managed, with the exception substantively of business continuity arrangements.

For business continuity RBC has clear corporate expectations and Internal Audit was provided with both RBC's overarching Business Continuity Plan and a Critical Function Analysis for Customer Services. Information for CRM is consistent between these two documents and in line with how CRM is backed up (seven-day maximum tolerable outage, maximum data loss of 24 hours).

As above other areas are informal. This includes the absence of any written agreement as to what the service can expect from technical teams (contract equivalent) a lack of documented processes for technical area (access and change management) and limited records. To a degree an in-house system will often be less formally managed than a bought in system but, to ensure the consistency, reliability and security of CRM and the technical processes on which it relies, a number of findings are raised regarding the need to bring in an increased level of formality.

Due to the good relationship between the service and technical staff and the absence of any major issues being identified overall Internal Audit's conclusion is that **reasonable assurance** is given.

3 Progress towards the 2023/24 Audit Plan

3.1 The table below provides a summary of the completion of audits for 2022/23 against the plan which will be used to assist the assurance opinion:

Audit/ Audit follow up status	Number of reviews	%
Finalised	6	38%
Draft report	8*	50%
In progress	1	6%
Removed due to assurance from other resources	1	6%
Total	**16**	**100%**

Appendix A details the audits at draft report stage

3.2 One audit will not be substantially completed, by the contract auditors, and therefore will not be included within overall audit opinion. The reports shown at draft report stage require final sign off but are substantially completed and will be included within the audit opinion.

4 Recommendation

4.1 Members are requested to note the information provided within the report in relation to the completion of Audit work against the 2023/24 audit plan.

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HEAD OF SERVICE: Peter Vickers, Executive Head of Finance & S151 Officer
peter.vickers@rushmoor.gov.uk

References: *Internal Audit – Audit Plan 2023/24*, presented to the Committee on 27th March 2023.

Agenda for Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee on Monday, 27th March, 2023, 7.00 pm - Rushmoor Borough Council

Audits at draft report stage which have been substantially completed so that the assurance level can still be used within the annual audit opinion but waiting on close out meetings before issuing as a final.

CREP
RHL
Capital Programme – Meads
Homes for Ukraine fund
Payroll
CIPFA Financial code
Related Parties
Parking

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NOMINATIONS FOR COUNCIL REPRESENTATION

PART 1 - OUTSIDE BODIES

1. Aldershot and Farnborough Festival of Music and Art

The Festival takes place each year in May and with objectives to promote excellence in the performing arts at all levels and to encourage the participation of the people of Rushmoor, of all ages and abilities.

Location and frequency of meetings	Membership and Requirements	Representatives 2023/24	Nominations for 2024/25
Five times a year at 7.15 p.m. on a Monday at the Council Offices – Feb, June, Sept and Nov (AGM and Committee Meeting).	Up to three Members (cross Group representation) This role is assisting a community link	Cllr Diane Bedford Cllr Jules Crossley Cllr Mara Makunura	Cllr Lisa Greenway Cllr Ivan Whitmee Cllr Sue Carter

2. Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee

This Committee is administered by Surrey County Council (SCC) and is responsible for the oversight of the completion of the restoration of the Basingstoke Canal; the management and maintenance of the Canal as an environmental, navigational and recreational asset; and balancing the interests of all users of the Canal. Attended by representatives of local authorities and special interest groups
.

Location and frequency of meetings	Membership and Requirements	Representatives 2023/24	Nominations for 2024/25
Twice a year at the Mytchett Canal Centre	Two Members and a Standing Deputy (requested by the Management Committee) This role is a link to the responsibilities of SCC and with an expectation for informal feedback	Cllr. A.H. Gani Cllr. P.G. Taylor Standing Deputy: Cllr Jules Crossley	Cllr Jules Crossley Cllr Rhian Jones Standing Deputy: Cllr Paul Taylor

3.	**Blackbushe Airport Consultative Committee**			
	The Consultative Committee provides a Forum for Blackbushe Airport to engage with local councils (parish, district and county) and other local interest groups and residents, related to airport business and events.			

Location and frequency of meetings	Membership Requirements	Representatives 2023/24	Nominations for 2024/25
Twice a year - March/Sept-Oct at the Pathfinder Café, Blackbushe Airport	One Member and a Standing Deputy (requested by the Consultative Committee) This role is assisting a link to the business activities of the Airport with an expectation for informal feedback	Cllr P.J. Cullum Standing Deputy: Cllr P.G. Taylor	Cllr Jules Crossley Standing Deputy: Cllr Alex Crawford

4.	**Blackwater Valley Advisory Panel for Public Transport**			
	This a liaison meeting for representatives from local authorities across the Blackwater Valley area to consider the proposals of bus and train companies operating within the area which are likely to affect the interests of the populations of two or more member districts and to discuss and recommend proposals for the improvement of existing services. Attended by local authorities and representatives from bus and rail operators.			

Location and frequency of meetings	Membership Requirements	Representatives 2023/24	Nominations for 2024/25
4 times a year. Meetings are held virtually on Teams – currently held in the late afternoon.	Cabinet Member with responsibility for public transport and one Member Two Standing Deputies This role is assisting a link to transport actives - expectation for informal feedback to the Council's Planning Policy Team.	Cabinet Member: Cllr J.B. Canty Cllr M.J. Roberts Standing Deputies: Cllr Jules Crossley Cllr Jonathan Canty	Cllr Mike Roberts Cllr Steve Harden Standing Deputy: Cllr Alex Crawford

5.	**Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership**			
	The aim of the Partnership is to provide a continuous green space alongside the Blackwater River as an attractive, safe, sustainable and wildlife rich environment for informal countryside recreation. The Partnership co-ordinates a programme of recreation and conservation tasks in the Blackwater Valley on behalf of the local authorities within the area – including Rushmoor Borough Council.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Annual Meeting Further details to be confirmed	Two Members and up to two Standing Deputies There is an expectation for informal feedback to the Council	Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford Cllr G.B. Lyon Standing Deputies: Cllr Jules Crossley Cllr Clive Grattan	Cllr Clive Grattan Cllr Jules Crossley Standing Deputy: Cllr G.B. Lyon

6.	**Brickfield Country Park, Friends of**			
	The Friends Group was formed to maintain, protect wildlife, and improve the small Brickfield Country Park in Manor Park Ward, Aldershot.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	4 times a year	Three Manor Park Members This role is assisting a community link	Manor Park Ward Councillors	Manor Park Ward Councillors

7.	**Cove Brook Greenway Group – Committee Meeting**			
	The Group works with Rushmoor Borough Council and the Environment Agency to look after Cove Brook, a wildlife rich greenway running through Farnborough, for the benefit of local people and wildlife.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	4 times a year at Blundon Hall, Farnborough	Two Members This role is assisting a community link	Cllr A. Adeola Cllr Michael Hope	Cllr Clive Grattan Cllr Rhian Jones

8.	**District Council's Network (DCN) Assembly**			
	The DCN is a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association (LGA) and provides a single voice for all district councils within the LGA. Rushmoor is a Member Council.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Virtual Meetings – as called by DCN. AGM Annual Conference	Leader of the Council	Leader of the Council	Leader of the Council

9.	**Hampshire Place Board**			
	The Board brings together the elected leaders of the partner councils with the purpose of strengthening local authority collaboration and to enable collective discussion and local authority representation on priorities and issues affecting the area.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Held remotely, six times a year	Leader of the Council Standing Deputy: Deputy Leader	Leader of the Council Standing Deputy: Deputy Leader	Leader of the Council Standing Deputy: Deputy Leader

10.	**NE Hants & Farnham Place Board/NE Hants & Farnham Place Forum**			
	Partnership between local authorities, Frimley ICB, and other local health partners and voluntary groups to reduce health inequalities and to support the health needs of the Place.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Quarterly/Twice a Year	Portfolio Holder with responsibility for health and wellbeing	Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sophie Porter

11.	**Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee (FACC)**			
	The Consultative Committee provides a forum for the management of Farnborough Aerodrome, to engage with local authorities, airport users and local interest groups on a range of environmental and other airport issues.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	3 times a year during the afternoon	Cabinet Member One Member from a ward that adjoins the site (St Marks, Cove & Southwood, Empress, Knellwood, Wellington) Standing Deputy This role provides a link to the business activities of the Airport with an expectation of informal feedback to the Council.	Cabinet Member: Cllr M.L. Sheehan Cllr Gareth Williams Standing Deputy: Cllr M.J. Tennant	Cabinet member: Cllr Keith Dibble Cllr Craig Card Standing Deputy: Cllr Alex Crawford

12.	**457 Squadron Farnborough RAF Air Cadets**			
	Part of the RAF Air Cadets, this is a military themed youth organisation supported by the Royal Air Force.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Squadron HQ, St Christopher's Road, Cove, Farnborough 6 Meetings per year	One Member This role is assisting a community link	Cllr Nadia Martin	Cllr Nadia Martin

13.	**Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association (HIOWLGA)**			
	The Association provides a structure for collaboration between all local authorities in Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight and represents the interests of local government in Hampshire and IOW.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Rota of authorities	Two Cabinet Members one of whom is the leader	Leader of the Council Cllr Jonathan Canty	Leader of the Council Deputy Leader of the Council

14.	**Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Board**			
	This is a Hampshire County Council Board with responsibility for advancing health and wellbeing for people in Hampshire and to encourage integrated delivery of health services by health providers.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	HCC Winchester	Hampshire CC arrangements to appoint co-opted Deputy onto the Board for District/Borough Members as needed.	Cllr Michael Hope	Cllr Sophie Porter (subject to HCC invitation)

15.	**Hampshire Police and Crime Panel (PCP)**			
	The PCP is responsible for scrutinising and supporting the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Hampshire. The PCP is made up of representatives from each of the local authorities in the Hampshire Police area, including Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight. Responsibilities include reviewing the draft Police and Crime Plan, reviewing, and having the power to veto, the PCC's proposed Council Tax precept levels and confirming and having the power to veto the Chief Constable's appointment.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Four times a year Hampshire County Council, Winchester	Leader or Cabinet Member	Cllr M.L. Sheehan Cllr J.B. Canty as Standing Deputy	Cllr Becky Williams Cllr Halleh Koohestani as Standing Deputy

16.	**Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust AGM**			
	The Organisation's purpose is to preserve the historical, architectural and constructional heritage of Hampshire by means of conservation and education.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	AGM once a year – various venues	Two Members	Cllr Jess Auton Cllr G.B. Lyon	Cllr Thomas Day Cllr Lisa Greenway

17.	**Local Government Association – National General Assembly**			
	The General Assembly is a formal meeting which is part of the LGA's political governance structure. It considers strategic policy issues of national significance to local government.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Annual – Various locations	Leader of the Council	Leader of the Council	Leader of the Council

18.	**North Hampshire Area Road Safety Council**			
	The Road Safety Council meetings are intended to help promote and raise awareness of Countywide Road Safety Education Campaigns delivered by Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Police and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. Meetings include officers from those organisations plus County and District Members together. Other representatives include those involved with cycling groups, driving organisations, pedestrians and equestrians.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Three times a year on Teams	One Member Standing Deputy	Cllr Mara Makunura Cllr Peace Essien Igodifo as Standing Deputy	Cllr Mike Roberts Standing Deputy Cllr Jules Crossley

19.	**PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee**			
	PATROL has been established to enable councils undertaking civil parking enforcement to exercise their functions under Section 81 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and Regulations 17 and 18 of the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007. PATROL provides for independent adjudication for appeals against civil traffic penalties.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Annually in July, Westminster, London Tuesday 9th July 2024 at 11.00 a.m. in London	One Member is required (The PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee Agreement (which Rushmoor is party to) requires nomination of a Councillor to the Joint Committee, even if that councillor is unable to attend meetings)	Cllr Christine Guinness	Cllr Becky Williams

20.	**PCC Violence Against Women and Girls Task Group (VAWG)**			
	A Task Group launched by the PCC and Hampshire Constabulary to improve the Hampshire and Isle of Wight response to VAWG victims, ensuring that the needs of women and girls are at the heart of the strategic response by the criminal justice system, local authorities and community safety partners			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Checking current position	Nominated by the Leader Cabinet Member/Champion with responsibility	Cllr Mara Makunura	Cllr Becky Williams

21.	**Parity for Disability**			
	A local charity based in Cove, Farnborough set up to support people with multiple disabilities, their families and carers, and actively works to meet students' evolving needs through specialist services and partnership working.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Council and Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Day Centre, Whetstone Road, Cove	One Member and One Standing Deputy This role is assisting a community link	Cllr S.J. Masterson Cllr Gaynor Austin as Standing Deputy	Cllr Lisa Greenway Standing Deputy Cllr S.J. Masterson

22.	**Project Integra - Strategic Board**			
	Project Integra is a partnership of local authorities in Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton which delivers a combined approach to waste services. The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy sets out the strategic direction for the Partnership.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	3 Meetings a Year: 1x in person at HCC Winchester 2x meetings on Teams	Cabinet Member with responsibility for waste management	Cabinet Member Cllr M.L. Sheehan	Cllr Becky Williams

23.	**Royal British Legion (Farnborough Branch) Remembrance Day Arrangements**			
	Armed Forces Charity supporting the Armed Forces community and Remembrance Day arrangements and events.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Council and Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	The Royal British Legion, 51 Cambridge Road East, Farnborough, GU14 6QB	Two Members This role is assisting a community link	Cllr Mrs D.B. Bedford Cllr C.P. Grattan	Cllr Nadia Martin Cllr Clive Grattan

24.	**Citizens Advice Rushmoor Trustee Board**			
	Part of the national Citizens Advice network, Citizens Advice Rushmoor is an independent charity which offers free, confidential, impartial, and independent advice and information services. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the quality and type of services provided and sets the overall direction for the organisation. The Board supports the development of the organisation, monitors performance, manages finances and works to ensure services meet the needs of the local community.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Meetings held in Person 8-10 Board Meetings a year and Trustee development day	Two Members to join as Trustees Representatives of different Groups. Expectation of report back to the Council – linked to updates at OSC/PPAB as appropriate	Cllr Gaynor Austin	Cllr Gaynor Austin (standing Trustee)

25.	**Rushmoor Voluntary Services (RVS) Board**			
	RVS are the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) in Rushmoor. Its role in the community is to champion volunteering and to support any voluntary or community group working in Rushmoor. It is a hub for organisations wanting to promote their services; for those seeking volunteer help and for those seeking to make links with other organisations in the area. RVS also manages a number of projects that provide community benefit. Rushmoor provides core funding for RVS and the Board of Trustee Meetings are responsible for ensuring effective governance and scrutinising the work undertaken.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Council and Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	6 meetings a year Meetings held virtually via Teams	One Member to join Board Meetings - Not as Trustee Expectation of report back to the Council – linked to updates at OSC/PPAB as appropriate	Cllr S.J. Masterson	Cllr Sophie Porter

26.	**South-East Employers (SEE) – Annual General Meeting**			
	SEE is an employer's organisation for local authorities in the South East to represent member councils' collective interests at a regional and national level. SEE provides expert knowledge, training and advice on employment and workforce matters, and supports Members' Learning and Development.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Annual Meeting held in July each year Voting to appoint the Chair, Vice-Chairs and the Executive Committee takes place at the AGM in July	Cabinet Member with responsibility for HR/People One Member as Standing Deputy Full role profile prepared by SEE is available from the Democracy Team	Cabinet Member Cllr Jonathan Canty Standing Deputy: Cllr Paul Taylor	Cllr Abe Allen Standing Deputy: Cllr Keith Dibble

27.	**Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board**			
	A Partnership to enable joint working, liaison and the exchange of information between local authorities and other organisations affected by the Thames Basin Heaths (TBH) Special Protection Area (SPA). It will address matters relating to the long-term protection of the TBH SPA arising from planning permissions for new residential development, and associated land management and planning issues that are of joint interest to the member organisations. Attendance includes 14 local authorities, Natural England, and major landowners.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Twice a year during the day with additional meetings scheduled if necessary – held virtually	Cabinet Member with responsibility for planning policy	Cabinet Member Cllr Jonathan Canty	Cllr Keith Dibble

28.	**Wellesley Residents Trust Board of Directors**			
	Under the terms of the S106 agreement for the Wellesley Development the developers were required to set up an Estate Management Company (EMC) to maintain and manage the open spaces and estate areas of the development, with Rushmoor BC entitled to become a member of the company and nominate a representative to be appointed as a director of the company. The appointment is to act as the Council's representative on the estate management company – Wellesley Residents Trust Ltd. to help ensure that the obligations of the EMC are fulfilled in accordance with the agreed Estate Management Plan.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	To be advised	One Member to be appointed as a Director to the Residents Trust Copy of background report available from Democracy Team	Cllr Jib Belbase Cllr Nadia Martin as Standing Deputy	Cllr Nadia Martin

29.	**Hampshire Cultural Trust - Aldershot Military Museum Strategic Local Agreement and West End Centre Management Committee**			
	The Museum and the West End Centre are operated by the Hampshire Cultural Trust, and annual meetings are held with each venue's management to review and report on projects and activities, community and partnership working, budgets and future venue plans.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Aldershot Military Museum once a year - daytime West End Centre, Aldershot Twice a year – to be confirmed	Two Members (one from each Group) Expectation for informal feedback to the Council	Cllr Mrs D.B. Bedford Cllr Jules Crossley	Cllr Jules Crossley Cllr Leola Card

30.	**Safer North Hampshire – Community Safety Partnership**			
	The Partnership oversees community safety issues across Rushmoor, Hart and Basingstoke			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	3 times a year by rotation of the local authorities	Cabinet Member with responsibility for community safety	Cabinet Member Cllr M.L. Sheehan	Cllr Becky Williams

31.	**Crime and Disorder Joint Scrutiny Committee (Hart/Basingstoke/Rushmoor)**			
	A Joint Scrutiny Committee between Hart DC, Basingstoke and Deane BC and Rushmoor BC with responsibility for the Performance Review of the Safer North Hampshire Community Safety Partnership in relation to its crime and disorder functions.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Once a year Next meeting – Wednesday 3rd July at the Hart District Council Offices	Three non-executive members including the Chairman and/or vice chairman of OSC To reflect proportionality: 1 Conservative 2 Labour	Two representatives from the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the OSC Committee Cllr Keith Dibble	Cllr Halleh Koohestani Cllr Alex Crawford Cllr M.J. Tennant

32.	**Rushmoor Development Partnership LLP (RDP) Board**			
	The RDP brings together Rushmoor Borough Council and development partner, Hill Investment Partnerships Ltd, to deliver major regeneration schemes across the Borough. The Board, which comprises representatives from both Hill and the Council, is responsible for all major financial and business decisions; including setting and approving budgets, approving all unbudgeted expenditure, decisions on the sale and purchase of land, approving investment plans and projects plans and material variations to plans.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	Currently under review	Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Major Projects Chief Executive Executive Director	Cllr M.J. Tennant Chief Executive Executive Director (KE)	Cllr Christine Guinness Chief Executive Executive Director (KE)

33.	**Rushmoor Housing Ltd (RHL) - Board of Directors**			
	RHL has been set up to provide quality homes for rent in the Borough.			
	Location and frequency of meetings	**Membership Requirements**	**Representatives 2023/24**	**Nominations for 2024/25**
	The Board meets approximately every six weeks depending on the timing of key decisions.	Three Members	Cllr P.G. Taylor Cllr S. Trussler Cllr Gareth Williams	Cllr Gareth Williams Cllr Ivan Whitmee Cllr S Trussler

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