

**Wiltshire Council**

**Audit and Governance Committee**

**7 February 2024**

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**Subject: Corporate Governance Update**

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**Executive Summary**

The Annual Governance Statement for Wiltshire Council demonstrates how the Council is meeting the principles of good governance adopted in its Local Code of Corporate Governance (LCCG). Following consideration of the Annual Governance Statement in July, this report provides an update on the current status of improvement actions identified in the Annual Governance Statement for 2023.

**Proposal**

Audit and Governance Committee is asked to consider the current status of improvement actions identified in Annual Governance Statement, as set out at **Appendix 1**.

**Reason for Proposal**

In considering the draft Local Code of Corporate Governance in 2019, Audit Committee agreed to receive regular updates on the implementation of improvement actions identified in the Annual Governance Statement. Consideration of these actions will inform the development of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) that the council is required to produce for 2023/24.

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**Lizzie Watkin**

Director, Finance

## Wiltshire Council

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#### Purpose of Report

1. To consider the current status of improvement actions identified in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and emerging themes to capture in the AGS for 2023-24.

#### Background

2. Wiltshire Council agreed a revised Local Code of Corporate Governance in 2019.
3. In considering the draft Local Code of Corporate Governance, Audit Committee agreed to receive regular updates on the implementation of improvement actions identified in the Annual Governance Statement. Consideration of these actions will inform the development of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) that the council is required to produce for 2023-24.

#### Main Considerations

4. In 2022-23's Annual Governance Statement the Council identified a number of areas where further improvements could be made to strengthen its governance framework. It should be noted that these areas are not to be regarded as failures, rather examples of issues where scope for further improvement has been identified. In many cases, work is already well underway to address these areas for improvement.
5. The governance of the Council continues to be monitored by Cabinet, Audit and Governance and other councillor committees and the Council's Corporate Leadership Team.
6. The Corporate Governance (Officer) Group chaired by the Monitoring Officer has considered:
  - The appendix to this paper
  - Internal governance and programme boards
  - Oversight of spend, savings and delivery
7. An update on progress with the improvement actions identified in the Annual Governance Statement 2022-23 is included at **Appendix 1**. This document will be kept live and updated and inform the development of the AGS for 2023-24.

8. Since the Annual Governance Statement for 2023 was [considered](#) by the Audit Committee it is worth noting that the council has received further assurance for its activities through an Ofsted inspection of arrangements for looked after children which awarded the grade 'Outstanding'; undertaken a [peer review](#) of adult social care; a peer review of the libraries service (expected to be made available shortly) and undertaken a [peer review](#) on planning.
9. All these reports are generally positive and bolster the findings of the [corporate peer review](#), which noted the 'impressive organisational governance' that exists within the council.

Report Authors:

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## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 LCCG AGS update