

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019/20 - ACTION PLAN – Update

The following table identifies issues that had been identified in 2019/20 during the review of effectiveness, together with the proposed actions to be taken during 2020/21 to address the issues. **When the AGS was written the COVID-19 crisis had occurred but the severity, longevity and impact of the pandemic was not foreseen at the time. The pandemic has had a major impact on the timescales and actions that were included in the original action plan and this is recorded in the table below.**

Significant Governance Issue linked to Framework	Action to be taken	Update
Budget pressures (including external and demand-led pressures and overspends) & problems living within budgets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue robust monitoring of budgets, savings and transformation programme activity at PFM and with both CMT and the Executive. • Annual review of Sustainable Swansea underway with revised programme to deliver future savings in years 3 onwards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Normal business” is continuing in terms of reporting through PFM processes and routinely to CMT and quarterly to Cabinet. Due to the way Welsh Government is helping fund the Covid 19 response there is uncertainty as to both timing and quantum of actual grant support available to this Council and has necessitated a delay in reporting by one month to normal cycle. This is likely to continue. There is however no normality to a spending position which requires budgets to be flexed by over £100m in revenue and over £20m in capital in the first quarter alone. There are material overspends and a near

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		<p>certain need to exhaust contingency and draw down from reserves. Both have been reported to cabinet in October and are to be reported to Council in November. The S151 officer is operating a deliberately blended approach to robust monitoring and action and has reported as such to Cabinet, Council, Audit Committee and Scrutiny. Planning and delivery will stick to as normal patterns as possible albeit with that material uncertainty rider in all planning and delivery assumptions and an increased risk of the s151 needing to exercise his statutory intervention powers in extremis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Deputy Chief Executive is leading on the Recovery Plan (for both Covid 19 and the future replacement for Sustainable Swansea) and has taken a substantive report through Cabinet in October 2020 which sets out a framework for future development and delivery.
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<p>Lack of workforce capacity, capability and resilience and relying on staff goodwill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Workforce Plan to support high performance and enable a skilled, flexible and engaged workforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Covid, a session was undertaken with Heads of Service on the development of individual workforce plans and how these would then feed into the overall corporate workforce plan. • A significant amount of interim, transitional workforce planning has been undertaken in response to Covid since March, e.g. Deployment of staff across the Council to deliver: Support for those vulnerable and shielding, issuing emergency payments, PPE, food banks, enabling digital capabilities for the remote workforce, and most importantly Social Care and TTP teams. • The Council's ability to respond quickly and effectively to the crisis is testament to the skills, flexibility and resilience of the workforce.
<p>Performance Reviews, i.e. appraisals system / induction training not fit for purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop a new appraisal solution to be delivered digitally through the new Oracle Cloud solution in November 2021. • Address Induction training of new staff as part of the review of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appraisal process is in place but appraisals were suspended because staff were diverted onto Covid work. However, one to ones and corporate meetings have taken place on a regular

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	<p>induction process and future policy reviews.</p>	<p>basis, with the emphasis on meeting the needs of maintaining core council services to protect our residents and fighting and addressing the Covid pandemic.</p>
<p>Embed the Future Generation Act principles into the Council's processes and decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development of integrated impact assessments to be undertaken to ensure that legal and regulatory compliance are embedded into the decision making process. • Provision of training/information on the requirements of the Future Generations Act. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft Future Generations Impact Assessment has been developed and is being piloted by Financial Services during the budget setting process for 2021/22. • Online training to improve awareness of the Future Generations Act and to support the Future Generations Impact Assessment is being scoped. • Training will be supported by online videos to improve understanding and application of the Act, including the national goals and 5 ways of working.
<p>Patchy Partnership Governance, including application of risk management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to address the challenges and areas for further development as set out within the Annual Report on Regional Working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report to Audit Committee on 5th December provides a summary of the Welsh Government's and WLGA's Review of Strategic Partnerships and outlines action taken by the Welsh Government and Swansea Council to date and indicates implications and

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		potential actions that Swansea Council should consider.
ICT Disaster recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolve through the move to cloud services, particularly Oracle Cloud in November 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ICT Infrastructure is now on resilient platforms. The long term Digital Strategy is to move to the cloud. All email has moved to cloud and progress on data is ongoing through the Enterprise Content Management (ECM) project. Proof of Concepts for systems to move to the Azure platform are progressing to formulate a plan for migration. Oracle Cloud project progressing well prior to the pandemic – the project will restart in February 2021 and complete in November 2021.
Use and governance of social media accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the review underway of the use of social media and social media access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes and ways of working tightened around this area. Changes being implemented and this item can now be removed as it is not a corporate governance issue.
Continue to improve risk management arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and risk owners to continue to improve their compliance to the Council's Risk Management Policy and Framework, including monthly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk management monitoring and reporting was recovered during July and August following suspension from March as a

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	<p>risk reviews and improving the quality of risk controls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop the Council's new risk register application to produce reports to help oversee the status of risk.	<p>result of Covid. Risk monitoring and monthly reporting recommenced in August. Efforts have focussed on responsible officers reviewing and updating their risks each month; compliance has improved each month since recovery with just over 93% of risks being reviewed in October. Improving aspects of the quality of risk information has been another focus as has increasing resilience by ensuring that risks have two officers capable of updating the risk register each month; these areas have shown improvement too, although further progress is needed. Work to improve the quality of risk controls will be the next improvement priority in line with available resources, capacity and other priorities as a result of the ongoing effects of Covid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The majority of the risk register system development has been completed. The Risk Register and the work to roll-out and implement
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		the register was given a 'substantial' level of assurance by Internal Audit. Further risk reporting to be enhanced once emergency Covid IT developments are completed.
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There are further areas that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in delays or where minimal responses have been undertaken whilst staff have been diverted to addressing the emergency; these will be reported to the January 2021 Audit Committee.