

Date of issue: 19 June 2023

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> (Councillors Manku (Chair), Shaik (Vice Chair), Escott, Hulme, Iftakhar, Mann, Matloob, Mohindra, O’Kelly and Stedmond)
<b>DATE AND TIME:</b>	TUESDAY, 27TH JUNE, 2023 AT 6.30 PM
<b>VENUE:</b>	COUNCIL CHAMBER - OBSERVATORY HOUSE, 25 WINDSOR ROAD, SL1 2EL
<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)</b>	MANIZE TALUKDAR 07871 982 919

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



**STEPHEN BROWN**  
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I

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**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**

1. Declarations of Interest

**AGENDA**  
**ITEM**

**REPORT TITLE**

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**WARD**

*All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 9 and Appendix B of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed.*

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| 2. | Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 March 2023   | 1 - 4  |  |
| 3. | Terms of Reference for the Committee<br><br>To note the constitutional basis for this committee.                  | 5 - 20 |  |
| 4. | Electing the Chairs of Task & Finish Groups<br><br>To elect a pool of 5 Chairs for future Task and Finish Groups. |        |  |

**SCRUTINY ISSUES**

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| 5. | Improvement & Recovery Update Report | 21 - 206 | ALL |
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**MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

- |    |                                     |  |  |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| 6. | Date of Next Meeting - 25 July 2023 |  |  |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|--|

**Press and Public**

**Attendance and accessibility:** You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before any items in the Part II agenda are considered. For those hard of hearing an Induction Loop System is available in the Council Chamber.

**Webcasting and recording:** The public part of the meeting will be filmed by the Council for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The footage will remain on our website for 12 months. A copy of the recording will also be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy. By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

In addition, the law allows members of the public to take photographs, film, audio-record or tweet the proceedings at public meetings. Anyone proposing to do so is requested to advise the Democratic Services Officer before the start of the meeting. Filming or recording must be overt and persons filming should not move around the meeting room whilst filming nor should they obstruct proceedings or the public from viewing the meeting. The use of flash photography, additional lighting or any non hand held devices, including tripods, will not be allowed unless this has been discussed with the Democratic Services Officer.

**Emergency procedures:** The fire alarm is a continuous siren. If the alarm sounds Immediately vacate the premises by the nearest available exit at either the front or rear of the Chamber and proceed to the assembly point: The pavement of the service road outside of Westminster House, 31 Windsor Road.

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**Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Meeting held on Wednesday, 22nd March, 2023.**

**Present:-** Councillors Gahir (Chair), Matloob (Vice-Chair), Akbar, Bedi and Kaur

**Also present under Rule 30:-** Councillors Ali, Hulme and Swindlehurst

**Apologies for Absence:-** Councillors Bal, Basra, M. Malik and S. Malik

**PART I**

**14. Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

**15. Minutes of the Meetings held on 15th February 2023 and 23rd February 2023**

**Resolved –** That the minutes of the meetings held on 15<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 be approved as a correct record.

**16. Member Questions**

No Member Questions had been submitted.

**17. Draft Annual Scrutiny Report 2022/23**

The Committee received and reviewed the draft Annual Scrutiny Report for 2022/23 and was asked to recommend the document to full Council.

The Chair summarised the report and highlighted that it had been a transitional year for scrutiny, with 'business as usual' continuing in terms of scrutiny of key aspects of the Council's budget and recovery as well as implementing the scrutiny review so that a new structure could be in place at the start of the next municipal year. Highlights of the year had included the work of the task and finish groups and it had been widely agreed that this model had been valuable and would be good practice to be continued in 2023/24. Budget scrutiny had been very detailed during the year with every budget saving coming to the committee or relevant scrutiny panel to test and challenge each proposals.

The Chair thanked members of the committee and officers that had supported scrutiny for their work throughout the year. He emphasised the importance of recruiting to the vacant scrutiny officer post so that the Overview & Scrutiny function had the dedicated resource and expertise that it required to fully contribute to the Council's recovery. Overall, the Chair stated that 2022/23 had provided a solid base for further scrutiny improvement during the next

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year and he requested that the committee endorse the report and recommend it to Council.

Members of the committee each commented on the key learnings from the year that should be taken forward as part of the next stage of the review. A summary of these issues which had been discussed in detail at the recent annual review and work programming session were included in the Annual Report. The Leader of the Council thanked the committee for its important work during the year and commented that the Cabinet had always valued recommendations and input from the committee and panels.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Annual Report was endorsed and it was agreed to recommend it to Council.

### **Resolved –**

- (a) That the draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23 be endorsed; and
- (b) That it be Recommend to Council that the Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23 be noted.

## **18. Best Value Intervention - Commissioners' Second Report and Government Response**

The Committee received a report that set out the current position with the Government intervention, which included the most recent 6-month report of the Commissioners submitted to the Secretary of State; the Secretary of State's letter to the Council in response; and an update from the Council following receipt of the two letters.

It was noted that the Commissioners' letter which set out their view of the progress of the Council had been submitted to the Secretary of State on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 covering the period of the first year of the intervention. The Secretary of State had subsequently written to the Council, and published the Commissioners letter, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

It had been hoped that the Lead Commissioner would have been able to attend the Committee. However, it was noted that the Lead Commissioner, Max Caller, had left that role on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and the Finance Commissioner Margaret Lee had resigned on 12<sup>th</sup> March. The remaining Commissioner, Gavin Jones, was not able to attend the meeting. It was anticipated that new Commissioners would be appointed in due course.

The Leader of the Council, Executive Director of Strategy & Improvement, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer were all present and answered the Committees questions in relation to the current position on the intervention.

The Committee expressed significant concern that the Commissioners letter of December 2022 stated that the progress the Council was making in a

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number of key areas was too slow and Commissioners said "...it was impossible...to conclude that SBC will be a viable unitary authority at the end of the current or a potentially extended Direction period." Members highlighted their disappointment that as no Commissioners were present as had been hoped they could not ask questions to better understand the basis for this assertion.

The Leader commented that the pace of delivery of improvement and recovery plans had accelerated significantly in the past three months since the Commissioners letter had been submitted. A meeting had been held recently with the Minister, Lee Rowley MP, which had given the Council the opportunity to detail the more recent progress that had been made. A full, permanent Director tier had been put in place towards the end of 2022 and this gave the Council the senior officer capacity and leadership required. It was noted that very significant progress had been made in the first year of the intervention, particularly stabilising the financial position and putting in place a clear financial recovery plan, including the asset disposal programme which was ahead of schedule. The Leader recognised that progress in other areas needed to be accelerated including culture change and the response to the recruitment issues that led to the extended Direction after the Commissioners first report in 2022. He said the next year would be key for the Council's recovery but if the Council could deliver its budget, with £22m of savings this year, and continue to deliver the asset disposal programme it would be in a significantly stronger position. The Leader thanked the outgoing Commissioners, Max Caller and Margaret Lee, for their support to the Council in the past year, particularly in supporting the immediate priority of financial repair.

The Committee had a wide ranging discussion about the issues raised including why there had been a delay between the submission of the Commissioners letter in December 2022 and its publication in March 2023. Scrutiny members were concerned that it was not therefore a fully up to date assessment of the Council's position. It was responded that publication of the Commissioners letter was entirely a matter for Commissioners and for DLUHC. The Leader highlighted that it was important the Council could demonstrate the progress it was making and the new reporting processes put in place in recent months would help provide this. He stated that no one was more committed to the Council's recovery than elected Members and emphasised that the Council had to 'own' its recovery and improvement to show that it could manage and operate effectively without intervention as soon as possible, recognising the scale of the challenge the Council still faced.

Members asked a number of questions about delayed completion of audits since 2018/19 and the serious weaknesses identified in the re-written 2018/19 external audit which had recently been published. The Leader recognised the serious weaknesses in financial management and practice reflected in the 2018/19 accounts and commented that similar issues would also be found in 2019/20 and 2020/21 as the issues were not identified by the Council until the new finance team came in during 2021. It was expected that audits for the

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financial years from 2021/22 onwards would start to show the improvements made to financial management as had been regularly reported to Members in the Finance Action Plan updates to each Council meeting.

The Executive Director Finance & Commercial/Section 151 Officer described the finance culture she hoped to promote in Slough as the Council sought to move to a 'business as usual' approach similar to all local authorities. The model was that finance was an all Council effort with shared responsibility across managers and staff in all directorates, supported by a strong finance business partner function.

The Committee discussed the reported lack of progress on culture change and the Leader and the Executive Director Strategy & Improvement summarised the work taking place on organisational transformation and said a dedicated programme group was leading this activity, although it was acknowledged that culture change took time and could be hard to define and measure. Members asked that an update on the culture change work be considered for the 2023/24 scrutiny work programme.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee noted the update and agreed that scrutiny had an important role to play in the 2023/24 in supporting the Council's recovery.

**Resolved –** That the contents of the Commissioners' report to the Secretary of State, the subsequent letter to SBC from DLUHC, and the report by SBC in light of the progress reports which Scrutiny had received since the Commissioners' letter was submitted to government be noted.

### 19. Members Attendance Record 2022/23

**Resolved –** That the record of Members' attendance be noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.31 pm and closed at 8.30 pm)



## Part 4.5 Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules

### 1. **SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

- 1.1 The Council will have a Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee with functions as set out in Article 6.

### 2. **MEMBERSHIP**

- 2.1 All Councillors except members of the Cabinet, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council shall be eligible for appointment as members of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.2 The Committee shall be appointed at Annual Council.

### 3. **CO-OPTees AND PARTICIPATING OBSERVERS**

- 3.1 The Committee shall be entitled to appoint a maximum of six people as non-voting co-optees either as standing members of the Committee or on a time limited basis. Voting co-optees may only be appointed to the Committee to meet statutory requirements (see section 4 below).
- 3.2 Co-optees, and their appointment terms, shall be decided by majority vote of the Committee, with the decision taken having consideration for the positive input an individual or organisation may make to the scrutiny process.
- 3.3 The Committee Chair may invite such participating observers as may be appropriate to support the delivery of Committee priorities on a meeting-by-meeting basis, for example to assist with expert questioning on a particular topic area for a particular agenda item. Participating observers will not have voting rights and the length of their appointment will be agreed at the time of appointment. Such arrangements will be reviewed on a regular basis.

### 4. **EDUCATION CO-OPTees**

- 4.1 The Committee shall include in its membership the following voting co-optees:
- 1 Church of England diocese representative (where there is at least one maintained Church of England school in the Borough);
  - 1 Roman Catholic diocese representative (where there is at least one maintained Roman Catholic Church school in the Borough);
  - 3 parent governor representatives
- 4.2 These co-optees will only be able to vote on education matters, and invited for those items, though they may stay in the meeting and speak on other matters at the discretion of the Chair.
- 4.3 The Committee shall also include in its membership the following non-voting co-optees:
- 1 Head Teacher representative

- 1 Primary School Teacher representative
  - 1 Secondary School Teacher representative
  - Up to 1 representative of other faiths, where the council maintains a school of that faith.
- 4.4 The Headteacher representative shall be nominated by the Slough Head Teachers at their relevant termly meeting.
- 4.5 The Teacher representatives shall be nominated by the teaching unions.
- 4.6 Any faith representative shall be nominated by the appropriate faith body falling wholly or partly in the Borough.
- 4.7 The parent governor representatives shall be elected from amongst parent governors in a process carried out by Slough Borough Council in accordance with procedures which shall be shared with all parent governors at the outset of such an exercise.
- 4.8 At least one parent governor representative must be from a primary school and at least one should be from a secondary school.
- 4.9 These non-voting co-optees will be invited for education items, although they may stay in the meeting and speak on other matters at the discretion of the Chair.

## 5. **TASK AND FINISH GROUPS PROTOCOL**

- 5.1 The Committee may, at any one time, commission up to three simultaneous Task and Finish Groups to carry out detailed examination of particular topics for reporting back to the Committee. The Terms of Reference, chairmanship and membership for such Groups shall be agreed by the Committee, and may only be amended by that Committee, although the detail of the scope of the review can be determined by the Task and Finish Group, subject to this being consistent with the Terms of Reference.
- 5.2 Membership of a Task and Finish Group may vary but must include between three and seven Members and may include any member of the Council (including co-opted members of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee). There is no requirement for political proportionality although cross-party representation is desirable.
- 5.3 Membership of a Task and Finish Group may also include individuals such as officers, members of the public or expert advisors, with specific knowledge of the topic to be examined. The members of the Task and Finish Group will be responsible for agreeing the final report and presenting this back to the Committee for debate and approval of any recommendations.
- 5.4 Forthcoming Task and Finish Groups on the Committee's work programme will be publicised to all members in advance to ensure that there will be enough councillors willing to serve on each Task and Finish Group.
- 5.4 The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee will elect five of its members to be included in the 'Task and Finish Group chairs pool'. Membership of the pool should be politically proportionate as far as is reasonably practicable, but the pool is not subject to proportionality rules and does not count as a committee for the purpose of calculating proportionality. The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee will

appoint Task and Finish group chairs from within this pool as and when Task and Finish Groups are set up.

- 5.5 All Task and Finish Groups shall have a standard maximum duration of 4 months at which point they must bring a final report to the next scheduled Committee meeting based on their progress up to that point, or forfeit the right to report to the committee. The Chair of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, in consultation with the Statutory Scrutiny Officer, may agree an extension to this timeline by delaying the commencement of other scheduled Task and Finish Groups.
- 5.7 Task and finish Groups should operate in accordance with the following principles of best practice:
- Wherever possible Task and Finish Groups should be led and comprised of the most appropriate and interested members for that topic – volunteers should be highly valued and any expectations of proportionality or rotation of Task and Finish Group chairs should be applied flexibly where it helps to accommodate this.
  - Task and Finish Group members should feel like they are driving the whole process from scope to recommendations. Members are encouraged to produce drafts of reports and recommendations themselves.
  - External input and evidence into the work of the Task and Finish Group should always be sought.
  - A lead officer will be appointed by the authority to support the Task and Finish Group, supported in turn by the Scrutiny Officer.
  - Engagement with the relevant cabinet portfolio holder(s) about recommendations and the evidence for them should be early and open, in order to allow them to formulate an evidence-based response to recommendations in a timely manner.
  - Recommendations should be tracked and progress reported to Members periodically.

## 6. **MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

- 6.1 The Council may determine a cycle of meetings for the Committee, with the Committee meeting a minimum of four times per municipal year. The Chair, or in their absence the Vice-Chair, may change the date or cancel meetings, or call additional and/or extraordinary meetings as they consider necessary to deal with the Committee's work programme.
- 6.2 A meeting of the Committee may be called by its Chair (or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair) or by the Head of Democratic Services, if he/she considers it necessary or appropriate, for example where senior officers or members of the Committee have requested an additional meeting.
- 6.3 Meetings of the Committee will be held in public and are subject to the Access to Information Rules.
- 6.4 Members of the Committee may be invited to informal meetings by the Scrutiny Officer or Head of Democratic Services to discuss issues relating to the functioning of Scrutiny and work programming.

## 7. **QUORUM**

7.1 The quorum for the Committee shall be 4 voting, elected Members.

## 8. **COMMITTEE CHAIR**

8.1 The Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by Council.

## 9. **WORK PROGRAMME**

9.1 The Committee will set its own work programme, and in the course of deciding which items to prioritise shall consider the following criteria, in order of importance:

- It fulfil a statutory requirement eg scrutiny of health systems.
- It directly assists in the council's improvement and recovery.
- A scrutiny process will add evidenced value to the issue.
- It reflects public interest.
- It is a corporate priority (ie linked to the Corporate Plan).
- It does not duplicate work of other member bodies or work being undertaken by officers or external bodies.
- The impact of scrutiny involvement is capable of being measurable.

9.2 The committee will have a rolling programme of task and finish groups scheduled as part of its work programme, so as to minimise downtime between Task and Finish Groups.

## 10. **AGENDAS – REQUEST FOR ITEMS**

10.1 The work programme is to be reviewed annually and will be updated periodically throughout the year. Any member of the Committee shall be entitled to submit a request to the Chair that they wish an item relevant to the functions of that Committee to be included on its work programme. This request should include sufficient information to enable the Scrutiny Officer to advise about the nature and purpose of the item, with regard to the criteria set out above, and to have a discussion with the Chair of the Committee and wider membership. Members may be required to complete a form in order to assist them in this.

10.2 In finalising agendas for individual meetings of the Committee, the Scrutiny Officer shall liaise with the Chair of the Committee.

## 11. **RIGHTS OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO DOCUMENTS**

11.1 In addition to their rights as Councillors, Members of the Committee have the additional right to documents, and to notice of meetings as set out in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.

## 12. **MEMBERS AND OFFICERS GIVING ACCOUNT**

12.1 The Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any Council functions. As well as reviewing documentation, in fulfilling the Scrutiny role, it may require any member of the Cabinet,

the Chief Executive and/or any senior officer to attend before it to explain in relation to matters within their remit:

- any particular decision or series of decisions;
- the extent to which the actions taken implement Council policy; and/or
- their performance

and it is the duty of those persons to attend if so required.

12.2 Where any member or officer is required to attend the Committee under this provision, the Scrutiny Officer (under instruction from the Chair) shall inform them giving at least 7 working days notice of the meeting at which he or she is required to attend (unless agreed otherwise). Any notice will state the nature of the item on which he or she is required to attend to give account and whether any papers are required to be produced for the Committee.

12.3 Where the account to be given to the Committee will require the production of a report, then the member or officer concerned will be given sufficient notice to allow for preparation of that documentation.

12.4 Where, in exceptional circumstances, the member or officer is unable to attend on the required date, then the Committee shall in consultation with the member or officer arrange an alternative date for attendance.

### 13. **ATTENDANCE BY OTHERS**

13.1 The Committee may invite people to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. It may for example wish to hear from residents, stakeholders and representatives from other parts of the public sector and shall invite such people to attend. Representatives from Council companies and key contractors may be invited to attend and address or answer questions. Depending on the terms of the contract, the Council may be able to require attendance, but consideration should be given to whether any part of the meeting should be held in private if matters of commercial confidence are to be discussed.

### 14. **CALL-IN – CABINET DECISIONS**

14.1 As part of reviewing or scrutinising decisions made in connection with the discharge of executive functions, the Committee has the power to call in a decision where it has not yet been implemented. This permits the Committee to recommend that the decision be reconsidered or for it to be reviewed by Full Council. This is a power which should only be used for key strategic decisions.

14.2 It is important that the call-in process is not abused, nor causes unreasonable delay; the main tool of the Committee is to improve delivery of policies and services through pre-decision scrutiny, rather than call-ins.

14.3 A decision can be called-in when Members:

- Believe it may be contrary to the normal requirements for decision making.
- Believe it may be contrary to the Council's agreed policy framework and/or budget.

- Need further information from the decision-taker to explain why it was taken.

14.4 Exceptions to call-in are as follows:

- that no decision considered and determined by the Committee within the preceding 6 months shall be subject to call-in;
- that call-in can be invoked in respect of any one decision only once;
- where the decision is taken by the Cabinet as urgent and in accordance with urgency procedures, this will only be subject to post-implementation scrutiny.

14.5 Every Cabinet decision which is subject to call-in cannot be implemented until the end of the call-in period or the conclusion of any call-in process, whichever is later. The call-in period lasts for 5 working days after the publication of the decision. Notice of the decision shall be published within 2 working days of being made, and copies of the decisions will be sent to all Committee Members.

14.6 The notice of decision will bear the date on which it is published and will specify that the decision will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiry of 5 working days after the publication of the decision, unless the decision is called in under the provisions set out below.

14.7 Within the call-in period a collective of three elected Members of the Authority may sign a notice requesting that the decision is called in and submit the notice to the Statutory Scrutiny Officer and Head of Democratic Services. The notice should give reasons for the request for call-in, having regard to the principles of decision making set out in Article 12 of this Constitution. Requests may also be submitted by email, and in this case, only one Member need submit the actual form, but individual emails in support of the request must be submitted by the other two members specified on the form before the end of the call-in period. A form setting out the information required when submitting a call-in is available from the Scrutiny Office.

14.8 On receipt of the notice of call-in the Statutory Scrutiny Officer will, as soon as possible, notify and seek the views of the Chair and the Monitoring Officer or in their absence, their deputies, as to the reasonableness of the request. The Monitoring Officer will assess the validity of the call-in, in consultation with the Committee Chair. If the Monitoring Officer is minded to reject the call-in, reasons will be given.

14.9 The Statutory Scrutiny Officer will submit a report to the next available meeting of the Committee giving details of the request and Monitoring Officer's reasons for refusing it.

14.10 If it is considered that the request for call-in is valid, the Statutory Scrutiny Officer will convene a meeting of the Committee, unless there is a normal meeting within a reasonable period. Committee members and the relevant lead member/senior officer are expected to make themselves available at short notice to attend the meeting and provide additional information.

## 15. **CALL-IN – OFFICER KEY DECISIONS**

15.1 The Committee has the power to call-in key decisions made under delegated authority by officers. The purpose is to consider whether to recommend that a decision be reviewed by the Cabinet. This is a power which should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

15.2 If a key decision is made by an officer, it will be recorded in a similar format to the cabinet template and details of the decision will be published and included on the schedule of significant decisions circulated to all Members on a monthly basis.

15.3 Within the call-in period a collective of three elected Members of the Authority may sign a notice requesting that the decision is called in and submit the notice to the Statutory Scrutiny Officer and Head of Democratic Services. The notice should give reasons for the request for call-in, having regard to the principles of decision making set out in Article 12 of this Constitution. Requests may also be submitted by email, and in this case, only one Member need submit the actual form, but individual emails in support of the request must be submitted by the other two members specified on the form before the end of the call-in period. A form setting out the information required when submitting a call-in is available from the Scrutiny Office.

15.4 The notice of call-in shall be dealt with as with a call-in of a Cabinet decision.

## 16. **CALL-IN – ACTIONS THE COMMITTEE CAN TAKE**

16.1 Where the Committee considers a call-in request, the format of the meeting will be as follows:-

- after the Chair opens the meeting the members who asked for the decision to be called-in will be asked to explain their reasons for the request and what they feel should be reviewed;
- the relevant portfolio holder (or holders if more than one is relevant) will then be invited to make any comments;
- the relevant Director or his/her representative will advise the Committee on the background and context of the decision and its importance to achieving Service priorities;
- Committee members will ask questions of members and officers in attendance (note: the call-in proposers would not be able to take part in the Committee's deliberations of the call-in);
- the portfolio holder(s) will be invited to make any final comments on the matter.

16.2 The Committee, after considering the evidence presented to the meeting, will make one of the following decisions:

- Agree to take no further action on the decision (reason for that decision to be recorded in the minutes and Members are advised).
- Refer the decision back to the decision-maker for re-consideration, or to Cabinet (in the case of an officer decision), making any recommendations in relation to the decision.
- Refer the matter to Full Council to scrutinise the decision.
- The Committee can make wider recommendations to Cabinet, including lessons learned as part of a recommendation to Cabinet, whilst also agreeing that no further action is required in relation to the specific decision.

## 17. **RESPONSE/ACTION THAT CAN BE TAKEN BY CABINET ON RECEIPT OF VIEWS OF THE COMMITTEE**

17.1 On receipt of a call-in report from the Committee, Cabinet/the officer can:

- Make the original decision without any changes.
- Reconsider the decision and reach a different decision – reasons must be given for reaching a different decision and it must be supported by evidence.
- For an officer, refer the matter to Cabinet for a decision.
- In addition to the above options, Cabinet can decide that it wishes to receive a further report on any wider learning points resulting from the Committee's recommendations, for instance a review of policy.

17.2 On receipt of a report from Committee for other matters, Cabinet can:

- Note and agree with the recommendations of the Committee (including agreeing to some but not all recommendations).
- Request officers to undertake further work in response to recommendations.
- Refer the matter to Full Council or a committee for action.
- Note and not accept the recommendations, giving reasons back to the Committee.

## 18. **URGENCY**

18.1 A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests.

18.2 The record of the decision, and notice by which it is made public shall state whether in the opinion of the decision maker, the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in.

## 19. **CONSIDERATION OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS BY THE CABINET**

19.1 The agenda for Cabinet meetings shall include a standing item entitled 'References from Overview and Scrutiny'. The reports of the Committee referred to the Cabinet shall be included at this point in the agenda (unless they have been considered in the context of the Cabinet deliberations on a substantive item on the agenda) as soon as practicable. Where an item is not considered by the Cabinet within two months, the Cabinet will give an explanation of the reasons to the Chair of the Committee as soon as practicable.

19.2 The Committee will have access to the Cabinet's forward plan and decision notices.

## 20. **COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION**

20.1 The Councillor Call for Action is a mechanism for enabling elected Members to bring matters of local concern to the attention of the Council, via the Scrutiny process.



20.2 Any Member may request that an item is placed on the agenda of the Committee for consideration. The Member making that request does not have to be a member of the Committee.

20.3 The Call for Action should be an option of “last resort”. In considering whether to refer to a matter in accordance with these provisions, Members must have regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State. A Call for Action will only be included on the Committee agenda if the Chair, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, is satisfied that:

- the Member has made all reasonable efforts to resolve the matter via direct liaison with council officers and/or relevant partners;
- the issue of concern is a matter in respect of which the Council has a statutory power or duty and is not precluded by adopted Council policy or legislation; and
- the issue of concern has a demonstrable impact on a part or the whole of the Member’s electoral ward.

and accordingly information to support the above matters should accompany the Call for Action request.

20.4 A Call for Action cannot, in any event, relate to:

- a planning decision;
- a licensing decision;
- any matter concerning an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment;
- any matter which is vexatious, discriminatory or not reasonable to be included in the agenda for, or to be discussed at, a meeting of the Committee; or
- any matter which is a local crime and disorder matter for the purposes of Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

20.5 If the Chair rejects the Call for Action the Member who made the request shall be provided with reasons for the decision.

20.6 A valid Call for Action will be considered at the next ordinary meeting of the Committee or at a special meeting of the Committee within 14 days of validation whichever is the sooner.

20.7 The subject matter of the Call for Action will be the subject of a report from the relevant Director, with such supporting information and evidence as is reasonably available. If the matter also or exclusively entails consideration of information held by another public body or partner, an appropriate representative shall be invited to the Committee meeting to provide that information, make representations and answer questions.

20.8 The Call for Action will be considered by the Committee in public session unless consideration of the issues involves the disclosure of exempt or confidential information as defined by the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution.

20.9 The Member who referred the matter under sub-paragraph 20.2 above may address the Committee in respect of the Call for Action for up to 10 minutes.

20.10 The Committee may also consider representations from any residents of the electoral ward affected by the Call for Action, subject to the discretion of the Chair.

20.11 If the Call for Action concerns issues that fall within the remit of the Cabinet, the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Member shall also attend the Committee to answer questions and make any representations.

## **21. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON CALLS FOR ACTION**

21.1 Where the Committee makes a report or recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet as a result of a reference under paragraph 20.1 above, the Committee may publish the report, subject to the provisions of Part 5 of the Local Government Act 2000 ("the 2000 Act") in relation to confidential or exempt information.

21.2 The Committee will, by notice in writing to the Head of Democratic Services, require the Council or Cabinet:

- to consider the report or recommendations;
- to respond to the Committee indicating what, if any action the Council or Cabinet proposes to take;
- if the Committee has published the report or recommendations, to publish the response, subject to the provisions of Part 5 of the 2000 Act relating to confidential or exempt information;
- if the Committee provided a copy of its report or recommendations to the Member who referred the matter to the Board, to provide that Member with a copy of the response, subject to the provisions of Part 5 of the 2000 Act in relation to confidential or exempt information;

and to do so within two months of the date when the Council or Cabinet received the report or recommendations or (if later) the date when the Head of Democratic Services received the notice.

## **22. SCRUTINY OF CRIME AND DISORDER MATTERS**

22.1 The Committee is designated as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee (in accordance with section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006) with responsibility for scrutinising crime and disorder and community safety matters.

22.2 Any Member of the Council may give notice to the Scrutiny Officer that he/she wishes an item which he/she considers to be a crime and disorder matter to be included on the agenda for discussion at the Committee.

22.3 The procedure for dealing with such requests shall be the same as those for any request for an item to be added to the Committee's work programme.

22.4 The Call for Action and Call-in rules apply to crime and disorder matters in the same way as for other matters.

22.6 Where the Panel makes a report or recommendations to the Council it must:

- provide a copy of the report or recommendations to the Member who referred the matter to the Committee and
- provide a copy of the report or recommendations to such of:
  - (a) the responsible authorities (within the meaning of Section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998); and
  - (b) the co-operating persons and bodies (i.e. those persons and bodies with which the responsible authorities have a duty to co-operate under Section 5(2) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998);as it thinks appropriate.

22.7 Where the Committee makes a report or recommendations to the Council or provides a copy of a report or recommendations, the Committee must notify the Council, body or person to whom it makes or provides a copy of the report or recommendations that the Council, body or person must:

- consider the report or recommendations;
- respond to the Committee indicating what (if any) action it proposes to take;
- have regard to the report or recommendations in exercising its functions.

22.8 For the purpose of carrying out its functions under the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations, 2009, the Committee will meet to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of the crime and disorder functions, no less than once in every 12 month period.

22.9 Where the Committee makes a report or recommendations to a responsible authority or to a co-operating person or body in accordance with section 19(8)(b) of the Police and Justice Act 2006, the Committee shall review the responses received and monitor the action (if any) taken by the relevant authority, person or body in accordance with its powers under section 19(1) of the 2006 Act.



## ARTICLE 6 – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

- 1 The Council will appoint an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as shown in the table below to discharge the functions conferred by Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and regulations made thereunder.

<b>Committee/Sub Committee</b>	<b>Scope</b>
Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All Overview and Scrutiny functions on behalf of the Council including statutory duties relating to Health, Crime and Disorder.</li><li>• The co-ordination of the Overview and Scrutiny work plan including the allocation of issues to Task and Finish Groups.</li></ul>

### **General Role**

- 2 Within its terms of reference, the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee will:
- (i) review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
  - (ii) make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the Executive and/or any other Committee in connection with the discharge of any functions;
  - (iii) consider any matter affecting the Borough or its inhabitants; and
  - (iv) review decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive and any other Committee, where these have been called-in.
- 3 The Committee will meet in public when it has formal business to conduct, unless confidential or exempt information is being considered.

### **Specific Functions**

- 4 **Policy Development and Review** - The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee may:
- (i) Assist the Council and the Executive in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues;
  - (ii) conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
  - (iii) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
  - (iv) question Members of the Executive, other Committees and Directors about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area; and

- (v) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.

**5 Scrutiny Functions – The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee shall:**

- (i) review and scrutinise decisions made by, and the performance of, the Executive, certain Committees and Council Officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
- (ii) review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets, data quality and/or particular service areas;
- (iii) question decision-makers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- (iv) make recommendations to the Executive and/or appropriate Committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- (v) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Committee and local people about their activities and performance; and
- (vi) question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).

**6 Improvement Functions - The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee shall:**

- (i) Monitor and drive improvement against any Directions by the Secretary of State and other external or internal inspections, reviews, performance information at their own discretion.
- (ii) Monitor and drive progress of major corporate improvement initiatives.
- (iii) Scrutinise and contribute to the council's budget-setting cycle and monitor the council's financial recovery
- (iv) Scrutinise proposals for, and delivery of, major savings initiatives, including their impact on partners and residents

**7. Annual Report.** The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee must report annually to the full Council.

**Proceedings of Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee**

- 7 The Committee will conduct its proceedings in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure rules set out in part 4 of this Constitution.

**Statutory Scrutiny Officer**

**8 The Statutory Scrutiny Officer will**

- (a) promote the role of overview and scrutiny within the locality,
- (b) provide support to the authority's scrutiny function
- (c) provide support and guidance to-
  - (i) members of the authority,
  - (ii) such persons who are not members of the authority but who sit on an overview and scrutiny committee or committees,
  - (iii) officers of the authority,
  - (iv) other designated persons to which section 9F(2) applies in relation to the authority's scrutiny function.

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## Slough Borough Council

<b>Report To:</b>	Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	27 June 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Improvement and Recovery update
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Dexter Smith, Leader of the Council
<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Stephen Brown
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Sarah Hayward
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Key Decision:</b>	NO
<b>Exempt:</b>	NO
<b>Decision Subject To Call In:</b>	NO
<b>Appendices:</b>	<p>Appendix 1 – Report to Improvement and Recovery Board 25 May 2023</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Report to Improvement and Recovery Board 27 April 2023</p> <p>Appendix 1 – Report to Improvement and Recovery Board 23 March 2023</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Commissioners second report  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slough-borough-council-commissioners-second-report">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slough-borough-council-commissioners-second-report</a></p> <p>Appendix 5 – Ministerial response to Commissioners second report  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slough-borough-council-ministerial-response-to-commissioners-second-report">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slough-borough-council-ministerial-response-to-commissioners-second-report</a></p> <p>Appendix 6 – Letter to Chief Executive  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slough-borough-council-letter-to-chief-executive">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slough-borough-council-letter-to-chief-executive</a></p>

### 1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report provides the quarterly update to Scrutiny on progress being made by the Council against the Secretary of State Directions issued in December 2021, and the overall council recovery plan.
- 1.2 This report also sets out the current position with Government intervention. Commissioners wrote to the Secretary of State in December 2022 to provide a detailed overview of the progress made by the Council during the first year of

intervention. The Secretary of State subsequently wrote to the Council on 16 March 2023.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1.3 Scrutiny is requested to make any comments on the following to inform the consideration of this report by Cabinet:
  - a) Note and comment on the progress made by the Council since the previous report in addressing the Directions of the Secretary of State;
  - b) Note the content of the Commissioners report and letters from the Secretary of State;
  - c) Agree to the next steps to deliver against the issues raised by Commissioners and the Secretary of State as set out in the action plans and other workstreams that have been developed to address the Directions.

### **Reason**

- 1.4 Since the last report in February there have been three meetings of the Improvement and Recovery Board in March, April and May. Copies of the reports to these meetings are attached as Appendices.
- 1.5 The Commissioners wrote to the Secretary of State on 22 December setting out the position of the Council against the Directions during the first year of intervention.
- 1.6 The Secretary of State has subsequently written to the Council.
- 1.7 Formal meetings with Commissioners continue monthly in the form of the Improvement and Recovery Board. Quarterly updates will continue to be brought to Scrutiny and Cabinet setting out the detail of the issues reported on at these progress meetings along with additional areas of focus and activity as required by Commissioners.
- 1.8 This report and the appendices set out the progress made to date and the next steps to accelerate change against the journey to recovery and improvement.

### **Commissioner Review**

“Scrutiny Committee will wish to satisfy itself that appropriate leadership, programme and project management skills are being deployed to ensure that the ambitions presented to them are delivered on time and on budget”

## **2. Repor**

### **Introduction**

- 2.1 As previously reported Members are aware the Council received a formal direction from DLUHC made under s.15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999, including a direction that prescribed functions are to be exercised by Commissioners; and the appointment of Commissioners from 1 December 2021.
- 2.2 The Council took a number of steps, including approving a new Corporate Plan in May 2022 that set out its strategy for improvement. This is in the process of

being refreshed and a report will be submitted to June Cabinet to approve a version for public consultation.

- 2.3 Commissioners have recognised that there is now a more holistic approach to reporting progress against the various action plans in place to address the Directions and this is presented in the reports attached to the Improvement and Recovery Board.
- 2.4 The Commissioners' report to the Secretary of State dated 22 December 2022 sets out the position after the first 12 months of intervention and highlights a number of outstanding concerns which are summarised in the Background section of this report.
- 2.5 The Secretary of State subsequently wrote to the council in March.

### **3 Options considered**

- 3.1 It was agreed by Cabinet in November that regular public reporting on the Council's ongoing response to Government intervention was essential to ensure transparency and accountability.
- 3.2 This report enables the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee to comment on the next steps for the council following the issues raised in the letters from Commissioners and the Secretary of State.
- 3.3 A separate report is being submitted to June Cabinet on a refresh of the Corporate Plan to set the direction of the council in light of the ongoing challenges faced.

### **Background**

- 3.4 It is now over a year since Commissioners were appointed by the Secretary of State. During that time the Council has had the opportunity to discuss with Commissioners the extent of the challenges it faces.
- 3.5 The Commissioner team has changed recently with the appointment of Gerard Curran and Denise Murray in May 2023, replacing Max Caller and Denise Murray. Gavin Jones remains as the Lead Commissioner. A first meeting of the Improvement and Recovery Board with new Commissioners and the new Leader of the Council took place in May.
- 3.6 Cabinet agreed in November to a more holistic method of reporting progress against the Directions and this has been welcomed by Commissioners.
- 3.7 Senior level appointments including the Chief Executive, Executive Directors for Finance & Commercial and Strategy & Improvement have created more of a sense of stability and an ability to oversee a refreshed corporate approach to financial planning, improvement and recovery.
- 3.8 The Commissioners' report to the Secretary of State sets out the position after the first 12 months of intervention and highlights a number of outstanding concerns. These include:
  - Pace of progress and ongoing need for SBC to understand the implications of the Directions and the changes required, both political and officer
  - Lack of progress to promote and embed culture change
  - Challenge of achieving ambitious savings requirements combined with rising service demand particularly children's services

- External audit and opinion for 2018/19 not yet complete and likely to raise procurement and asset concerns
  - Implications of the acquisition of the Akzo Nobel site
  - Ongoing issues with Slough Children First business plan and financial investment requirement
  - Requirement for a member committee on SBC companies
  - Requirement for continued financial support beyond the period of the Directions
  - Long-term planning for the viability of the council
- 3.9 It is clear that Commissioners remain extremely concerned at the pace of progress and the long term viability of the council.
- 3.10 For these reasons, the appendices to this report present an overview of the workstreams in place to address each of the Directions and how these have been reported to Commissioners.
- 3.11 To address the specific issues of concern raised by Commissioners the format of the Improvement and Recovery Board has been amended so that alongside the standard reporting on the Directions, there are now 'deep dives' into individual Directions or other recovery workstreams.
- 3.12 A separate report on the council's strategic direction in the form of a refreshed Corporate Plan is being submitted to June Cabinet. This will address:
- The focus of the Council on Improvement and Recovery
  - Set a renewed purpose and set of strategic priorities for the council
  - Ensure greater alignment with the medium term financial strategy.
- 3.13 In addition, the Cabinet and other member forums continue to receive reports which relate to specific directions and improvements, including finance action plan updates, reports on specific company governance, updates on ICT, procurement and internal audit progress, asset disposal recommendations and updates and updates on senior officer staffing restructure.

## **4 Implications of the Recommendation**

### **Financial implications**

- 4.1 This progress update report is intended to complement existing financial reporting in particular against the Financial Action Plan. Any actions arising from the recommendations will be funded from within existing budgets.

### **Legal implications**

- 4.2 On 1 December 2021 the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities made statutory directions requiring the Council to take prescribed actions and that certain functions be exercised from this date by appointed Commissioners, acting jointly or severally. The directions were extended on 1 September 2022. The directions were made under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999 due to the Council having failed to comply with its best value duty. The

general duty of best value is set out in section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 and requires local authorities 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”. This requires consideration of overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision. There is also a duty to consult when deciding how to fulfil the best value duty.

4.3 Annex A of the directions set out the action the Council is required to take. This included functional capability assessments of all service areas and preparing and agreeing an improvement plan containing a number of action plans. The functional capability assessments were reported to Cabinet in March 2022 and have formed the basis of service delivery plans. The improvement plan was approved by full Council in May 2022 with a series of recovery themes. Work is continuing on the detail of the action plans under each of these themes. The Council is required to report to the Commissioners on the delivery of the Improvement Plan at six monthly intervals or such intervals as the Commissioners may direct. The Council has been reporting to the Commissioners at monthly improvement and recovery boards and will be adopting the recent feedback given by the commissioners in meetings on each of the action plans. There is a specific direction on a programme of cultural change. A report was brought to Cabinet in March 2022 agreeing actions against this direction and this work underpins all other actions plans and recovery work. There is also a specific direction on reviewing the Council’s companies. Progress on this has been reported in the Finance Action Plan, as well as in standalone reports. Reports will be presented to Cabinet on each of the remaining companies this financial year. There is a specific direction on better and evidence-based decision making, including enhancing the use of data and insight. This underpins all Council action plans and improvements as it is at the centre of how public bodies should make decisions.

4.4 Annex C sets out the functions to be exercised by the Commissioners. This includes functions associated with governance and scrutiny of strategic decisions, requirements for the proper administration of financial affairs, functions associated with the oversight of collection of revenues and benefits and appointment of the three statutory governance officers and the scrutiny officer, as well as functions to define the officer structure at a senior level, determine recruitment processes and recruit relevant staff to these positions. The Explanatory Memorandum to this Direction confirms that in practice most decisions are expected to be taken by the Council, however the Directions are designed to give the Commissioners the power to tackle weaknesses identified to ensure the Council is better equipped to meet the best value requirements. Cabinet should have regard to the advice and comments of the Commissioners contained in this report.

### **Risk management implications**

4.5 The table below sets the key risks

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Mitigations</b>
Financial	Failure to deliver financial sustainability	Financial action plan, Capitalisation Directive and immediate to long-term savings plans
Legal	Failure to address the Directions and	Appointment of new interim Monitoring Officer to bolster capacity

Risk	Summary	Mitigations
	demonstrate compliance with the Council's best value duties or other legal duties leading to increased legal challenges to decision-making and further statutory intervention.	at senior management level. Recruitment of interim support for governance and scrutiny.  A whole system approach, focusing on the basics of local government governance and decision making, including training and development and involvement of legal services at an earlier stage of policy formulation.
Reputational	Failure to meet the requirements contained in the Directions leading to further intervention from Government	A more comprehensive and corporate approach has been developed building on lessons learned over the past year to provide greater confidence in the Council's journey and direction of travel

## Environmental Implications

4.6 There are no direct environmental implications as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

## Equality implications

4.7 The Council has a duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day-to-day business and to keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

## Procurement implications

- 4.8 One of the Directions includes specific reference to the procurement and contract management function and this is detailed in the Appendix.

**Workforce implications**

- 4.9 Any future changes to the workforce will be subject to full statutory processes and consultation.

**Property implications**

- 4.10 The Council has developed an Asset Disposal Strategy and this has been approved by Cabinet.

**5 Background Papers**

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Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board

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Progress Report  
23-Mar-23

*Report Owner: Sarah Hayward, ED Strategy and Improvement*  
*Report Author: Strategy and Improvement Team*

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- Appendices - Supporting Evidence / Detail.



# Open and Closing Actions

Ref	Status	Description of Action	Date Raised	Raised By	Owner	Progress	Date Last Updated	Target Date	RAG
AC-002	Open	Commissioners to set up a working session with a cross-party group to discuss how to implement recovery plans at the same time as running council services.	28-Jul-22	IRB	Max Caller	<p><b>26/01/23</b> - Discussion at IRB on whether to do it after the election. This was agreed by those present. Max will put it the calendar for all. Carry over for update after the election.</p> <p><b>28/11/22</b> - Pending the availability of approved Recovery Plans against all Directions.</p> <p><b>29/09/22</b> - TBC: Original date no longer available.</p>	09-Feb-23	31-May-23	
AC-007	Open	Stephen Brown agreed to take forward work to look into lessons learned from the capability assessments done as part of the 'Our Futures' restructure, including how the organisation who did 'gate one' assessments were commissioned and if scrutiny/audit should be involved in this processes.	29-Sep-22	IRB	Stephen Brown Sarah Wilson	<p><b>23/02/23</b> - Expect to be incorporated into Directions Workstream - carry over</p> <p><b>26/01/23</b> - This is expected to be incorporated into Directions Workstream</p> <p><b>20/12/22</b> - Task and Finish group evidence gathering sessions have been completed and report is being drafted in consultation with the chair.</p> <p><b>20/12/22</b> - Findings of Task and Finish Group will be reported to the O&amp;S Committee in January 2023 with recommendations to be made to cabinet and other member forums in January/February 2023.</p> <p><b>24/11/22</b> - The O&amp;S Committee has set up a task and finish group to look at the commissioning and contract management processes and this includes looking at how Gate One was commissioned and delivery measured. This follows a lead Member and Directors meeting on a learning lessons report where it was decided not to take this to a formal cabinet meeting, as the learning had been captured and not much to be gained from having a public ...</p>	23-Feb-23	TBC	
AC-014	Open	Pat Hayes to provide Commissioners with trend information	23-Feb-23	IRB	Pat Hayes		23-Feb-23	Before 23-Mar-23	
AC-015	Open	Max wanted to see the transformation and culture change accelerated and asked Stephen Brown and Sarah Hayward to prioritise this and to provide a full report to Cabinet as a matter of urgency.	23-Feb-23	IRB	Stephen Brown Sarah Hayward		23-Feb-23	Soonest, priority	

# Open and Closing Actions

Ref	Status	Description of Action	Date Raised	Raised By	Owner	Progress	Date Last Updated	Target Date	RAG
AC-016	Open	Sarah would report on progress at the March Board.	23-Feb-23	IRB	Sarah Hayward		23-Feb-23	23-Mar-23	
AC-017	Open	Claire to expedite getting the invitations done for Paul Moffat, Cllr Ajaib and Max Caller and IRB.	23-Feb-23	IRB	Claire Willerton		23-Feb-23	Soonest	
AC-018	Open	Chair of the audit committee to provide a report to Commissioners	23-Feb-23	IRB	Chair of Audit Committee Cllr Kelly		23-Feb-23	23-Mar-23	

Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board

## Section Two - Headlines

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1. Accounts, budget and CTS agreed at Council on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
2. Progress against the Headline Recovery “Plan on a Page” has been positive over the last period.
3. Getting the basics right in some areas continues to be a challenge, for example the timely production of reports for Commissioners and Members. This will be a key focus of the Culture Programme and supporting streams.

# Recovery Combined "Plan on a Page"

Note, RAG status against individual milestones does not represent overall service status

Feb-23 Mar-23 Apr-23 May-23 Jun-23 Jul-23 Aug-23 Sep-23 Oct-23 Nov-23 Dec-23 Jan-24 > Jan-24

## Oversight

◆ IRB (Feb-23, Mar-23, Apr-23, May-23, Jun-23, Jul-23, Aug-23, Sep-23, Oct-23, Nov-23)  
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (incl. Grant Thornton audit) (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (Jun-23)  
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (Sep-23)  
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (Dec-23)

## Financial Sustainability

Future Years Budget Exploration & Savings Ideation (Mar-23 to Jun-23)  
 2024/25 Draft Budget Preparation (Jun-23 to Sep-23)  
 2024/25 Budget Finalisation (Sep-23 to Dec-23)  
 S151 Arrives (Feb-23)  
 2023/24 Budget Update & Approval (Mar-23)  
 2024/25 Budget Update Available (May-23)  
 2024/25 Draft Budget (Sep-23)  
 Financial Settlement (Dec-23)  
 2018/19 Accounts Audit Complete (Feb-23)  
 2019/20 Accounts Audit Complete (Aug-23)  
 2020/21 Accounts Audit Complete (Nov-23)

## Asset Disposal

On-going Asset Disposal Programme (Feb-23 to Jan-24)  
 \*\*\*Quarterly receipts forecasts to be revised.

## Procurement & Contract Mgmt.

Contracts Register Reviews (focussed to ensure up to date and robust, then six-monthly thereafter) (Feb-23 to Jun-23)  
 Six-Monthly Register Reviews Start (Jan-24)  
 ◆ Mgmt. Framework (Feb-23)  
 ◆ Contracts Register on Finance System (Mar-23)  
 ◆ KPI's Monitoring (Feb-23)  
 ◆ Procurement process mapping (Mar-23)

## Subsidiary Companies

Increase Member Oversight (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 Present and Implement Annual Business Plans for JEH, GRE5, SCF (Mar-23 to Sep-23)  
 ◆ JEH, GRE5, SUR Business Plans to Cabinet (Mar-23)  
 DISH Review (Jun-23)  
 ◆ Undertake and Implement Recommendations for Governance Reviews (Jul-23 to Dec-23)  
 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Sep-23)  
 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Nov-23)  
 Exit from GRE5 & SUR 2024/25 (Dec-23)  
 ◆ (Jan-24)

## Democratic Governance & Scrutiny

P2a – Short Term (incl. CfGS review response) (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 P2b – Short to Medium Term (incl. improving Member and Officer decision making processes, introductory training) (Mar-23 to Jan-24)  
 P3 – Medium to Long Term (incl. improved partnership governance, longer-term planning & decision making) (Mar-23 to Jan-24)  
 ◆ Governance & Culture Workshop (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Whole Council Elections (Apr-23)  
 Agree Member Dev Programme (Mar-23)  
 Deliver Member Development Programme (Apr-23 to Jun-23)  
 ◆ Post-Election Member Survey (Oct-23)  
 ◆ Present Reports on T&F Groups linked to Recovery (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Implement new Scrutiny Structure, delivery training and finalise annual work programme (Jun-23)

## Internal Audit

◆ First Tranche of IA Recruitment Complete (Feb-23)  
 Transition RSM to In-House Team (Mar-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Audit Plan available (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Finance Board Update on IA way forward (Mar-23)  
 Review against PSIAS Standards (Jan-24) ◆

## ICT & Digital

Corporate Telephony (Feb-23)  
 Updated ICT Strategy (Mar-23)  
 Data-Centre Relocation Completes (Apr-23)  
 Security and Resilience, incl. DR Improvements (Apr-23)  
 Service Management Customer Portal Go-Live (Mar-23)  
 Mobile Telephony (Sep-23)  
 Service Management – Ph 2 Go -Live (Sep-23)

## Mgmt. Structure & Recruitment





Recruitment Process Optimisation (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 ◆ ED & AD Levels Complete (Mar-23)

## Workforce & Culture


P1 - Defining Future & Quick Wins (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 P2 - Reshaping for Performance (Mar-23 to Aug-23)  
 P3 – Optimised Delivery (Aug-23 to Jan-24)  
 ◆ Leadership Roadshow (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Improved PM (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Staff Survey (Apr-23)  
 ◆ CLT & Governance Restructure (Apr-23)  
 ◆ Q'ly Perf Rep (Jun-23)  
 ◆ Leadership Roadshow (Sep-23)  
 ◆ Q'ly Perf Rep (Sep-23)  
 ◆ Staff Survey (Dec-23)







# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
1	Functional Capability Assessment	Sarah Hayward	Dean Tyler		01-Dec-22		=	<b>14/10</b> - Service plans have been completed, which will address gaps in capability. These are continuing to be iterated to ensure coherence across services and alignment with the corporate plan. SLT will act as the governance body for the service planning. Next steps are to develop reporting arrangements for monitoring progress in delivery, and ensure lessons for next year are captured.
2	Avoid Poor Governance or Financial Mismanagement	Steve Mair	Steve Muldoon / Liton Rahman	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	Continuous		=	<b>28/10</b> - Extensive finance business plan completed March 2022. Developed a medium and long term financial planning framework. Implemented changes to obtain best value for money. Ensuring financial implications of decisions are understood. Improving capacity, capability and culture to enable future success and monitoring of progress through the Finance Action plan. Embedding strong Financial Governance and risk management. Further improvements in Governance and Culture across the council will also contribute towards the delivery of this direction.
3a	Financial Sustainability Action Plan	Steven Mair	Steve Muldoon / Liton Rahman	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-29		=	<b>13/10</b> - The Finance action plan covers 10 years in detail from 2015/16 to 2024/25 and is supplemented by a 14 year active financial model (to 2028/29). Key elements are: Accounts, Assets sales, Capitalisation direction, Revenue budgets, Borrowings, MRP, DSG, Internal audit, Risks and mitigations Finance structure and Directions/recommendations from DLUHC, GT, CIPFA, Directions. The plan is regularly updated.
3b	Democratic Governance Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Leader	01-Dec-23		=	<p><b>09/03</b> – Updates to a number of workstreams this month as preparation for the election, May AGM, new member cohort, updated constitution, new scrutiny arrangements, induction etc move into their final stages. This workstream’s relationship with the culture change programme is becoming clearer as the project environment continues to mature, making it easier to spot and make use of interdependencies.</p> <p><b>17/02</b> - The action plan is progressing, with two key governance culture workshops held with the extended CLT in January and February, facilitated by Bethan Evans. Actions from these sessions are being reviewed for addition to the plan. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p><b>10/02</b> - Project Support Officer recruitment is underway to assist with planning / tracking.</p> <p><b>20/01</b> - The action plan is progressing. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p><b>17/11</b> - Democratic governance action plan updated and reported to Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee on 17th November as part of wider update.</p>







# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3c	Scrutiny Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee	01-Dec-23		=	<p><b>09/03</b> – The council’s most robust ever Budget Scrutiny process concluded in this period and the member Survey and a Scrutiny Annual Review workshop have provided opportunities for members to reflect on the year as it draws to a close. Annual Report and Commissioners’ one-year report will be received at the last O&amp;S meeting of the year on 22 March.</p> <p><b>17/02</b> - Excellent feedback from all quarters at the conclusion of the T&amp;F groups pilot, providing an excellent evidence base and lessons learned for next year’s new ways of working. The action plan is progressing, with the second meeting of the member working group on scrutiny taking place on 22 February to continue defining the detail of next year’s arrangements. There were no applicants to the advertised Scrutiny Officer post despite a full programme of advertising in appropriate trade media. The post is to be re-graded and re-issued. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p><b>10/02</b> - Project Support Officer recruitment is underway to assist with planning / tracking.</p> <p><b>20/11 - 20/01</b> - The action plan is progressing. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p><b>17/11</b> - Scrutiny action plan update and reported to Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee on 17th November, as well as separate report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on ....</p>


# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3d  Page 39	Internal Audit Action Plan	Steven Mair	Mike Thomas	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-23			<b>05/12</b> - Pre <b>21/22</b> internal audits - there are now 269 actions or 97 per cent completed from a total of 276 actions. There is a concerted management effort to complete the remaining recommendations which are rated low. For the <b>21/22</b> internal audits - there are now 105 actions or 36% completed from a total of 288 actions. A further 51 or 20% are not yet due for completion. As per the direction, the existing service has been reviewed and a fully costed option appraisal for an in-house internal audit function has been completed. Recruitment advertising completed on <b>25/11/22</b> and 25 applications have been received for the 5 posts. Interviews are being scheduled before Christmas 2022 with appointments expected before March 2023. <b>16/02</b> The new Head of Fin Gov, Internal Audit, Counter Fraud, Risk and Insurance began work with the Council on 3 Feb, Audit Manager starts on 13 /3 and Senior Auditor on 14/4. Two internal auditors need to be recruited or sourced via an agency or consortium. The new team will transition from the current suppliers RSM in the next three or four months. The Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 is being drafted between RSM and the new in-house team. Concerted efforts are being made to respond to and complete all <b>22/23</b> internal audit reports. There are 135 internal audit recommendations from 2021/22 that need to be actioned of which 15 are rated high priority. These have been shared with Department Leadership teams for action and follow up will continue in the coming months. The new Internal Audit team will ....
3e	Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan	Steven Mair	Clare Priest	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	12-Jan-23			<b>28/02</b> - Forward planning for 2023/24 financial year has been completed with all directorates, using the contracts register as a key source of information. Training sessions for staff continue, 95 officers have been trained to date. Process mapping in procurement to externally validate processes and procedures has commenced, excellent level of engagement across all directorates. Working with local partnerships on development of a contract management framework and establishment of a contract management assurance board.

# Directions Progress Summary





Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3f	Information Technology Action Plan	Stephen Brown	Simon SharkeyWoods	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	11-Jan-23			<p><b>03/03</b> - Telephony project commenced and the contact centre and IT ServiceDesk have migrated to the new technology. Resourcing pressures increasing due to contract staff resignations and limited progress on permanent recruitment. The Housing Management System project is taking significant effort from the team but changes to the project team are planned to improve governance and transparency.</p> <p><b>07/02</b> - Our Technology Operations Manager and Project Support Officer have started with the team and are supporting staff with progressing modernisation works. The ICT &amp; Digital strategy has commenced its passage through governance before being presented to Cabinet in March.</p> <p><b>28/12</b> - ICT &amp; Digital update report discussed at Cabinet and warmly received. New strategy for ICT &amp; Digital Services that is capable of supporting the ongoing change taking place in the Council, will be presented back to Cabinet in first quarter of 2023. Technology Operations Manager recruited and will be joining in January 2023.</p>
3g Page 40	Suitable Officer Structure and Scheme of Delegation	Stephen Brown	Sarah Wilson (MO)	Leader	01-Oct-22			<b>Please see direction 8.</b>
4	Improvement Plan Monthly Reporting	Sarah Hayward	Tony Wisken	Leader	01-Nov-23			<p><b>09/02</b> - Work continues to increase the quality and depth of reporting, particularly to ensure at outcomes focus. The continued rollout of tools and guidance from the Transformation Team is supporting these efforts.</p> <p><b>20/01</b> - Reporting and compliance continues to improve. Further work is required to ensure all updates are provided in a timely manner and are of the appropriate depth / quality.</p> <p><b>24/11</b> - Feedback from the Nov IRB on the revised reporting approach was positive. Minor points of feedback have been reflected in the Dec materials. Further work will be required to align the various Action Plans to a common approach.</p> <p><b>14/10</b> - First new style reporting with improved content and evidence produced for the Oct-22 IRB.</p> <p><b>22/09</b> - Initial draft produced for review with Improvement and Recovery Board.</p>

# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
5	Culture Change	Stephen Brown	Sarah Hayward	Leader	31-Dec-23			<p><b>10/03</b> - 'Concept on a Page' agreed with Stephen Brown. Approval to be sought at Mar IRB by Commissioners to ensure our thinking is aligned. Plans continue to develop, however progress across all streams is being made, but the reporting needs to be improved.</p> <p><b>09/01</b> - Deemle Brain, the new Programme Manager has started as planned. Formal Programme definition and planning is now happening to ensure the work progresses in a coherent manner with all key stakeholders aligned.</p> <p><b>18/01</b> - Programme Manager to lead on Cultural Change expected to start w/c <b>23/01</b>. Workstream level plans continue to develop.</p> <p><b>01/12</b> - Briefing by Nick Kemp has taken place with SLT / CLT on <b>30/11</b>.</p> <p><b>14/11</b> - A consultant, Nick Kemp, has been appointed to support the Programme. Scoping of key activities is currently being progressed.</p>
6	Subsidiary Company Review	Steven Mair / Sarah Wilson	Carmel Booth	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	02-Apr-23			<p><b>20/12</b> - Agreement from leader to extend terms of reference of cabinet committee to include companies, SCF governance review update presented to December Audit and CG Committee, SCF articles of association reviewed and due for approval January cabinet, JEH, GR5 and SCF annual business plans to be presented to cabinet by end of FY. I would tentatively suggest this could be green, but we have not made progress on DISH, but should have done by April. Maybe we should wait for the business plans to go through and the committee to receive its first report.</p> <p><b>05/12</b> - Update given to commissioners and elected members with timescale for formal cabinet reporting on each council as part of annual business planning. Of the eleven companies, six have been shut, four are currently being very actively managed, one, low risk, will follow in <b>23/24</b> (DISH). Capital programme reduced by c £65m, capital receipts of circa £50m will be generated</p>

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# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
7	Evidence Based Decision Making	Sarah Hayward	Sarah Wilson	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	02-Apr-23			<p><b>09/02</b> - First draft of Data Strategy created. Due at CLT in March.</p> <p><b>20/12</b> - Data and insight elements incorporated into democratic governance action plan. Lessons learned incorporated into member level reports, including asset disposals, complaints and procurement reports. Progress updates being taken to formal member meetings to demonstrate progress against strategic priorities, with first progress update taken to Asset Disposal Cabinet Committee in December.</p> <p><b>16/11</b> – Following the Commissioner review meeting, the Data Strategy and Governance Board met to scope actions for 2023. The first milestone will be writing and sign-off of a Corporate Data Strategy. The key messages are included in the slide pack. Budget discussions remain on-going and whether additional investment can be identified will determine if the council can pursue a Growth/Transformative path or a Foundations/Incremental path in responding to this Direction in 2023.</p>
Page 42	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment	Commissioners	Stephen Brown		31-Mar-23			<p><b>03/02</b> - ED for Strategy and Improvement has been appointed. This was the last remaining vacancy in CLT.</p> <p><b>20/01</b> -Recruitment of the S151 has been completed and two deputies is in progress. Director of Children's Services has been appointed and has started 16th January. Two interim AD have been engaged in Property and Housing. ED Strategy and Improvement interviews taking place at the end of January.</p>

Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board

## Section Three – Directions Summary

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2023/24 Savings Delivery Risk Assessment (figures in £'000s)

As @ 16-Mar-23	Saving Totals		Deliverability RAG Assessment					Saving Mitigations		
	Original (Baseline)	Total so far (excl. Non-Deliverable)	Non-Deliverable	Red (no credible plan)	Amber (at risk)	Green (on track)	Delivered	Agreed Sustainable	Agreed One-off	Proposed
Adults	5,688	5,688	0	0	763	4,925	0	0	0	0
Childrens	805	805	0	0	305	500	0	0	0	0
Strategy & Improvement	1,823	1,823	0	0	0	1,823	0	0	0	0
Finance	7,506	7,506	0	0	0	7,494	12	0	0	0
Place	3,700	3,700	0	0	0	3,680	20	0	0	0
Housing, Property & Planning	750	750	0	0	0	750	0	0	0	0
Cross-Council	2,150	2,150	0	750	200	1,200	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Slough Savings</b>	<b>22,422</b>	<b>22,422</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>1,268</b>	<b>20,372</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
			0.0%	3.3%	5.7%	90.9%	0.1%			



Movement from Previous Period	0	0	616	604	12
Previous Period	0	750	1,884	19,768	20

£750k in red relates to the Strategic Commissioning Review for which an external consultancy has just started their review and will report end April. Plan development will follow.



1. Accounts, budget and CTS agreed at Council on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
2. Contract received from DfE for £27m historic debt. Signed and back with DfE awaiting their signature. Likely to be public 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
3. Key focus now has to be delivery of all savings from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, or other planned date where applicable.

The priorities for the Asset Disposal Programme over the next month include:

- Driving for best bids for the sites that are currently being marketed and secure the approvals necessary to move forward with transactions.
- Issue instructions for a third tranche of sites to be marketed.
- Generate wider investment interest in Slough, including a 'Sitematch' event which is being planned for 19 April.
- Progress the Estate Strategy work to identify further disposal opportunities and to help clarify the size of the retained portfolio, moving forward.

## Progress

1. Continued pressure at CLT level to improve timeliness of report writing, now supported by RAG-rated corporate schedule.
2. Review of constitution has commenced and is in progress to inform review at annual council.
3. Member Survey results have been shared with key officer teams and work is underway to identify new actions etc – will be shared with Members at rescheduled 6 April Standards Committee.
4. Proposed Member development and induction plans drafted for rescheduled 6 April Standards Committee.
5. Contributing to revised staff induction programme with key governance / political environment content.
6. Independent remuneration panel appointed and convened for 15 March.
7. Proposed schedule for 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' governance training reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group.
8. Reviewed Significant Officer Decision-making guidance and streamlined publication criteria (for inclusion in review of constitution), re-circulated to Extended CLT.
9. A forward schedule for the management of Asset Disposals is being developed in order to assist with the workflow of those decisions.

## Next Steps

1. A report on the independent remuneration panel will be made to February / March Council for endorsement and approval of their Scheme of Allowances recommendations when received.
2. Report Member Survey baseline results to Standards Committee 6 April.
3. Report Member development and induction plans to Standards Committee 6 April.
4. Extended CLT session on member survey, scrutiny annual report and member induction, 22 March.

## Progress

1. Annual Review and Work Programming Workshop held 2 March, shaping the Scrutiny Annual Review to be received by committee 22 March.
2. Member Working Group on Scrutiny (set up by Council) has completed its meetings, with decisions made about the shape of scrutiny next year, for final review by email and referral to the Constitution Working Group and Council.
3. Member Working Group on Scrutiny has agreed core Terms of Reference for next year's Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, providing focus to next year's work (to be published for reference in Scrutiny Annual Report at 22 March O&S Committee).

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## Next actions

1. Extended CLT item to review Scrutiny Annual Report – emphasis on peers feeding back on the benefits of officers involving themselves in T&F activity, with lessons learned.
2. Constitution redrafting is now under way to bring Member Working Group on Scrutiny's recommendations to reality via the Constitution Working Group and Council (AGM).
3. Final O&S meeting of the year – 22 March – to review Commissioners' one-year letter and DLUHC response, as well as scrutiny annual report.

**A new Internal Audit team has been recruited** and the 'Head of' has been in post since 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023.

### **Pre 21/22 internal audits:**

- There are 3 actions (out of 257) rated as medium or low priority outstanding with actions in place to complete these in the near future.

### **21/22 internal audits:**

- Actions completed as at end of February number 152 or 56 per cent of the total due, with a further 41 or 13 per cent not yet due. A concerted effort is being made by CLT to close the remaining 120 actions that are overdue.

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### **22/23 internal audits:**

- 12 reports have been finalised and a further 6 reports are in draft and being responded to by management. A further 75 actions have been raised for 2022/23 from these reports. 7 actions are overdue and 15 complete.

### **23/24 Internal Audit Plan**

- A draft plan is going to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 14 March 2023, this will be finalised by the new in-house team in the coming months.
- Reports on progress of implementing recommendations are made to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, Risk & Audit Board, Finance Board and CLT Assurance meetings.

Contracts register is being used as a business as usual tool in forward planning procurement activity, this includes consideration of longer term procurement activity required for high value, high risk contracts. It has been used to develop the forward plan/contracts over £180k report for April Cabinet.

Utilising existing IT systems for the contract register – implementation on Agresso due to be complete by the end of June 2023

The training programme on the council's contract procedure rules continues and reflects the revised rules approved by Council in November, 95 officers have been trained to date.

Moved away from relying on expensive consultancy support, by initiating recruitment to a permanent in-house team, engaged a cheaper consultancy to support specialist procurement where needed and to plug short term gaps in resources.

*Note, for detailed Action Tracker, refer to appendix.*

**Further key development activities**

1. Implement the contracts register on the council's finance system – by June 2023 (slight delay due to onboarding of managed service provider).
2. Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management. This is being done with the contract management pioneer programme– from January 2023.
3. Process mapping procurement - focus is on governance to provide the council with external validation on its processes and to make recommendations on improvements – February to March 2023.
4. Establishment of contract management assurance board to drive best practice in contract management . As part of this process, the contract register steering group will be disbanded and the project ended as the project has met its aims and objectives. A lessons learned review will be undertaken in April 2023.
5. Ensure KPI's are meaningful and monitored effectively – from January 2023.
6. Programme of continuous contracts register reviews to ensure the council is getting the best value for money – from September 2023 and six monthly thereafter.
7. Implement the actions in the procurement and contract management strategy that have not yet been undertaken, throughout the 2023/24 financial year.
8. Report went to February Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the Contracts T&F Group recommending improvements to contract management. Recommendations also reported to Cabinet on 27 February.

## The ICT & Digital Team Strategy and Plan

1. The new strategy for ICT & Digital has completed the rounds of review before being taken to Cabinet in March. Commissioners have fed back that the paper needs to be stronger on corporate control of ICT & Digital to ensure that there is minimal duplication and increased impact for any investments made. This has now been incorporated into the text.
2. The strategy will help us move to the vision of providing a trusted digital space where our communities can find the help they need from a range of organisations, often enabling them to solve issues for themselves.
3. Most importantly, the strategy is designed to be flexible enough to accept and welcome change. The opportunity provided by new technologies and/or new ways of working should be exploited more quickly and enable Slough to adapt without major disruption.
4. Some difficult decisions will be required around what we prioritise for improvement and the team will continually engage with CLT and members to ensure that the work being undertaken by the team is aligned to areas of greatest need and impact for residents.



## Current activity and next steps

1. Seek approval of the ICT & Digital Strategy at Cabinet.
2. Continue to work through the high volume of work in the modernisation programme. The housing management system project has now moved to ICT & Digital and continues to be high risk and will take significant focus and resource. New telephony services will continue to be rolled out (ICT ServiceDesk and Contact centre complete), and the new IT service management system for taking support and service requests will be implemented in March.
3. Continue to focus on three core areas that require tight control. These are; audit actions, risk management, and budgeting. New tools have been established to actively manage these areas and the output from them will be shared via the teams monthly service reporting cycle from now on. This reporting is shared with the ED for Strategy & Improvement and the lead member for ICT&D.
4. Continue work on a new standard build for end-user devices that is based on standard, business-class devices that have long-term support by the manufacturer. (Dell devices have been selected and newly elected members will receive these in May. We are working with current members to agree the way these are configured).
5. Continue to assess options for simplifying support process and resourcing for Adults and Children's Services. AD CDIO met with both EDs this week and will develop a proposal to improve this area during March.

1. A concept on a page has been developed, and is shown on the next slide. **We are looking for endorsement by Commissioners.**
2. The Chief Executive has discussed the proposed new driving purpose for the council – i.e. increasing healthy life expectancy – with staff at recent roadshows.
3. Workstream plans continue to develop, however this is not preventing the delivery of defined milestones.
4. Development of the Corporate Plan is progressing as planned. This will be ratified following the May elections.
5. Member feedback from a recent survey has given us a baseline against which to progress and measure. Communication (written and verbal) and Leadership remain concerns with Members.
6. A draft staff survey, supported from the LGA, has been received and will be refined prior to launch.
7. Improved staff engagement through roadshows, vlogs, ‘getting to know you’ sessions with the Chief Exec are progressing well. Visibility and transparency is increasing, but too early to see the impact.
8. “Change Champions” - role profile being validated and will soon be appointed.

Why do we want to do this and what's included?

## Background and Opportunity

Slough's corporate culture was identified by Commissioners as not providing the operating conditions for serious failures in decision making to be identified and addressed. The culture within both Member and Officer groups were cited as being dysfunctional (Jim Taylor Report 2021).

In addition, staff were seen to be demotivated and disempowered, leading to operational risks associated with attrition, performance and recruitment. Both Council and employer brands were cited as opportunities for improvement, where the council had lost purpose and alignment of services aimed for residents.

## Objectives and Benefits (Vision)

1. A Council whose culture promotes and supports effective decision making for residents.
2. Promote and improve healthy life expectancy of residents.
3. A Council that is fiscally astute and sustainable for the long-term.
4. A Council that manages its performance effectively.
5. Attracts the best people to work with and within the Council, retaining and growing their contribution.
6. Is sufficiently agile and informed, incl. data, to adapt to changing demands, and the priorities of the administration of the day.
7. Promotes cross agency and cross silo working where this improves Council or community outcomes.

## Scope

1. Cabinet Members.
2. All elected membership.
3. Executive Officer group.
4. Operational Leaders and Managers.
5. Staff.
6. Service delivery resources.
7. Contribution from residents, partners and other borough stakeholders.
8. Trade Unions and Equalities group.

What are the outcomes and what impedes progress?

## Deliverables / Outcomes

1. A shared vision / intention and behaviours from the Cabinet and Executive teams.
2. Cabinet and executive teams exhibit good and agreed behaviours as part of a culture that is continuously evolving.
3. SBC makes decisions informed around priorities.
4. Induction programme that promotes the culture and purpose of SBC.
5. Budgets that monitored, managed and met.
6. SBC is a good employer, investing in its people, and its reputation as an employer and partner is improving.
7. Changes to services are well managed and deliver measurable results.
8. All colleagues have, and know they have a voice.
9. An environment where Officers and Members can be successful.

## Constraints and Risks

1. The prevailing culture prevents positive culture change.
2. There is insufficient priority given to engaging in cultural change.
3. Effective availability of resources (time / human) to deliver the change agenda.
4. There is a lack of agreed and consistent leadership behaviours.
5. Some existing Officers and Members may be unable / unwilling to make the necessary adjustments.
6. The ongoing presence of Commissioners and their impact on culture, however unintended. Officers and Members need to be ready to lead the organisation without Commissioner support.
7. Poor systems, processes and contracts.

## Assumptions and Dependencies

1. Cabinet, CLT & Senior organisational leadership own the cultural change narrative and journey.
2. The culture will be described within a future narrative that frames behaviour against the Councils contribution for the needs of the residents and community (purpose).
3. Commissioners will need to be engaged throughout, to ensure their expectations / needs are met, and that progress is demonstrated.
4. Resident and partner engagement will be key to ensure their needs are understood and to demonstrate how the organisation is changing for the better.

How, by whom and when will it be delivered?

## Governance and Approach

1. Cultural change will be facilitated by the Corporate Leadership Team and will act as the Programme Board.
2. The delivery of the cultural tasks and projects will be managed through programme disciplines.
3. Progress against Plan, incl. 'Transition States' will be reported to Commissioners through the Improvement & Recovery Board.
4. Members will be updated through governance reporting and briefings.
5. Regular Highlight Reports, in email form, will be issued to the primary Programme Stakeholders.
6. Change readiness and culture changes will be reported to CLT.

## Key Stakeholders and Participants

**Function:** Strategy and Improvement  
**Change Group:** Transformation  
**Exec Director:** Sarah Hayward  
**Cabinet Member:** James Swindlehurst  
**Sponsor:** Stephen Brown  
**Prog. Manager:** Deemple Brain

## Scheduling, Costs and Savings

**Target Start:** Dec-22  
**Target End:** Dec-23  
**Delivery Cost:** £TBC  
**Savings Target:** £TBC  
**Commentary:** No direct savings are anticipated from the Culture work, however being fiscally astute and delivering a sustainable Council for the long-term are key benefits.

1. GRE5 reporting going to Cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
2. Other, non SCF, company business plans drafted and will be at Cabinet in the new financial year.
3. NWQ sale agreed at Cabinet 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023, with completion and exchange imminent.

1. Work has continued to develop the Slough Insights Pack, which will be used to support decision making across the council.
2. This was used to inform a workshop on the corporate plan on 28<sup>th</sup> February, which was an early opportunity for senior leaders to review the plan's strategic priorities.
3. The pack is being finalised. Key highlights will be discussed at the March roadshows and the full pack will be shared on Insight shortly.
4. The outcomes of the LGA residents' survey are being shared with the council from w.c.13/03, which will also be used as part of the evidence base for the corporate plan.

# Improvement & Recovery Board Calendar

Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3	1 2 3	3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5	1 2
9 10 11 12 13	6 7 8 9 10	6 7 8 9 10	10 11 12 13 14	8 9 10 11 12	5 6 7 8 9
16 17 18 19 20	13 14 15 16 17	13 14 15 16 17	17 18 19 20 21	15 16 17 18 19	12 13 14 15 16
23 24 25 26 27	20 21 22 23 24	20 21 22 23 24	24 25 26 27 28	22 23 24 25 26	19 20 21 22 23
30 31	27 28	27 28 29 30 31		29 30 31	26 27 28 29 30

Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4	4 5 6 7 8	2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3	1
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Publish final papers for IRB	9:00am to IRB Administration	Improvement & Recovery Board	Monthly, usually the 4th Thursday
IRB Papers due for CLT	12:00pm to CLT Administration	CLT to pre-approve IRB papers	Wednesday preceding IRB
		IRB Updates and Papers due	12:00pm to Strategy & Transformation

# Forward Plan

Function	CLT Member	Cabinet Member	Initiative / Description	Apr (27/04)	May (25/05)	Jun (22/06)	Jul (22/07)	Aug (24/08)	Sep (28/09)
Finance	Steven Mair	Cllr Robert Anderson	2023/24 Budget Deliverability					Deep Dive	
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Streamlined Recruitment Process			Update			
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Operating Model						
Finance	Steven Mair	Cllr Robert Anderson	Revenue and Benefits						
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Culture Change Programme	Deep Dive			Deep Dive		
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	Cllr Harjinder S. Gahir	Scrutiny	Deep Dive					
Finance	Steven Mair	Cllr Robert Anderson	Internal Audit		Deep Dive				
Finance / Democratic Services	Steven Mair / Sarah Wilson	Cllr Robert Anderson	Subsidiary Company Oversight		Deep Dive				
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Democratic Governance			Deep Dive			
Strategy & Improvement	Sarah Hayward	Cllr Zaffar Ajaib	Information Technology				Deep Dive		
Finance	Steven Mair	Cllr Zaffar Ajaib	Procurement and Contract Management	Update					
Chief Exec	Stephen Brown	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment						
Children's	Sue Butcher	Cllr Christine Hulme	SCF Business Plan SCF Improvement Plan DfE / SEND Response		Deep Dive				

Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board Appendices

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## Contents

- Recent Governance Decisions Taken in Support of Improvement and Recovery
- Previous IRB Decisions Taken
- Subsidiary Company Review - Additional Information
- Evidence Based Decision Making - Examples
- Corporate Risk Register - Extract
- Key Service Updates



# Recent Governance Decisions Taken in Support of Improvement and Recovery

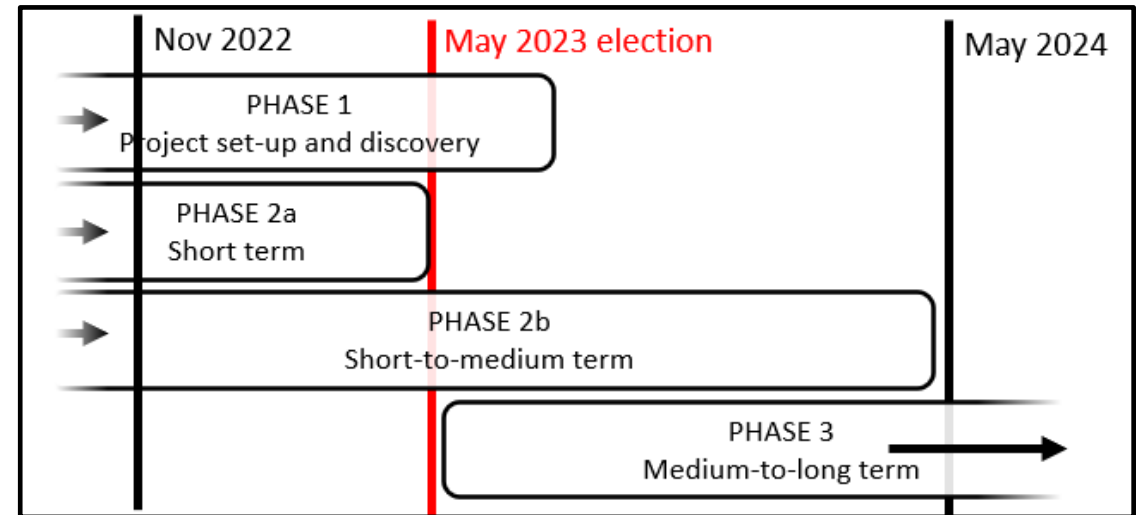
Ref	Report & Subject	Date	Chief & Contact Officers	Portfolio	Key Decision	Summary of Decision	Related Direction and Contribution to Recovery	Link to Document
GD-030	<b>Cabinet Fees and Charges Review</b>	16-Jan-23	Steven Mair ----- Steve Muldoon	All	No	<p>(a) That the proposed fees and charges for council services (Appendix 1) be agreed, except those marked 'for noting only – non-Cabinet approval', for implementation from 1 April 2023.</p> <p>(b) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial, following consultation with the relevant Executive Director and relevant Cabinet member, to implement any increases prior to 1 April 2023 on an exception basis.</p> <p>(c) That delegated authority be given to the relevant Executive Director(s) to amend the</p> <p>....</p>	<b>3a Financial Sustainability Action Plan:</b> Increase Council income, supporting overall sustainable finances.	<a href="https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74353/Report.pdf">https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74353/Report.pdf</a>

# Recent Governance Decisions Taken in Support of Improvement and Recovery

Ref	Report & Subject	Date	Chief & Contact Officers	Portfolio	Key Decision	Summary of Decision	Related Direction and Contribution to Recovery	Link to Document
GD-031	<b>Cabinet</b> Asset Disposals	16-Jan-23	Steven Mair ----- Fin Garvey	Financial Oversight and Council Assets	Yes	(a) Agreed to the Council sale of the Adelphi, Slough with the bidder named in Appendix 2 to the report; and (b) Delegated authority to the Executive Director of Property and Housing, in consultation with the Lead Member for Financial Oversight and Council Assets and the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial, to negotiate the terms of and enter into the contract and any associated documentation in connection with the disposal consistent with the disposal report and Heads of Terms appended at Confidential Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.	<b>3a Financial Sustainability Action Plan:</b> Support the continued disposal of assets, reducing the overall debt servicing costs of the Council and in turn supporting financial sustainability.	<a href="https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74517/Ad%20Cabinet%20Paper%20on%20Adelphi%20Disposal%20Final.pdf">https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74517/Ad%20Cabinet%20Paper%20on%20Adelphi%20Disposal%20Final.pdf</a>
GD-028	<b>Cabinet</b> CT & Digital Update – Progress and next steps for the proper functioning of IT at SBC	19-Dec-22	Sarah Hayward ----- Simon SharkeyWoods	Customer Services, Procurement and Performance	No	Noted the update to the modernisation and remediation activities being undertaken by the ICT & Digital Team and understand the ongoing risks, issues and challenges as the work continues.	<b>3f Information Technology Action Plan:</b> Plan for the improvement of Information Technology services	<a href="https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74083/Report%20and%20Appendices.pdf">https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74083/Report%20and%20Appendices.pdf</a>
GD-029	<b>Cabinet</b> Remodelling of Children Centres	19-Dec-22	Sue Butcher ----- Richard Tedd	Children's Services, Lifelong Learning & Skills	Yes	Authorised a 6 week consultation on options for change to the Council's Children's Centres, including proposals to reduce the number of buildings and reduce the amount of childcare provision being directly provided by the Council.	<b>3a Financial Sustainability Action Plan:</b> Reduction in the costs associated with the provision of childcare	<a href="https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74170/Report.pdf">https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74170/Report.pdf</a>

## Timescales

- Further project and resource planning will be part of phase 1.
- While this is underway, the timescales given are fairly broad. All phases are expected to overlap.
- This action plan incorporates the plan for addressing direction 7 on evidence based decision making, as well as aspects of direction 3.g.
- The phases below will also be used within the Scrutiny Action Plan.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
1. Set up formal project management and reporting arrangements	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

### Actions to date:

- Set up Corporate Governance Working Group – now meeting monthly to review action plans and governance issues arising
- CG Working Group formally requested Project Support Officer from PMO – recruitment underway

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### Next steps:

- Align plan, materials and reporting with whole-council approach to recovery action planning and reporting
- Confirm programme/project management resource – recruitment underway

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
2. Continuous ongoing development of this plan including fostering a culture of looking to best practice across the sector, amongst members and officers.	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

**Actions to date:**

- Two workshops with all Democratic Services staff to check and develop the plan
- Plan discussed monthly at Corporate Governance Working Group
- Launched Member Survey to enable benchmarking
- Ongoing work to align this plan with (or within) the culture change workstream
- Member survey completed, setting baseline and helping to inform development of this plan (to be reported to Standards in March)
- Actions identified from extended CLT governance culture workshops

**Next steps:**

- Formulate overall philosophy of governance in the authority, expressed through corporate documentation
- Assess baseline and benchmark via survey of staff and members
- Schedule a LM&Ds discussion on the existing ‘policy statement on corporate governance’, with a view to collecting feedback for an update, to be agreed by appropriate Member forum and full council.
- Review: governance framework (CIPFA/SOLACE guidance), outstanding internal audit actions, Business Continuity and emergency planning arrangements, and major corporate systems and their business impact / risks etc.

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
3. Continue to improve forward planning of decision-making, including early engagement with members and other stakeholders	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

### Actions to date:

- Internal corporate schedule produced and reviewed weekly at CLT and regularly at Lead Members and Directors – now RAG-rated by Monitoring Officer, Legal and Democratic Services to indicate progress against expected clearance timescales.
- Visits by Head of Governance and Scrutiny at all DLTs to conduct horizon scanning and further embed use of corporate schedule as business planning tool
- MO has met all ADs and EDs to understand the causes of governance issues and set clear expectations.
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team about governance expectations and timescales, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of ‘Bitesize Leadership Learning’ on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group

### Next steps:

- Create and deliver further Slough-specific training on working in a political environment, for senior leaders and frequent report authors
- Report Member Survey findings to Standards Cttee in April along with Member Development Strategy and Plan informed by the results

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
4. Improve effectiveness of, and compliance with, formal decision-making processes	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

**Actions to date:**

- Senior officer training programme to improve report writing
- Clear timescales and clearance processes published and promoted throughout council
- Cabinet reports reviewed at CLT and LM&Ds
- *Guide* to cabinet and committee lead-in dates published and publicised internally
- Lead members briefed and presenting reports at Cabinet meetings
- Commenced RAG-rating of cabinet report compliance with corporate timescales for SLT/CLT monitoring
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team about governance expectations and timescales, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of ‘Bitesize Leadership Learning’ on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group
- Reviewed Significant Officer Decision-making guidance and streamlined publication criteria (for inclusion in review of constitution), re-circulated to Extended CLT

**Next steps:**

- Improve quality of Cabinet and Committee reports.
- Implement data recording in Democratic Services to understand frequency of late reports by directorate.
- Review whether single member decision-making should be introduced.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
5. Further improve quality of formal reports	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

### Actions to date:

- Officer training to top three tiers on report writing
- Improved clarity and timeliness of clearance processes and discussion at CLT re: cabinet reports
- Improved early briefing of lead members
- Discussions underway with IT about options for bringing formal report workflow into a document management system such as the one currently being procured.
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team about governance expectations and timescales, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group

### Next steps:

- Deliver further bite-size sessions about report-writing for lead officers
- Explore options for using a document management system to improve document handling, version control, sign-offs etc
- NB further improvements in process, timeliness and engagement (elsewhere in plan) will further improve quality



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
6. Establish agreed and documented expectations and consistent processes for commissioner decisions	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

### Actions to date:

- Bespoke training session on essentials of local government decision-making for top three tiers
- Feedback captured from above event and actions discussed and agreed at CLT
- MO and governance officers routinely meeting with new senior staff, to conduct bespoke governance induction.

### Next steps:

- Review induction processes and introduce session on 'governance in a political environment' for new starters
- Review management and senior officer development programme to incorporate support for officers who have been promoted within the organisation
- Devise a framework for commissioner decision-making and advice and guidance.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
6. Establish agreed and documented expectations and consistent processes for commissioner decisions	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

**Actions to date:**

- Meeting between chief of staff, former MO and COO
- Discussion with other local authorities under statutory intervention for example frameworks

**Next steps:**

- Working with the commissioners and their chief of staff, devise a framework for consistent, robust and transparent commissioner decision-making, advice and guidance.

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
7. Ensure effective introduction to local government decision-making and processes as part of induction are in place for all new starters and those promoted including senior officers.	Monitoring Officer	Phases 2a & 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Bespoke training session on essentials of local government decision-making for top three tiers, feedback captured and actions discussed and agreed at CLT.
- Updated all-staff induction programme in development with new content on governance and political environment

**Next steps:**

- Review induction processes and introduce session on ‘governance in a political environment’ for new starters.
- Review management and senior officer development programme to incorporate support for officers who have been promoted within the organisation.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
8. Ensure effective and respectful member officer relations	Monitoring Officer	Phases 1, 2a & 2b

### Actions to date:

- Training session for top three tiers on member officer relations protocol
- Externally facilitated workshop between CLT and lead members
- Review of member casework system
- Report to Standards Committee on various matters on ethical framework, including member complaints
- Meetings between statutory governance officers and leaders of groups
- Governance culture workshop for top two tiers with external facilitator using CfGS toolkit – sessions on 10 Jan and 7 Feb
- Member survey has closed with 24 responses (over 50%) and the process of sharing this with the organisation and with members has commenced (see elsewhere in the plan)

### Next steps:

- Analysis and next steps with outputs from Member survey (extended CLT item 22 March, Standards Cttee 6 April)
- Link to wider culture change action plan

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
9. Assess and improve how the council’s real situation compares to its sense of self	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Training and self-assessment for Audit committee members
- Training and annual report for scrutiny members
- Externally facilitated workshop between CLT and lead members and regular lead member briefings and meetings
- Annual report on complaints data taken to Audit and Corporate Governance
- CLT Assurance meetings to review performance data
- Completed first of two workshops with external facilitator on CfGS’ seven characteristics of good governance with officers
- Member survey findings to be reported to Standards Cttee in February
- Two governance culture workshops held in January and February facilitated by Bethan Evans, with actions arising for inclusion in various improvement plans.

**Next steps:**

- Assess and incorporate actions from governance culture workshops into action plans
- Review: how officers and members monitor and act on data about the council’s performance; approach to resident / public participation in decision-making; options for gathering residents’ views on satisfaction with services and how members self-assess their performance.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
10. Improve organisational awareness of Slough's particular political dynamics	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

**Action to date:**

- Training on local government decision-making for officers and feedback report to CLT, agreeing next steps.
- Member-Officer relationships and culture development programme underway
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team with key links to resources relating to Slough's political environment, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group

**Next steps:**

- Governance and political awareness built into officer induction programme
- Leadership development to include political awareness and skills – potentially with input from ADSO
- Consider programme of encouraging senior officers to observe formal meetings (and feed back?)
- Consider how to use induction, (and perhaps the Lord Mayor's office) to create more opportunities for members and officers to meet and mingle informally.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
11. Revise directorates' internal schemes of delegation in line with recently reviewed Scheme of Delegations	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

### Action to date:

- Reviewed and amended Scheme of Delegation to Officers, including delivering training to senior officers on delegations
- Introduced internal schemes of delegation per directorate, including consistent sections on financial, HR and procurement delegations
- Amended contract procedure rules to set out thresholds for officer decision making
- Amended financial procedure rules to set out thresholds for officer decision making

### Next steps:

- Update internal schemes of delegation to reflect new senior officer structure
- Implement annual review of internal schemes
- Review thresholds and procedures for significant officer decision making

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
12. Improve Member Development	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

### Actions to date:

- Bespoke training for scrutiny members
- Bespoke training for Audit and Corporate Governance Committee members
- Welcome induction event and handbook for new members
- Briefings with chairs and vice-chairs of scrutiny
- Briefings in advance of formal member meetings

### Next steps:

- Agree 4-year member development strategy, designed with input from councillors – Standards Cttee 6 April
- Agree annual member development plan at Standards Cttee 6 April, aligned to above strategy

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
13. Improve provision of information to Members	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

### Actions to date:

- Review and communication on member casework, agreed with leaders of groups
- Weekly member bulletin rebranded and relaunched
- Briefings with lead members and scrutiny members
- Confidential budget papers available to scrutiny members in advance of budget scrutiny
- Rebranded member bulletin and incorporated Customer Service data infographic

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### Next steps:

- Produce a position statement on what information councillors can expect to be provided with and when.
- Include training on availability and functionality of Insite in induction programme
- Consider creating intranet or SharePoint pages dedicated to information for Councillors
- Implement regular programme of 'all member scrutiny briefings'
- Corporate push to improve consistency and completeness of officers' email signatures and phone book entries
- Each Executive Director-Lead Member partnership to have a re-set conversation to define what performance information is shared and reviewed, and at what frequency.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
14. Deliver accurate and efficient all-out election and maximise the intended benefits of the change to four yearly elections	Returning Officer	Phase 2a

### Action to date:

- Council decision to move to whole council election
- Boundary review
- Polling station review (underway)
- New Returning Officer and senior leads for election management
- Proposals in development by Strategy team relating to a longer-term strategic planning and delivery cycle linked to the four-year municipal cycle
- Progress towards delivery of election in line with project plan monitored regularly by RO, with additional campaigns relating to voter ID and voter fraud built in as appropriate.

### Next steps:

- Identify and maximise the intended benefits of the change to four yearly elections

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
15. 2022/23 Annual review of Policy Statement on Corporate Governance	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

## Actions to date:

- New Policy Statement on Corporate Governance based on CIPFA framework approved by full council.

## Next steps:

- Conduct desktop analysis of organisational governance, making links to Annual Governance Statement

16. Review and reprioritise use of Democratic Services Team’s limited resources	Monitoring Officer	Phases 1, 2a & 2b
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## Actions to date:

- Recruitment of senior interim lead for governance and scrutiny, including fulfilling statutory scrutiny officer
- Commencement of recruitment to scrutiny role vacancy
- Advertised Scrutiny Post and other vacancies in the Democratic Services team - appointed two internal posts but no applications for scrutiny role.
- Have made conditional offer to external candidate for Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager.

## Next steps:

- Up-grade and re-issue scrutiny officer advert.
- Review: service provision with a view to streamlining offer, support for partnership meetings and review cost-effectiveness of Statutory Appeals service.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
17. Ensure document storage and retention arrangements are robust	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Review of deeds by legal team, including advice on deeds packets
- Review and plan for storage of existing physical deeds

**Next steps:**

- Review circumstances around deeds and storage of legal documentation by SBC in-house.
- Review arrangements for electronic deeds storage.

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
18. 2022/23 Implement annual review of constitution	Monitoring Officer	Phases 2a & 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Rolling review of the constitution based on needs
- Consulted Extended CLT on whether any further elements of the constitution require to be updated
- Review underway.

**Next steps:**

- Conduct minor review of constitution for 2023 AGM with a view to more significant rolling review thereafter

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
19. Strengthen community engagement in the council’s recovery and improvement	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Confirmed re-subscription to Citizen Space as the single online tool used by the council to consult and engage with residents.

**Next steps:**

- Review community participation and engagement in local democracy / decision-making

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
20. Improve how the council looks to the future to assure its own viability and set its decision-making priorities	Monitoring Officer / ED for Strategy	Phases 2b & 3

**Actions to date:**

- New five year corporate plan linked to recovery themes
- Proposals in development by Strategy team relating to a longer-term strategic planning and delivery cycle linked to the four-year municipal cycle

**Next steps:**

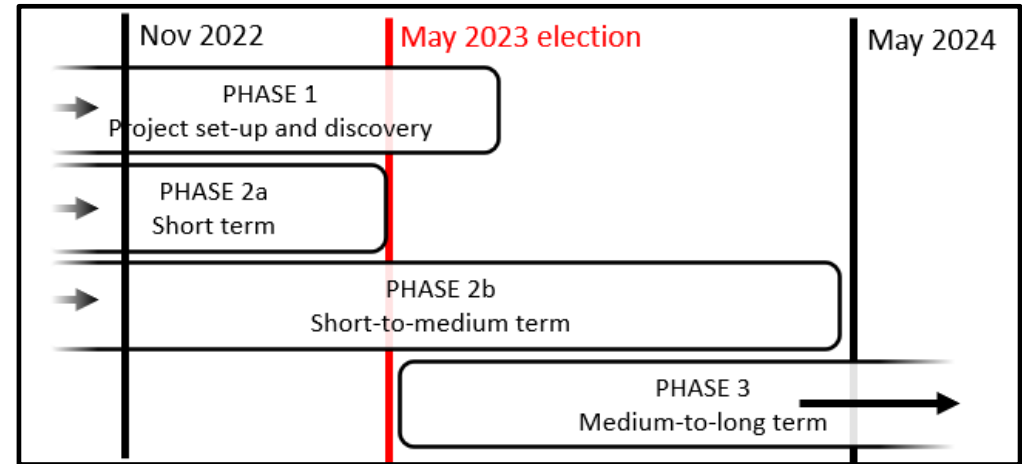
- Build cycle of corporate planning into corporate schedule and communicate the intended pathway to the organisation
- Long-term options for future viable governance of the authority explored and assessed
- Refresh the service planning cycle

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
21. Improve quality of local (external) partnerships	Monitoring Officer	Phase 3

- Review partnerships governance
- Implement changes that improve efficiency and effectiveness of partnership arrangements

## Timescales

- Further project and resource planning will be part of phase 1.
- While this is underway, the timescales given are fairly broad. All phases are expected to overlap.
- The same phases are used within the Democratic Governance Action Plans.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
1. Set up project management and reporting arrangements	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align plan, materials and reporting with whole-council approach to recovery action planning and reporting.</li> <li>Seek programme/project management resource.</li> <li>Created informal 'Democratic Governance Improvement Group' chaired by Monitoring Officer – meeting regularly to review action plans and consider emerging issues.</li> <li>Member survey issued to assess baseline satisfaction with, and attitudes to, scrutiny.</li> </ul>		

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
2. Respond to CfGS review in relation to reorganising scrutiny arrangements	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

## Actions to date:

- Commissioned Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to undertake a review of scrutiny function. This has been published, endorsed by Council and member training delivered
- Established which member/s will lead on the development of the scrutiny function
- Held two meetings of the Member Working Group on Scrutiny (January and February) and agreed key principles for the new design of scrutiny.

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## Next steps:

- Final review of detail e.g. role profiles for key members, to be reviewed virtually by Group Leaders
- Constitutional changes recommended by Member Working Group on Scrutiny to be considered by Constitution Member Working Group, for agreement by Council at AGM 2023.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
3. Formulate a cohesive work programme for scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

### Action to date:

- Work programming events held in-year with officer and member involvement
- Launch of three T&F Groups to conduct focused work and a work programme for the remaining panels focussing on Budget/savings, improvement and recovery
- Annual Review and work programming workshop held 2 March – attended by 10 members. Output forms the backbone of the Scrutiny Annual Report and may be considered by next year’s scrutiny members.
- Member Working Group on Scrutiny has agreed core Terms of Reference for next year’s Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, providing focus to next year’s work.

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### Next steps:

- Continue to develop a cohesive work programme for scrutiny, tightly focused on scrutiny of the council’s plans for financial and organisational recovery and progress against those plans, in line with the CfGS recommendations.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
4. Re-instate regular all-member briefings outside of formal committee settings	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

- Proposals to be made for regular programme of ‘all-member scrutiny briefings’ to improve all members’ knowledge and connection to the business of the council, increase scrutiny bandwidth and take ‘for information/learning’ items out of committee setting allowing better prioritisation of impactful items, as part of review of scrutiny.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
5. Elevate and support the role of the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

**Action to date:**

- Statutory Scrutiny Officer now meeting weekly with Chair of O&S Cttee
- Chair of O&S Cttee now periodically invited to Improvement Board meetings with Commissioners, Cabinet and senior officers, when O&S is under discussion.
- LGA mentorship reinstated for O&S Chair

**Next steps:**

- Review the Special Responsibility Allowance attracted by the Scrutiny Chair position and other scrutiny lead roles, via an Independent Remuneration Panel

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
6. Improved mechanisms for holding Cabinet Members to account	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

**Action to date:**

- Cabinet members invited to present and answer questions at budget scrutiny sessions in February 2023, and invited to receive T&F group reports in public committee meetings (also February 2023).

**Next Steps:**

- Further review strength of cabinet connections with scrutiny - e.g. regularity of attendance, portfolio updates etc as part of proposals for new scrutiny arrangements.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
7. Recruit resource to vacancies in Democratic Services and Scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 1

**Actions to date:**

- Recruitment of interim head of governance and statutory scrutiny officer
- Scrutiny role and other democratic services posts have been advertised
- Two internal posts appointed and Manager post offered to external candidate.

**Next steps:**

- Re-grading of scrutiny officer post via JE panel is underway for re-issue

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
8. Improve the ways in which scrutiny members are kept apprised of forthcoming executive decisions and issues	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

**Action to date:**

- Significant improvements to early engagement with budget setting
- Regular meetings between O&S Chair and Chief Exec have now commenced.

**Next steps:**

- Embed mechanism to ensure that scrutiny members are availed of the public Forward Plan of cabinet decisions and are using it to inform their work
- Design effective use of corporate performance management information and KPIs by scrutiny councillors
- Support scrutiny members to understand their rights to access information

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
9. Improve year-round scrutiny of the financial cycle	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 1

## Actions to date:

- Significant improvements to early engagement with budget setting
- Additional round of finance training and detailed pre-meeting for December round of budget/savings scrutiny meetings carried out on 24<sup>th</sup> November.
- Three budget scrutiny sessions in February, leading up to final budget scrutiny session 23 Feb
- Whole-year focus on financial management in scrutiny embedded in draft Terms of Reference for next year's Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with guidance from CfGS.

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## Next steps:

Operation of Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee to include focus on financial cycle.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
10. Deliver sustained programme of Scrutiny member and officer training and skills development	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phases 2a & 2b

## Actions to date:

- Training delivered to all scrutiny members taking account of early draft findings of CfGS review.
- Have involved service-based officers heavily in the leadership and delivery of T&F group support, encouraging learning-by doing - excellent feedback about weekly meetings for officer leads of T&Fs to discuss progress and process and thereby share good practice – feeding back to extended CLT 22 February

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## Next steps:

- Commission the member training proposal set out by Centre for Governance & Scrutiny
- Consider options for co-option in order to bring in exemplars of effective scrutiny to the committee setting
- Deliver further training to lead officers at suitable intervals
- Deliver member training and induction, including about scrutiny and chairmanship, post-election.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
11. Review constitution re: scrutiny rules and practice, including call-in		Phase 2a

- Review of constitution underway re: scrutiny rules and practice, including call-in, for recommendation by working groups to Council at AGM 2023.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
12. Improve overall support for Scrutiny Members to continuously improve effectiveness of scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phases 2a& 2b

## Actions to date:

- See actions 5, 8 & 10.
- Offered intensive officer support of O&S Chair including regular weekly meetings with the statutory scrutiny officer.
- Pre-meetings more routinely in place for all committees.
- Member Survey and Annual Report has provided opportunities for members to reflect on successes and weaknesses of Scrutiny in 2022-23.

## Next steps:

- See action 2 & 10.
- With the support of CfGS, empower scrutiny members to self-evaluate their performance in committee and plan steps towards further improvement.
- Implement system of pre-meetings with facilitated identification of key lines of inquiry for key items

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
IA-001	C	Recruit to new IA Team	Mike Thomas	First round of adverts completed and shortlisting taking place	25-Nov-22	30-Nov-22	25-Nov-22	
IA-003	C	Shortlisting	Mike Thomas	Shortlisting to take place 1 December and 14 December 2022	25-Nov-22	01-Dec-22	14-Dec-22	2 phases of shortlisting in case first round is unsuccessful
IA-002	C	Recruitment advert extension approved	Mike Thomas	Advert extended to 9 December to attract additional candidates	09-Dec-22	09-Dec-22	09-Dec-22	Completed
IA-004	C	Interviews and Assessment centres	Mike Thomas	Interviews and Assessment centres to take place weeks commencing 5 and 12 December	16-Dec-22	16-Dec-22	16-Dec-22	Completed 3 Offers made to Head, Internal Audit Manager and Senior Auditor
IA-005	C	Offer Letters	Mike Thomas	Pre Christmas 2022	31-Dec-22	22-Dec-22	22-Dec-22	Completed
IA-017	A	New In House team commence work	Mike Thomas	Depends on recruitment	31-Dec-22	31-Jan-23	31-Jan-23	Head of IA began work on 3 Feb, Audit Manager begins on 13 March and Senior Auditor on 14 April. Recruitment of 2 Internal Auditors being re-advertised and alternative arrangements being considered
IA-13	A	Failure to recruit In House Team	N/A	Plan B is in place for RSM to continue for <b>23/24</b> should recruitment not be successful - it is likely other options will be considered	31-Dec-22	31-Jan-23	31-Mar-23	Not an issue as senior recruitment taken place - completed
IA-008	A	Transition from RSM to In House team	Head of FG, IA	Depends on recruitment – internal auditor posts will need re-advertising or support through alternative means.	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	During March through to July 2023
IA-10	A	Development of IA approach and launch of new service	Head of FG, IA	Review of approach to consider support for departments and managers	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	This will take place during 2023/24 as the new team sets up and beds in.
IA-11	A	Reduction in historical IA recommendations	Mike Thomas	IA Tracker in place and being utilised to reduce number of IA recs	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	Ambition is to reduce the number and risk rating of IA recommendations on an annual basis
IA-006	G	2023-24 IA Plan	Mike Thomas	Work with RSM and new team to develop and transition a plan for 2023/24	01-Apr-23	01-Apr-23	01-Apr-23	First draft of plan being discussed between RSM and new Head of IA.

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
IA-009		Quality Review of IA work	Head of FG, IA	Review against PSIAS standards to be undertaken within two years of new team starting	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24	Subject to quality of work and recruitment and need to undertake at least every 5 years
IA-12		Positive Head of Internal Audit Opinion	Head of FG, IA	This will be work in progress for a number of years	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24	Significant number of variables that can impact including outcome of External Audit findings; recruitment of a IA team and general response from departments to implementing IA recommendations



Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
M-004		Deliver contracts register	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Contracts register in place and reflects new council structure used forward plan for 2023/24	30-Jun-22	30-Jun-22	30-Jun-22	A lessons learned review will be undertaken on the project in April 23
M-006		Update Contract Procedure rules	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Updates approved, along with revised financial procedure rules at full council on 22nd November	22-Nov-22	22-Nov-22	22-Nov-22	Major update to CPR's was done in November 2021
M-002		Develop procurement and contract management processes and procedures, and train staff	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Processes and procedures updated to reflect changes to contract procedure rules, training sessions in Jan/Feb2023 to raise awareness and improve governance	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-22	31-Jan-23	Changes to procurement legislation in 2023/24 will necessitate a review of the councils contract procedure rules
M-001		Recruit to vacant posts within the Commercial Team	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> -Posts have been advertised, a second round of is needed for all roles	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23		Resource gaps are being filled by using Human Engine
M-003		Implement contract management system (Agresso)	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Moved to Amber due to delays in onboarding new managed service provider which has slipped the completion to beyond the target date	31-Mar-23	30-Jun-23		
M-007		Development of meaningful KPIs and performance data	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - KPI's includes performance relating to exemptions. Procurement review board tracker has been reviewed.	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23		
M-009		Develop forward plan for 2023/24	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Contracts register will be used and form the basis of the forward plan, meetings with directorates completed	01-Apr-23	01-Apr-23		Report being reviewed for April Cabinet
M-005		Develop and implement social value policy	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Policy written, working with procurement consultants to implement, including use of best practice examples	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-23		Initial desktop research completed and draft policy written.
M-008		Implement procurement and contract management strategy	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Strategy in place, LGA procurement strategy maturity assessment to be undertaken. Implement contract management framework when resources in place	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24		Predicated on fully resourced in house team
M-009		Process mapping procurement	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Focus is on governance to provide the council with external validation on its processes and to make recommendations on improvements	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23		Workshops had an excellent level of engagement across the council
M-010		Contract management framework	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management. This is being done with the contract management pioneer programme. A contract management assurance board will be establish from April 2023 to drive best practice in contract management.	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-23		

## Public Health

- Action: Recruiting to the majority of the Public Health Team currently filled by interims
- Update – following interviews, an initial offer has been accepted for the Substantive Deputy Director of Public Health post. A large number of applications were received for the Public Health Lead and Public Health Officer posts. Interviews are w/c 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March but the majority of applicants to date were either not eligible to work in the UK or had no relevant experience at the right level.
- Outcome: Increased stability, reduced cost
- Outcome measure: Substantive team in place
- Related issues/concerns: Currently losing interim staff to longer term interim positions.
- Risks: The public health workforce is small and well-connected and there is some informal feedback that the challenges of working within Slough are well-known and that the remuneration would need to be higher to account for this.

## Place and Community

- The directorate is stabilising, recruitment to vacant posts has, is and will increasingly enable a return to business as usual.
- We have > 5,000 green waste subscribers and anticipate 14,000 by July 2023. Pressure from the grass cutting season and reduction of capacity in the grey bin, once it goes fortnightly in June, will drive take up.
- Alternate fortnightly collections of grey bin and red bin is on track for 26 June start. Rounds are designed, consultation with staff and unions is underway, a Marketing and Comm's specialist company have been procured and our promotional campaign is about to commence.
- A dedicated technical specialist is in place to tender contracts for Highway Maintenance, Street lighting and Road Markings. Tender processes for Green Waste disposal and DSO Fleet are underway.
- PMO and technical support is in place to enable the delivery of the Place Grant Funded Capital Programme including: Farnham Road, A4 Cycleway, Sponge City Catchments and A4 Safer Roads.
- Parking engineers are preparing 4 Controlled Parking Zone consultations which will be carried out in May 2023. Two further CPZ locations will proceed shortly after.
- Energy was procured on 9 March 2023 until 31 March 2024. The Cabinet "permission to buy if prices fall below a floor price" was triggered and brought a 2023/24 budget saving of £300k providing that we continue to control energy usage.
- **Mitigation for 2023/24 savings shortfalls** of £700k (+ £300k energy saving = £1m ) have been identified to offset the potential £473k pressure from CCTV. **If not needed then some or all of this will feed through as 2024/25 savings.**

## Place and Community

- Procurement for a new E-Scooter provider is underway
- The work stream to enable the closure of the CCTV on or before 31 December 2023 is ahead of target. It is anticipated that alternative arrangements for Careline and for return of internal CCTV to originating SBC teams will be in place by June/July. Indications are that transfer of public facing CCTV to TVP may be achieved by October/November.
- The 2023/24 operating plan for Libraries is designed, has been communicated to staff and will be implemented on 1 April 2023 including a re-write of the Councils website to ensure consistency between what we do and what we say we will do.
- We have written to Everyone Active setting out our expectations for payment of the 2023/24 management fee. This will come into effect on 1 June 2023 so we will have certainty by the end of Q1.
- Adverts for vacancies in the Housing Regulation and Food & Safety teams are live and once appointed to backlogs can be cleared and continuous improvement in performance will be driven.
- Self Assessment in our Community Learning service (Adult learning) reflects that the service is still operating at a OFSTED good level.
- The new skills and employment hub at the Curve is to be launched in Summer 2023.
- Our rekindled partnership with Norden Farm will bring life back to The Venue at the Curve as part of a successful joint bid for £977k Arts Council Funding over the next 3 years.

## Complaints

1. Complaints Handling Task and Finish Group report was well received and approved at Customer & Community scrutiny panel in February and Cabinet in March.
2. Q3 complaint figures have been compiled and disseminated with feedback given to CLT Assurance Board and the wider Senior leadership team in February.

## Headlines are for Quarter 3:

- Reduced number of complaints than during the same period last year, with a reduction in the percentage of complaints answered that were upheld.
- Bespoke weekly complaints reports detailing all outstanding casework per service issued to AD's requesting action to close outstanding casework. Services continue to use these reports to respond to complaints.
- The largest proportion of complaints upheld during Jan-23 were : Osbourne's (24%; 7), Revenues & Benefits (21%; 6) and Environmental Services (14%; 4).
- The average number of days taken to resolve complaints has improved over the past year.
- Quality check meetings with services focusing on capturing and embedding learnings from complaints are scheduled quarterly and commenced in January. This is to improve the quality of the investigatory process and outcomes – with a clear focus on continuous improvement.

# Key Service Updates - Customer Services

## Performance

- Performance in December, January and February exceeded the corporate plan target relating to answer rate of (70%) but has fallen short of the average wait time target of 7 minutes for February - which resulted in a 7.39m average call wait time. This shortfall in performance resulted from the implementation of a new telephony platform which has required staff to be off the phones to be trained on the new system.

	Dec-21	
Calls Received	11,222	10,025
Calls Answered	5,471	7682
% answered	48.80%	76.60%
Average wait time	13:41	06:08

	Jan-22	Jan-23
Calls Received	15,712	13,931
Calls Answered	5033	10709
% answered	32.00%	76.87%
Average wait time	17:09	06:53

	Feb-22	Feb-23
Calls Received	15,712	12,856
Calls Answered	5033	9845
% answered	32.00%	76.60%
Average wait time	17:09	07:39

Performance remains substantially improved compared to this time last year. Recruitment to fill the 18 additionally funded resources has continued to be a challenge and a significant drain on management time. The full compliment of additional resources was reached in Jan 2023 for a very short period of time before 2 resignations reduced the resource level to 16 This underlines the volatility of a workforce with an over – reliance on interims. A business case to extend the additionally funded resources is currently progressing through governance processes.

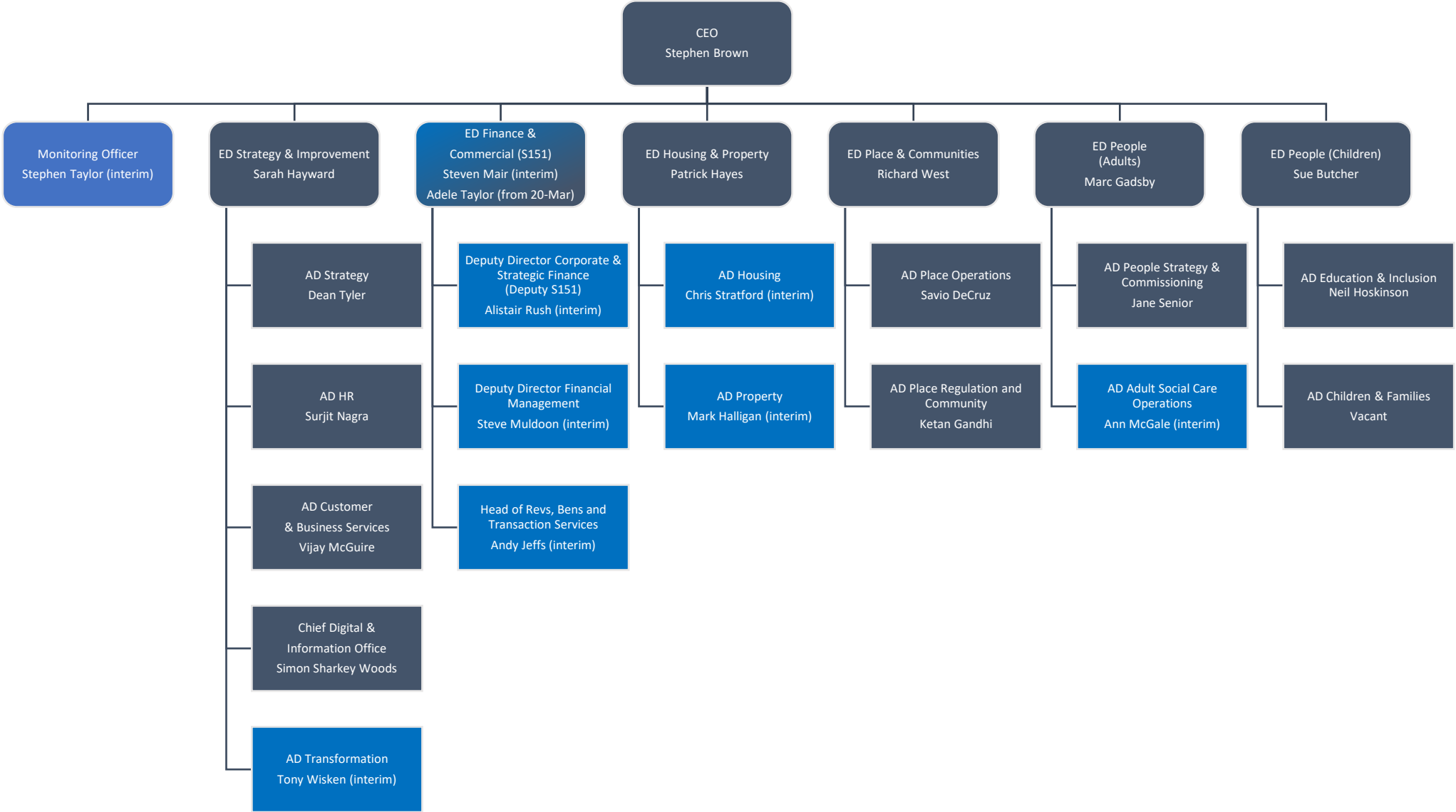
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 For March it is anticipated that call volumes will increase by 50-100% (as it does every year due to various end of year peaks). Steps are being taken to a) maximise staff capacity to meet predicted demand and b) work collaboratively with the back office service to support the increase in calls. We expect that the Corporate Plan targets for March will not be met given the anticipated call volumes.

### Key activities for the reporting period of March:

1. Corporate telephony project, which replaces the contact centre call handling system, has been successfully implemented, with no impact on customers.
2. Rationalisation of 18 service specific phone queues to 12. Fewer queues are more cost-effective, and we will explore reducing the number of queues further.
3. Council Tax team will release 4-6 staff each morning to assist in taking take calls through the Annual Billing period. Training on the new telephony platform will take place in the next two weeks. Collaborating with the service so that demand can be effectively managed, coupled with effective sign posting for support
4. Secondary school offer day of March 1st, has seen an expected increase in calls (generally 1000-2000 more in the early weeks of March) and the service is focusing on responding to the additional calls received.
5. Collaborating with Housing Allocations to improve the customer experience whilst backlogs resulting from the NEC system are resolved over the coming quarter. The emergency re-procurement of our Concessionary Bus Pass system continues with the new provider needing to be in place by 1/04/23, to ensure no disruption to this statutory service.
6. A corporately led “Customer Service Improvement Group’ is in the process of being scoped with colleagues from Comms, IT & D and Insight for CLT Consideration which will focus on developing 3-5 year customer services corporate improvement plan.

### Reablement

1. The Reablement recruitment advertisement campaign concluded however there is delays in the onboarding of the staff this is being worked through with HR. Posts which were not successfully recruited to are be re-advertised.
2. Reablement Roadshows for wider teams are planned through 2023.
3. New stair lift offer following the introduction of the cabinet agreed Housing Assistance Policy went live 1<sup>st</sup> March.
4. Co-produced staffing rota live with improved utilisation of hours.
5. 23/24 saving methodology agreed and tracking mechanisms in place.





Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board

Page 001  
Progress Report  
April 2023

*Report Owner: Sarah Hayward, ED Strategy and Improvement*  
*Report Author: Strategy and Improvement Team*

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## Section Four - Close.



- Future Meetings, incl. Forward Plan. ED Strategy & Improvement.
- Any other Business. Leader / CEX.
- Appendices - Supporting Evidence / Detail.



# Open and Closing Actions

Ref	Status	Description of Action	Date Raised	Raised By	Owner	Progress	Date Last Updated	Target Date	RAG
AC-002	Open	Commissioners to set up a working session with a cross-party group to discuss how to implement recovery plans at the same time as running council services.	28-Jul-22	IRB	Gavin Jones	<p><b>26/01/23</b> - Discussion at IRB on whether to do it after the election. This was agreed by those present. Max will put it the calendar for all. Carry over for update after the election.</p> <p><b>28/11/22</b> - Pending the availability of approved Recovery Plans against all Directions.</p> <p><b>29/09/22</b> - TBC: Original date no longer available.</p>	09-Feb-23	31-May-23	
AC-007 Page 104	Open	Stephen Brown agreed to take forward work to look into lessons learned from the capability assessments done as part of the 'Our Futures' restructure, including how the organisation who did 'gate one' assessments were commissioned and if scrutiny/audit should be involved in this processes.	29-Sep-22	IRB	Stephen Brown Sarah Wilson	<p><b>23/02/23</b> - Expect to be incorporated into Directions Workstream - carry over</p> <p><b>26/01/23</b> - This is expected to be incorporated into Directions Workstream</p> <p><b>20/12/22</b> - Task and Finish group evidence gathering sessions have been completed and report is being drafted in consultation with the chair.</p> <p><b>20/12/22</b> - Findings of Task and Finish Group will be reported to the O&amp;S Committee in January 2023 with recommendations to be made to cabinet and other member forums in January/February 2023.</p> <p><b>24/11/22</b> - The O&amp;S Committee has set up a task and finish group to look at the commissioning and contract management processes and this includes looking at how Gate One was commissioned and delivery measured. This follows a lead Member and Directors meeting on a learning lessons report where it was decided not to take this to a formal cabinet meeting, as the learning had been captured and not much to be gained from having a public ...</p>	23-Feb-23	TBC	
AC-014	Open	Pat Hayes to provide Commissioners with trend information	23-Feb-23	IRB	Pat Hayes		23-Feb-23	Before 23-Mar-23	
AC-015	Open	Max wanted to see the transformation and culture change accelerated and asked Stephen Brown and Sarah Hayward to prioritise this and to provide a full report to Cabinet as a matter of urgency.	23-Feb-23	IRB	Stephen Brown Sarah Hayward		23-Feb-23	Soonest, priority	

# Open and Closing Actions

Ref	Status	Description of Action	Date Raised	Raised By	Owner	Progress	Date Last Updated	Target Date	RAG
AC-016	Open	Sarah would report on progress at the March Board.	23-Feb-23	IRB	Sarah Hayward		23-Feb-23	23-Mar-23	
AC-017	Open	Claire to expedite getting the invitations done for Paul Moffat, Cllr Ajaib and Max Caller and IRB.	23-Feb-23	IRB	Claire Willerton		23-Feb-23	Soonest	
AC-018	Open	Chair of the audit committee to provide a report to Commissioners	23-Feb-23	IRB	Chair of Audit Committee Cllr Kelly		23-Feb-23	23-Mar-23	

Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board

## Section Two - Headlines

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### Positives:

- The level of organisational self awareness has improved with a greater recognition of the areas that need fixing including customer experience and the SEND Board
- Cabinet approved a new adaptive IT strategy which takes an innovative approach to rectifying deep rooted issues
- The assets target was exceeded
- Creation of a Slough Insights pack using latest Census and other data has meant that we are taking an evidence based approach to decision making in line with the directions including the refresh of the Corporate Plan

### Negatives:

- The scale of the cultural change required in key areas such as HR is revealing the extent of work still to do
- There are risks associated with the deliverability of budget savings this year
- The organisation needs to quickly get to a position where it is forward planning and project managing key issues as recent examples have revealed the challenges we face by being reactive

# Recovery Combined "Plan on a Page"

Note, RAG status against individual milestones does not represent overall service status

Feb-23 Mar-23 Apr-23 May-23 Jun-23 Jul-23 Aug-23 Sep-23 Oct-23 Nov-23 Dec-23 Jan-24 > Jan-24

## Oversight

◆ IRB (Feb-23, Mar-23, Apr-23, May-23, Jun-23, Jul-23, Aug-23, Sep-23, Oct-23, Nov-23)  
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (incl. Grant Thornton audit) (Mar-23), ◆ Letter to DLUHC (Jun-23), ◆ Letter to DLUHC (Sep-23), ◆ Letter to DLUHC (Dec-23)

## Financial Sustainability

Future Years Budget Exploration & Savings Ideation (Mar-23 to Jun-23)  
 2024/25 Draft Budget Preparation (Jun-23 to Sep-23)  
 2024/25 Budget Finalisation (Sep-23 to Jan-24)  
 S151 Arrives (Feb-23), ◆ 2023/24 Budget Update & Approval (Mar-23), ◆ 2024/25 Budget Update Available (Apr-23)  
 ◆ 2018/19 Accounts Audit Complete (Mar-23), ◆ 2019/20 Accounts Audit Complete (Aug-23), ◆ 2020/21 Accounts Audit Complete (Nov-23)  
 ◆ 2024/25 Draft Budget (Sep-23), ◆ Financial Settlement (Dec-23)

## Asset Disposal

On-going Asset Disposal Programme (Feb-23 to Jan-24)  
 \*\*\*Quarterly receipts forecasts to be revised.

## Procurement & Contract Mgmt.

Contracts Register Reviews (focussed to ensure up to date and robust, then six-monthly thereafter) (Feb-23 to Jun-23)  
 Six-Monthly Register Reviews Start (Jan-24) ◆  
 ◆ Mgmt. Framework (Feb-23), ◆ Contracts Register on Finance System (Mar-23)  
 ◆ KPI's Monitoring (Feb-23), ◆ Procurement process mapping (Mar-23)

## Subsidiary Companies

Increase Member Oversight (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 Present and Implement Annual Business Plans for JEH, GRE5, SCF (Mar-23 to Sep-23)  
 ◆ JEH, GRE5, SCF Business Plans to Cabinet (Mar-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Sep-23), ◆ 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Nov-23)  
 ◆ DASH Review (Jun-23), ◆ Undertake and Implement Recommendations for Governance Reviews (Jul-23 to Jan-24)  
 Exit from GRE5 & SUR 2024/25 (Jan-24) ◆

## Democratic Governance & Scrutiny

P2a – Short Term (incl. CfGS review response) (Feb-23 to Apr-23)  
 P3 – Medium to Long Term (incl. improved partnership governance, longer-term planning & decision making) (Apr-23 to Jan-24)  
 P2b – Short to Medium Term (incl. improving Member and Officer decision making processes, introductory training) (Feb-23 to Jan-24)  
 ◆ Governance & Culture Workshop (Mar-23), ◆ Whole Council Elections (Apr-23)  
 Agree Member Dev Programme (Feb-23 to Mar-23), Deliver Member Development Programme (Apr-23 to Jun-23)  
 ◆ Present Reports on T&F Groups linked to Recovery (Mar-23), ◆ Implement new Scrutiny Structure, delivery training and finalise annual work programme (Jun-23)  
 Shadow O & S Arrangements (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 ◆ Post-Election Member Survey (Oct-23)

## Internal Audit

◆ First Tranche of IA Recruitment Complete (Feb-23)  
 Transition RSM to In-House Team (Mar-23 to Apr-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Audit Plan available (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Finance Board Update on IA way forward (Mar-23)  
 Review against PSIAS Standards (Jan-24) ◆

## ICT & Digital

Corporate Telephony (Feb-23), ◆ Updated ICT Strategy (Mar-23), ◆ Data-Centre Relocation Completes (Apr-23)  
 ◆ Security and Resilience, incl. DR Improvements (Apr-23)  
 ◆ Service Management Customer Portal Go-Live (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Mobile Telephony (Sep-23), ◆ Service Management – Ph 2 Go -Live (Sep-23)

## Mgmt. Structure & Recruitment




Recruitment Process Optimisation (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 ◆ ED & AD Levels Complete (Mar-23)

## Workforce & Culture



P1 - Defining Future & Quick Wins (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 P2 - Reshaping for Performance (Mar-23 to Aug-23)  
 P3 – Optimised Delivery (Aug-23 to Jan-24)  
 ◆ Leadership Roadshow (Mar-23), ◆ CLT & Governance Restructure (Apr-23), ◆ Q'ly Perf Rep (Jun-23)  
 ◆ Leadership Roadshow (Sep-23), ◆ Q'ly Perf Rep (Oct-23), ◆ Staff Survey (Dec-23)







# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
1	Functional Capability Assessment	Sarah Hayward	Dean Tyler		01-Dec-22		=	<b>14/10</b> - Service plans have been completed, which will address gaps in capability. These are continuing to be iterated to ensure coherence across services and alignment with the corporate plan. SLT will act as the governance body for the service planning. Next steps are to develop reporting arrangements for monitoring progress in delivery, and ensure lessons for next year are captured.
2	Avoid Poor Governance or Financial Mismanagement	Adele Taylor	Steve Muldoon / Liton Rahman	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	Continuous		=	<b>13/04</b> Finance action plan will be refreshed during April/May to reflect continued improvements for medium term <b>28/10</b> - Extensive finance business plan completed March 2022. Developed a medium and long term financial planning framework. Implemented changes to obtain best value for money. Ensuring financial implications of decisions are understood. Improving capacity, capability and culture to enable future success and monitoring of progress through the Finance Action plan. Embedding strong Financial Governance and risk management. Further improvements in Governance and Culture across the council will also contribute towards the delivery of this direction.
3a	Financial Sustainability Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Steve Muldoon / Liton Rahman	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-29		=	<b>13/10</b> - The Finance action plan covers 10 years in detail from 2015/16 to 2024/25 and is supplemented by a 14 year active financial model (to 2028/29). Key elements are: Accounts, Assets sales, Capitalisation direction, Revenue budgets, Borrowings, MRP, DSG, Internal audit, Risks and mitigations Finance structure and Directions/recommendations from DLUHC, GT, CIPFA, Directions. The plan is regularly updated.







# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3b	Democratic Governance Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Leader	01-Dec-23		=	<p><b>09/03</b> – Updates to a number of workstreams this month as preparation for the election, May AGM, new member cohort, updated constitution, new scrutiny arrangements, induction etc move into their final stages. This workstream’s relationship with the culture change programme is becoming clearer as the project environment continues to mature, making it easier to spot and make use of interdependencies.</p> <p><b>17/02</b> - The action plan is progressing, with two key governance culture workshops held with the extended CLT in January and February, facilitated by Bethan Evans. Actions from these sessions are being reviewed for addition to the plan. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p><b>10/02</b> - Project Support Officer recruitment is underway to assist with planning / tracking.</p> <p><b>20/01</b> - The action plan is progressing. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p><b>17/11</b> - Democratic governance action plan updated and reported to Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee on 17th November as part of wider update.</p>
3c	Scrutiny Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee	01-Dec-23		=	<p><b>11/04</b> – The Scrutiny Annual Report and Commissioners’ One year report were received at the last O&amp;S meeting of the year on 22 March. Full Council received the Scrutiny Annual Report on 28 March, and Members’ comments both in the report and at the meeting reflect improvements from the year-to-date. Following input from the member working group, constitutional changes to adjust the structure and practice of O&amp;S in Slough are being prepared for the AGM in May. Preparation is underway for induction with input from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and work programming with the new committee.</p> <p><b>09/03</b> – The council’s most robust ever Budget Scrutiny process concluded in this period and the member Survey and a Scrutiny Annual Review workshop have provided opportunities for members to reflect on the year as it draws to a close. Annual Report and Commissioners’ one-year report will be received at the last O&amp;S meeting of the year on 22 March.</p> <p><b>17/02</b> - Excellent feedback from all quarters at the conclusion of the T&amp;F groups pilot, providing an excellent evidence base and lessons learned for next year’s new ways of working. The action plan is progressing, with the second meeting of the member working group on scrutiny taking place on 22 February to continue defining the detail of next year’s arrangements. There were no applicants to the advertised Scrutiny Officer post ....</p>



# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3d	Internal Audit Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Mike Thomas	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-23			<p><b>13/04</b> - Actions have been reviewed by finance team to ensure that action owners reflect current structure and will be taken to each DLT for progress updates with exceptions to be reported into Finance and Commercial DLT for follow up by S151</p> <p><b>16/02</b> - The new Head of Fin Gov, Internal Audit, Counter Fraud, Risk and Insurance began work with the Council on 3 Feb, Audit Manager starts on 13 /3 and Senior Auditor on 14/4. Two internal auditors need to be recruited or sourced via an agency or consortium. The new team will transition from the current suppliers RSM in the next three or four months. The Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 is being drafted between RSM and the new in-house team. Concerted efforts are being made to respond to and complete all <b>22/23</b> internal audit reports. There are 135 internal audit recommendation from 2021/22 that need to be actioned of which 15 are rated high priority. These have been shared with Department Leadership teams for action and follow up will continue in the coming months. The new Internal Audit team will need to develop an action plan in terms of its set up and operations once the RSM contract is completed.</p> <p><b>05/12</b> - Pre <b>21/22</b> internal audits - there are now 269 actions or 97 per cent completed from a total of 276 actions. There is a concerted management effort to complete the remaining recommendations which are rated low. For the <b>21/22</b> internal audits - there are now 105 actions or 36% completed from a total of 288 actions. A further 51 or 20% ....</p>
3e	Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Clare Priest	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	12-Jan-23			<p><b>05/04</b> - Forward planning for 2023/24 financial year has been completed with all directorates, using the contracts register as a key source of information and reported at April Cabinet. Training sessions for staff continue, with a further session on 27 April. Process mapping in procurement to externally validate processes and procedures has completed and an improvement plan to implement recommendations is live. Work to develop a contract management framework and establish a contract management assurance board has commenced.</p>





# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3f	Information Technology Action Plan	Stephen Brown	Simon SharkeyWoods	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	11-Jan-23			<p><b>11/04</b> - ICT&amp;D 3 year strategy formally adopted by the council. Final wording strengthened following Commissioner feedback and it is now clearer about corporate oversight and control. New IT service management system deployed and well received. Overall quality of the support service was negatively impacted by end-of-year activities, such as removal of legacy hardware, required to ensure savings targets could be met.</p> <p><b>03/03</b> - Telephony project commenced and the contact centre and IT ServiceDesk have migrated to the new technology. Resourcing pressures increasing due to contract staff resignations and limited progress on permanent recruitment. The Housing Management System project is taking significant effort from the team but changes to the project team are planned to improve governance and transparency.</p> <p><b>07/02</b> - Our Technology Operations Manager and Project Support Officer have started with the team and are supporting staff with progressing modernisation works. The ICT &amp; Digital strategy has commenced its passage through governance before being presented to Cabinet in March.</p>
3g	Suitable Officer Structure and Scheme of Delegation	Stephen Brown	Sarah Wilson (MO)	Leader	01-Oct-22			<b>Please see direction 8.</b>
4	Improvement Plan Monthly Reporting	Sarah Hayward	Tony Wisken	Leader	01-Sep-23			<p><b>13/04</b> - Gavin has signalled a readiness to move to a more summarised approach to IRB reporting, however the detail of this has yet to be determined. As agreed with Sarah Hayward, reporting for the Apr IRB will proceed as previous months.</p> <p><b>13/04</b> - CLT have agreed to stand up a "Recovery and Transformation Board" to govern the transformation agenda of the organisation. This will meet monthly aligned to the IRB schedule such that papers / materials can be agreed before going to IRB.</p> <p><b>09/02</b> - Work continues to increase the quality and depth of reporting, particularly to ensure at outcomes focus. The continued rollout of tools and guidance from the Transformation Team is supporting these efforts.</p>

# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
5	Culture Change	Stephen Brown	Sarah Hayward	Leader	31-Dec-23		=	<p><b>13/04</b> - Plans and overall governance around the Culture Change Programme continues to develop / build. Whilst progress is not as fast as we would like, momentum is growing and the increased support the Transformation Team is now able to offer is helping the workstream leads develop their plans.</p> <p><b>10/03</b> - 'Concept on a Page' agreed with Stephen Brown. Approval to be sought at Mar IRB by Commissioners to ensure our thinking is aligned. Plans continue to develop, however progress across all streams is being made, but the reporting needs to be improved.</p> <p><b>09/01</b> - Deemle Brain, the new Programme Manager has started as planned. Formal Programme definition and planning is now happening to ensure the work progresses in a coherent manner with all key stakeholders aligned.</p> <p><b>18/01</b> - Programme Manager to lead on Cultural Change expected to start w/c <b>23/01</b>. Workstream level plans continue to develop.</p> <p><b>01/12</b> - Briefing by Nick Kemp has taken place with SLT / CLT on <b>30/11</b>.</p> <p><b>14/11</b> - A consultant, Nick Kemp, has been appointed to support the Programme. Scoping of key activities is currently being progressed.</p>
6	Subsidiary Company Review	Adele Taylor / Sarah Wilson	Carmel Booth	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	02-Apr-23		=	<p><b>06/04</b> - GRE5 business plan and extension of loan facility agreed March cabinet. New non-executive director appointed for SCF to focus on financial management.</p> <p><b>20/12</b> - Agreement from leader to extend terms of reference of cabinet committee to include companies, SCF governance review update presented to December Audit and CG Committee, SCF articles of association reviewed and due for approval January cabinet, JEH, GR5 and SCF annual business plans to be presented to cabinet by end of FY. I would tentatively suggest this could be green, but we have not made progress on DISH, but should have done by April. Maybe we should wait for the business plans to go through and the committee to receive its first report.</p> <p><b>05/12</b> - Update given to commissioners and elected members with timescale for formal cabinet reporting on each council as part of annual business planning. Of the eleven companies, six have been shut, four are currently being very actively managed, one, low risk, will follow in <b>23/24</b> (DISH). Capital programme reduced by c £65m, capital receipts of circa £50m will be generated</p>

# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
7	Evidence Based Decision Making	Sarah Hayward	Sarah Wilson	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	02-Apr-23			<p><b>06/04</b> - Action plan incorporated into democratic governance action plan and includes brief bites training programme for officers.</p> <p><b>14/04</b> - position statement developed for agreement with CLT including proposals for introduction for new technology to improve data collection and management.</p> <p><b>09/02</b> - First draft of Data Strategy created. Due at CLT in March.</p> <p><b>20/12</b> - Data and insight elements incorporated into democratic governance action plan. Lessons learned incorporated into member level reports, including asset disposals, complaints and procurement reports. Progress updates being taken to formal member meetings to demonstrate progress against strategic priorities, with first progress update taken to Asset Disposal Cabinet Committee in December.</p> <p><b>16/11</b> - Following the Commissioner review meeting, the Data Strategy and Governance Board met to scope actions for 2023. The first milestone will be writing and sign-off of a Corporate Data Strategy. The key messages are included in the slide pack. Budget discussions remain on-going and whether additional investment can be identified will determine if the council can pursue a Growth/Transformative path or a Foundations/Incremental path in responding to this Direction in 2023.</p>
8	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment	Commissioners	Stephen Brown		31-Mar-23			<p><b>13/04</b> - Now considered BAU, however a restructure at the AD and levels immediate below is about to get underway.</p> <p><b>03/02</b> - ED for Strategy and Improvement has been appointed. This was the last remaining vacancy in CLT.</p> <p><b>20/01</b> - Recruitment of the S151 has been completed and two deputies is in progress. Director of Children's Services has been appointed and has started 16th January. Two interim AD have been engaged in Property and Housing. ED Strategy and Improvement interviews taking place at the end of January.</p>

Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board

## Section Three – Directions Summary

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2023/24 Savings Delivery Risk Assessment (figures in £'000s)

As @ 12-Apr-23	Saving Totals		Deliverability RAG Assessment					Saving Mitigations		
	Original (Baseline)	Total so far (excl. Non-Deliverable)	Non-Deliverable	Red (no credible plan)	Amber (at risk)	Green (on track)	Delivered	Agreed Sustainable	Agreed One-off	Proposed
Adults	5,688	5,688	0	0	763	4,925	0	0	0	0
Childrens	805	805	0	0	305	500	0	0	0	0
Strategy & Improvement	1,823	1,823	0	0	0	1,823	0	0	0	0
Finance	7,506	7,506	0	0	0	7,494	12	0	0	0
Place	3,700	3,700	0	0	0	3,680	20	0	0	0
Housing, Property & Planning	750	750	0	0	0	750	0	0	0	0
Cross-Council	2,150	2,150	0	750	200	1,200	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Slough Savings</b>	<b>22,422</b>	<b>22,422</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>1,268</b>	<b>20,372</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
			0.0%	3.3%	5.7%	90.9%	0.1%			



Movement from Previous Period	0	0	0	0	0
Previous Period	0	750	1,268	20,372	32

Figures are the same as March. Suggest that once Hitesh Jolapara is in place, functional Finance Leads should take ownership of maintaining this data.



1. Accounts, budget and CTS agreed at Council on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
2. Contract received from DfE for £27m historic debt. Signed and confirmed with DfE and £10.8m was subsequently received in cash by the end of March 2023. Ongoing reporting on a periodic basis will be expected by DfE through the coming year/s.
3. Key focus now has to be delivery of all savings from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, or other planned date where applicable. At this stage there is no update to the RAG status of the savings on the previous slide.
4. Focus also on developing savings options for 2024/25 with an initial discussion having taken place at CLT on 12/04 to agree key themes and targets.
5. Weekly asset sales schedule of pipeline capital receipt forecast now in place.
6. Recruitment of remaining permanent staff for Finance and Commercial planned with adverts opening from 24/04. Interim appointments Alistair Rush and Hitesh Jolapra in Dep S151 roles.

The priorities for the Asset Disposal Programme over the next month include:

- Driving for best bids for the sites that are currently being marketed and secure the approvals necessary to move forward with transactions.
- Issue instructions for a third tranche of sites to be marketed.
- Follow up on the successful ‘Sitematch’ event (19/4/2023), which was attended by nearly 80 people. Further meetings are being arranged for 3/5/2023.
- Progress the Estate Strategy work to identify further disposal opportunities and to help clarify the size of the retained portfolio, moving forward. A baseline report has been drafted and is now being verified. Stakeholder Engagement schedules are being planned and are likely to take place in May/June.
- Draft a Cabinet report to recommend improvements to the current process, including:
  - The approach to valuations and demonstrating Best Consideration
  - Increasing the delegation levels to the Executive Director, to reduce an otherwise excessive need to use the urgency procedures and to reduce the risk of compromising SBC’s commercial position
  - Appropriation from HRA to GF

## Progress

1. Continued pressure at CLT level to improve timeliness and quality of report writing, now supported by RAG-rated corporate schedule, with all reports cleared by the Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer prior to submission to Commissioner.
2. Review of constitution has commenced and is in progress to inform review at annual council.
3. Member Survey results have been shared with key officer teams and work is underway to identify new actions etc – was published for Standards Cttee on 6 April however the meeting was not quorate.
4. Proposed Member development and induction plans published for 6 April Standards Committee however the meeting was not quorate – will proceed with small member working group instead.
5. Contributing to revised staff induction programme with key governance / political environment content.
6. New Member Allowances Scheme agreed by Full Council 28 March following recommendation by IRP.
7. Reviewed Significant Officer Decision-making guidance and streamlined publication criteria (for inclusion in review of constitution), re-circulated to Extended CLT.

## Next Steps

1. Preparation for election, onboarding and induction of new Members, AGM 18 May, revised constitution etc.
2. Extended CLT session on member survey, scrutiny annual report and member induction, rescheduled to April.
3. Launch 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' governance training.
4. A process for the management of Asset Disposals is being developed in order to assist with the workflow of those decisions.

## Progress

1. The Scrutiny Annual Report and Commissioners' One year report were received at the last O&S meeting of the year on 22 March. Full Council received the Scrutiny Annual Report on 28 March, and Members' comments both in the report and at the meeting reflect improvements from the year-to-date.
2. Preparation is underway for induction and work programming with the new committee.
3. Annual Review and Work Programming Workshop held 2 March, shaping the Scrutiny Annual Review to be received by committee 22 March.
4. Member Working Group on Scrutiny (set up by Council) has completed its meetings, with decisions made about the shape of scrutiny next year. Following input from the member working group, constitutional changes to adjust the structure and practice of O&S in Slough are being prepared for the AGM in May.

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## Next actions

1. Extended CLT item to review Scrutiny Annual Report – emphasis on peers feeding back on the benefits of officers involving themselves in T&F activity, with lessons learned.
2. Constitution redrafting is now under way to bring Member Working Group on Scrutiny's recommendations to reality via the Constitution Working Group and Council (AGM).

- **A new Internal Audit team has been recruited** and the 'Head of Internal Audit' has been in post since 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 and the Internal Audit Manager since 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Also, the Senior Internal Auditor joined on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

### **Pre 21/22 internal audits:**

- There is one action (out of 257) rated as low priority outstanding with actions in place to complete these in the near future.

### **21/22 internal audits:**

- Actions completed as at end of March number 143 or 46% of the total due with a further 12 or 4% not yet due. A concerted effort is being made by CLT to close the remaining 162 actions that are overdue.

### **22/23 internal audits:**

- 12 reports have been finalised and a further 12 reports are in draft and being responded to by management.
- 171 actions have been raised for 2022/23 from these reports.
- 57 actions are overdue and 19 complete.
- 64 are awaiting management responses (action owners and implementation dates).

### **23/24 Internal Audit Plan**

- The Audit Plan was approved by the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 14 March 2023. The Plan will be reviewed and updated by the in-house Head of Internal Audit in Q1 2023/24.
- Reports on progress of implementing recommendations are made to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, Risk & Audit Board, Finance Board and CLT Assurance meetings.

Contracts register is being used as a business as usual tool in forward planning procurement activity, this includes consideration of longer term procurement activity required for high value, high risk contracts. It has been used to develop the forward plan/contracts over £180k report reported to April Cabinet.

Utilising existing IT systems for the contract register – implementation on Agresso due to be complete by the end of June 2023

The training programme on the council's contract procedure rules continues and reflects the revised rules approved by Council in November, a further course took place in April

Moved away from relying on expensive consultancy support, by initiating recruitment to a permanent in-house team, engaged a cheaper consultancy to support specialist procurement where needed and to plug short term gaps in resources.

*Note, for detailed Action Tracker, refer to appendix.*

**Further key development activities**

1. Implement the contracts register on the council's finance system – by June 2023 (slight delay due to onboarding of managed service provider).
2. Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management. This is being done with the contract management pioneer programme– from January 2023.
3. Process mapping procurement - focus is on governance to provide the council with external validation on its processes and to make recommendations on improvements which are being implemented – From April 2023.
4. Establishment of contract management assurance board to drive best practice in contract management . As part of this process, the contract register steering group will be disbanded and the project ended as the project has met its aims and objectives. A lessons learned review was undertaken in April 2023.
5. Ensure KPI's are meaningful and monitored effectively – from January 2023.
6. Programme of continuous contracts register reviews to ensure the council is getting the best value for money – from September 2023 and six monthly thereafter.
7. Implement the actions in the procurement and contract management strategy that have not yet been undertaken, throughout the 2023/24 financial year.
8. Report went to February Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the Contracts T&F Group recommending improvements to contract management. Recommendations also reported to Cabinet on 27 February.

## The ICT & Digital Team Strategy and Plan

1. The new strategy for ICT & Digital was approved by Cabinet on the 20<sup>th</sup> March and was formally adopted by the Council on the 29<sup>th</sup> March following the call-in period. As per the request by Commissioners the final paper was strengthened around the corporate control of ICT & Digital to ensure that there is minimal duplication and increased impact for any investments made.
2. The strategy is now a key point of reference for the ICT&D team and the wider Council as we prioritise the large amount of ongoing initiatives established to modernise and remediate our technology portfolio.
3. The strategy has been designed to be flexible enough to accept and welcome change. The opportunity provided by new technologies and/or new ways of working should be exploited more quickly and enable Slough to adapt without major disruption. The rise of generative AI and large language models is expected to be the biggest technology shift for a generation and the strategy enables us to plan for the expected impact of these new tools.
4. Some difficult decisions will be required around what we prioritise for improvement and the team will continually engage with CLT and members to ensure that the work being undertaken by the team is aligned to areas of greatest need and impact for residents. The ICT&D team is working increasingly closely with Customer Services to identify opportunities for improvements and efficiencies.



## Current activity and next steps

1. Currently undertaking a review of the governance and effectiveness of the way key platforms are supported and developed. Focus is currently on the platforms that support both Adults and Childrens Services. A proposal for a sustainable way forward will be completed before the end of April.
2. Maintaining the momentum on the ICT modernisation programme. The newly established governance for the housing management system project has begun and the work will be a significant focus for ICT&D during 2023. Telephony services will continue to be rolled out after an issue linked to hardware updates stalled progress, and the new IT service management system will have additional modules implemented following the successful delivery of the call logging module in March.
3. The three core areas of control, namely; audit actions, risk management, and budgeting continue to be developed and improved. The tools that have been established to actively manage these areas and the output from them will be shared via the teams monthly service reporting cycle. The first draft reports from the new IT service management system have been included in this months cycle.
4. Work on the new standard build for end-user devices that is based on standard, business-class devices that have long-term support by the manufacturer continues. The first batch of devices has arrived and work is underway to prepare them for deployment.

1. Leadership Workshop planned for Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May to agree what behaviours need to be adopted to deliver the values that need to be embedded within SBC.
2. Staff survey is live
3. Detailed plans being drawn up for each workstream so that dependencies and key target dates are more clearly set and monitored by the project team.
4. Progress being made with move to Directors and Heads of Service
5. Change champions recruited to support CC work, starting off with support for the Staff Survey.
6. Quick wins identified to help the organisation utilise tools effectively and evolve the workforce into a learning organisation.

## Updates:

1. GRE5 business plan and loan extension agreed by Cabinet in March 2023.
2. Progress on SCF governance action plan update reported to Audit and Corporate Government Committee in March 2023.
3. Appointment of new NED for SCF leading on financial management.
4. Plans developed for board development day in May 2023 for SCF board, with attendance from SBC CE and senior officers.

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# Improvement and Recovery Board

## Section Four - Close

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# Improvement & Recovery Board Calendar

Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3	1 2 3	3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5	1 2
9 10 11 12 13	6 7 8 9 10	6 7 8 9 10	10 11 12 13 14	8 9 10 11 12	5 6 7 8 9
16 17 18 19 20	13 14 15 16 17	13 14 15 16 17	17 18 19 20 21	15 16 17 18 19	12 13 14 15 16
23 24 25 26 27	20 21 22 23 24	20 21 22 23 24	24 25 26 27 28	22 23 24 25 26	19 20 21 22 23
30 31	27 28	27 28 29 30 31		29 30 31	26 27 28 29 30

Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4	4 5 6 7 8	2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3	1
10 11 12 13 14	7 8 9 10 11	4 5 6 7 8	9 10 11 12 13	6 7 8 9 10	4 5 6 7 8
17 18 19 20 21	14 15 16 17 18	11 12 13 14 15	16 17 18 19 20	13 14 15 16 17	11 12 13 14 15
24 25 26 27 28	21 22 23 24 25	18 19 20 21 22	23 24 25 26 27	20 21 22 23 24	18 19 20 21 22
31	28 29 30 31	25 26 27 28 29	30 31	27 28 29 30	25 26 27 28 29

Publish final papers for IRB	9:00am to IRB Administration	Improvement & Recovery Board	Monthly, usually the 4th Thursday
IRB Papers due for CLT	12:00pm to CLT Administration	CLT to pre-approve IRB papers	Wednesday preceding IRB
		IRB Updates and Papers due	12:00pm to Strategy & Transformation

# Forward Plan

Function	CLT Member	Cabinet Member	Initiative / Description	Apr (27/04)	May (25/05)	Jun (22/06)	Jul (22/07)	Aug (24/08)	Sep (28/09)
Finance	Adele Taylor	Cllr Robert Anderson	2023/24 Budget Deliverability					Deep Dive	
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Streamlined Recruitment Process			Update			
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Operating Model						
Finance	Adele Taylor	Cllr Robert Anderson	Revenue and Benefits						
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Culture Change Programme	Deep Dive			Deep Dive		
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	Cllr Harjinder S. Gahir	Scrutiny	Deep Dive					
Finance	Adele Taylor	Cllr Robert Anderson	Internal Audit		Deep Dive				
Finance / Democratic Services	Adele Taylor / Sarah Wilson	Cllr Robert Anderson	Subsidiary Company Oversight		Deep Dive				
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Democratic Governance			Deep Dive			
Strategy & Improvement	Sarah Hayward	Cllr Zaffar Ajaib	Information Technology				Deep Dive		
Finance	Adele Taylor	Cllr Zaffar Ajaib	Procurement and Contract Management	Update					
Chief Exec	Stephen Brown	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment						
Children's	Sue Butcher	Cllr Christine Hulme	SCF Business Plan SCF Improvement Plan DfE / SEND Response		Deep Dive				



Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board Appendices

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## Contents

- Recent Governance Decisions Taken in Support of Improvement and Recovery
- Subsidiary Company Review - Additional Information
- Evidence Based Decision Making - Examples
- Key Service Updates



# Recent Governance Decisions Taken in Support of Improvement and Recovery

Ref	Report & Subject	Date	Chief & Contact Officers	Portfolio	Key Decision	Summary of Decision	Related Direction and Contribution to Recovery	Link to Document
GD-046	<b>Cabinet</b> ICT & Digital Strategy 2023-2026	20-Mar-23	Sarah Hayward ----- Simon Sharkey Woods	Recovery, Forward Strategy & Economic Development	Yes	That the refreshed strategy for ICT & Digital services as detailed in the report and the full strategy document as attached at Appendix 1 be approved.	<b>3f Information Technology Action Plan:</b> Supports the overall Technology Strategy of the organisation	<a href="https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s75391/ICT%20Cabinet%20Report%20and%20Appendix.pdf">https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s75391/ICT%20Cabinet%20Report%20and%20Appendix.pdf</a>
GD-045	<b>Special Cabinet</b> Disposal of Council Asset at North West Quadrant	07-Mar-23	Patrick Hayes ----- Patrick Hayes	Financial Oversight and Council Assets	Yes	(a) Agreed to the disposal of the NWQ site substantially in accordance with the Heads of Terms at Appendix 2 to the report, and delegated authority to the Executive Director of Housing and Property, in consultation with the Lead Member for Financial Oversight and Council Assets and the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial, to enter into the Sale Contracts and the related legal documentation in connection with the disposal and to approve the final disposal terms. (b) Agreed to the key terms of related corporate transactions that would be required as a result of the disposal of the site, including the treatment of associated pre-development costs and steps ....	<b>3a Financial Sustainability Action Plan:</b> Supports the overall Financial Strategy of the organisation.	<a href="https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s75171/Report.pdf">https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s75171/Report.pdf</a>

# Previous Improvement and Recovery Board Decisions Taken

Ref	Status	Description of Decision	Impact / Rationale of Decision	Date Raised	Raised By	Owner	Consulted Parties	Date Last Updated	RAG	Date Closed
D-001	Closed	Stephen Brown committed to providing a regular savings monitor to lead Members.	Lead Members will be communicated to effectively regarding the savings plans and progress.	22-Aug-22	IRB	Stephen Brown		22-Aug-22	G	13-Oct-22
D-002	Closed	Future reports to the Board should include an update on compliance with the Intervention Directions.	Commissioners will gain increased confidence that SBC are fully addressing the Intervention Directions.	25-Aug-22	IRB	Stephen Brown		13-Oct-22	G	

# Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan

Direction 3.e

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
M-004		Deliver contracts register	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Contracts register in place and reflects new council structure used forward plan for 2023/24	30-Jun-22	30-Jun-22	30-Jun-22	A lessons learned review will be undertaken on the project in April 23
M-006		Update Contract Procedure rules	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Updates approved, along with revised financial procedure rules at full council on 22nd November	22-Nov-22	22-Nov-22	22-Nov-22	Major update to CPR's was done in November 2021
M-002		Develop procurement and contract management processes and procedures, and train staff	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Processes and procedures updated to reflect changes to contract procedure rules, training sessions in Jan/Feb2023 to raise awareness and improve governance	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-22	31-Jan-23	Changes to procurement legislation in 2023/24 will necessitate a review of the councils contract procedure rules
M-001		Recruit to vacant posts within the Commercial Team	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> -Posts have been advertised, a second round is underway	31-Mar-23	30-Sep-23		Resource gaps are being filled by using Human Engine
M-003		Implement contract management system (Agresso)	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Moved to Amber due to delays in onboarding new managed service provider which has slipped the completion to beyond the target date	31-Mar-23	30-Jun-23		Initial meetings with managed service provider has taken place
M-007		Development of meaningful KPIs and performance data	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - KPI's includes performance relating to exemptions. Procurement review board tracker has been reviewed.	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	Improved tracker in place
M-009		Develop forward plan for 2023/24	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Contracts register will be used and form the basis of the forward plan, meetings with directorates completed	01-Apr-23	01-Apr-23	01-Apr-23	Report for April Cabinet
M-005		Develop and implement social value policy	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Policy written, working with procurement consultants to implement, including use of best practice examples	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-23		Initial desktop research completed and draft policy written.
M-008		Implement procurement and contract management strategy	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Strategy in place, LGA procurement strategy maturity assessment to be undertaken. Implement contract management framework when resources in place	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24		Predicated on fully resourced in house team
M-009		Process mapping procurement	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Focus is on governance to provide the council with external validation on its processes and to make recommendations on improvements	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	Workshops had an excellent level of engagement across the council. Improvement plan in place to implement recommendations
M-010		Contract management framework	Clare Priest	<b>28/02</b> - Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management. This is being done with the contract management pioneer programme. A contract management assurance board will be establish from April 2023 to drive best practice in contract management	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-23		

## Performance

- Customer Contact Centre performance in the last 3 months exceeded the corporate target of 70% calls answered, although the target of an average wait time of 7 minutes was not achieved. This has only been possible due to the additional temp resources supporting the service.

	Jan-22	Jan-23
<b>Calls Received</b>	15,712	13,931
<b>Calls Answered</b>	5033	10709
<b>% answered</b>	32.00%	76.87%
<b>Average wait time</b>	17:09	06:53

	Feb-22	Feb-23
<b>Calls Received</b>	15,712	12,856
<b>Calls Answered</b>	5033	9845
<b>% answered</b>	32.00%	76.60%
<b>Average wait time</b>	17:09	07:39

	Mar-22	Mar-23
<b>Calls Received</b>	21,326	20,215
<b>Calls Answered</b>	8,405	14,775
<b>% answered</b>	39.4%	73.1%
<b>Average wait time</b>	0:14:20	0:08:53

- Call volumes at this time of year are typically 50-100% higher than they are in the other 11 months of the year, due to a number of service 'peaks'. However, performance has been substantially better than anticipated, with an annual performance of calls answered of 69.9%
- The service was given approval to extend the additional 18 'over establishment' temporary agency staff until the end of June subject to several prerequisites as set out by the Section 151 Officer, which are currently in progress.

## Improvements

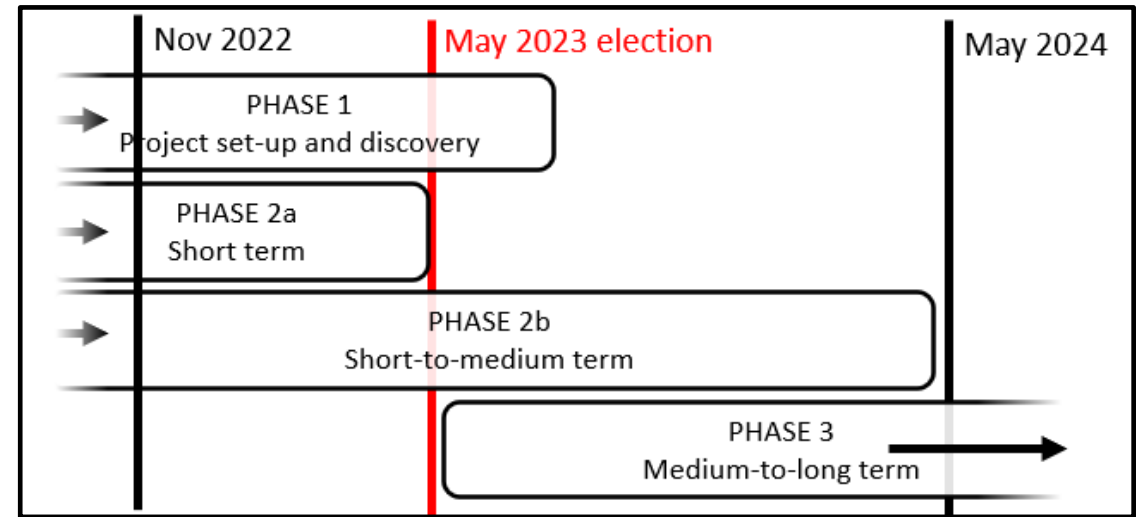
- Improved joint working with the Council Tax team to prepare for the influx in demand that follows annual billing. Including a loan of 4-6 staff every morning of the 2 weeks following main billing, which were upskilled on the CS Telephony system. The support of the SME's from the back office service resulted in 65% of calls being answered, which is approx. 3 times better than is usual at this time of year. The later issuing of bills has also been helpful in reducing demand.
- The emergency re-procurement of the Concessionary Bus Pass system has now been completed, and contracts signed. Data is currently being transferred from the old system provider to the new one, and the service will transition seamlessly (for customers) into a new contract. This is a huge achievement as procurements typically take a minimum of 6 months, whereas this has been managed in 2 months.
- A Customer Service Improvement Plan is in development by the Transformation team and the first draft will be published for review by contributing departments
- Improvement workshops are planned over the next 2-3 weeks with service areas, starting with Revs and Bens on 14/04/23, and Housing on 21/04/23. The purpose of these is to conduct deep dives into initiatives that can reduce demand, or improve service quality.
- In the Improvement Plan, there will be consideration of the staffing requirements which will review and recommend they way forward on 'over establishment' staffing levels in Customer Services.

## Service Updates - Complaints

1. Complaints Handling Task and Finish Group final recommendations agreed at the Customer & Community scrutiny panel in February and Cabinet in March are being worked on. Draft for 2 stage process and webpage expected at the end of April.
2. Q4 and yearly report will be developed effective from May - to allow the full year of data to be analysed. This will be tabled for June CLT Assurance Board and Audit and Governance committee – once correspondence has been received from the LGSCO.
3. Bespoke weekly complaints reports detailing all outstanding casework per service continue to be issued to AD's requesting action to close outstanding casework. Services are using these reports to respond to complaints – with a notable improvement on reducing the number of outstanding complaints for some services.
4. 62% complaints upheld compared to 71% previous year.
5. 7% decrease in complaint numbers year on year.
6. The average number of days taken to resolve complaints has improved over the past year. Q4 currently showing 11.4 working days compared to 44.2 from previous year.
7. Quality check meetings with services focusing on capturing and embedding learnings from complaints are being scheduled quarterly and commenced in January. This is to improve the quality of the investigatory process and outcomes.

## Timescales

- Further project and resource planning will be part of phase 1.
- While this is underway, the timescales given are fairly broad. All phases are expected to overlap.
- This action plan incorporates the plan for addressing direction 7 on evidence based decision making, as well as aspects of direction 3.g.
- The phases below will also be used within the Scrutiny Action Plan.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
1. Set up formal project management and reporting arrangements	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

### Actions to date:

- Set up Corporate Governance Working Group – now meeting monthly to review action plans and governance issues arising
- PMO resource now available – Lara Felix now learning the ropes and will be handling the monthly reporting cycle for the Corporate Governance Working Group and the IRB, including a refresh of the action plans.

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### Next steps:

- Align plan, materials and reporting with whole-council approach to recovery action planning and reporting, as this emerges.
- Aim to close this action within a month now that Lara is on board.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
2. Continuous ongoing development of this plan including fostering a culture of looking to best practice across the sector, amongst members and officers.	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

**Actions to date:**

- Two workshops with all Democratic Services staff to check and develop the plan
- Plan discussed monthly at Corporate Governance Working Group
- Ongoing work to align this plan with (or within) the culture change workstream
- Member survey completed, setting baseline and helping to inform development of this plan (to be reported to Standards in March)
- Actions identified from extended CLT governance culture workshops

**Next steps:**

- Ensure the Corporate Plan refers to an overall philosophy of governance in the authority
- Assess baseline and benchmark via survey of staff (to align with Member Survey – need to consider whether to conduct a separate leadership survey).
- Schedule a LM&Ds discussion on the existing ‘policy statement on corporate governance’, with a view to collecting feedback for an update, to be agreed by appropriate Member forum and full council – as part of onboarding of new Cabinet.
- Review: governance framework (CIPFA/SOLACE guidance), outstanding internal audit actions, Business Continuity and emergency planning arrangements, and major corporate systems and their business impact / risks etc.
- Consider next steps with regard to benchmarking – interdependency with a culture change programme action on this topic (AC-031)



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
3. Continue to improve forward planning of decision-making, including early engagement with members and other stakeholders	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

**Actions to date:**

- Internal corporate schedule produced and reviewed weekly at CLT and regularly at Lead Members and Directors – now RAG-rated by Monitoring Officer, Legal and Democratic Services to indicate progress against expected clearance timescales.
- Visits by Head of Governance and Scrutiny at all DLTs to conduct horizon scanning and further embed use of corporate schedule as business planning tool
- MO has met all ADs and EDs to understand the causes of governance issues and set clear expectations.
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team about governance expectations and timescales, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of ‘Bitesize Leadership Learning’ on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group
- Published Member Survey findings for Standards Cttee in April along with Member Development Plan informed by the results, however meeting was not quorate

**Next steps:**

- Create and deliver further Slough-specific training on working in a political environment, for senior leaders and frequent report authors – this to be delivered initially via the Leadership Learning programme recently agreed.
- Agree next steps for Member Survey information to be owned by Councillors – following the abandoned 6 April Standards Cttee

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
4. Improve effectiveness of, and compliance with, formal decision-making processes	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

**Actions to date:**

- Launched use of Office 365 functionality in the drafting and clearing of formal reports – CLT agreed to have all Cabinet reports in the cloud by the June cycle. Informal training underway for CLT. Chief Exec’s executive assistant is leading some efforts to familiarise CLT with the technology day-to-day.
- Senior officer training programme to improve report writing
- Clear timescales and clearance processes published and promoted throughout council
- Cabinet reports reviewed at CLT and LM&Ds
- Guide to cabinet and committee lead-in dates published and publicised internally
- Lead members briefed and presenting reports at Cabinet meetings
- Commenced RAG-rating of cabinet report compliance with corporate timescales for SLT/CLT monitoring
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team about governance expectations and timescales, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of ‘Bitesize Leadership Learning’ on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group
- Reviewed Significant Officer Decision-making guidance and streamlined publication criteria (for inclusion in review of constitution), re-circulated to Extended CLT

**Next steps:**

- Develop next steps for improving quality of Cabinet and Committee reports – to include training as part of the Leadership Learning programme.
- Implement data recording in Democratic Services to understand frequency of late reports by directorate.
- Review (again) whether single member decision-making should be introduced – post-election

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
5. Further improve quality of formal reports	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

### Actions to date:

- Officer training to top three tiers on report writing
- Improved clarity and timeliness of clearance processes and discussion at CLT re: cabinet reports
- Improved early briefing of lead members
- Discussions underway with IT about options for bringing formal report workflow into a document management system such as the one currently being procured.
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team about governance expectations and timescales, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group

### Next steps:

- Deliver further bite-size sessions about report-writing for lead officers as part of Leadership Learning programme.
- NB further improvements in process, timeliness and engagement (elsewhere in plan) will further improve quality

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
6. Establish agreed and documented expectations and consistent processes for commissioner decisions	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

### Actions to date:

- Bespoke training session on essentials of local government decision-making for top three tiers
- Feedback captured from above event and actions discussed and agreed at CLT
- MO and governance officers routinely meeting with new senior staff, to conduct bespoke governance induction.
- Information added to all-staff generic induction relating councillors, governance and role of commissioners.
- Meeting between chief of staff, former MO and COO
- Discussion with other local authorities under statutory intervention for example frameworks

### Next steps:

- Ensure 'governance in a political environment' is built into review of induction arrangements currently underway led by HR
- Review management and senior officer development programme to incorporate support for officers who have been promoted within the organisation – links to leadership culture change actions.
- Devise a framework for commissioner decision-making and advice and guidance.
- Working with the commissioners and their chief of staff, devise a framework for consistent, robust and transparent commissioner decision-making, advice and guidance.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
7. Ensure effective introduction to local government decision-making and processes as part of induction are in place for all new starters and those promoted including senior officers.	Monitoring Officer	Phases 2a & 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Bespoke training session on essentials of local government decision-making for top three tiers, feedback captured and actions discussed and agreed at CLT.
- Updated all-staff induction programme in development with new content on governance and political environment
- Information added to all-staff generic induction relating councillors, governance and role of commissioners.
- Developed draft programme of ‘Bitesize Leadership Learning’ on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group

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**Next steps:**

- Review induction processes and introduce session on ‘governance in a political environment’ for new starters.
- Review management and senior officer development programme to incorporate support for officers who have been promoted within the organisation.
- Ensure ‘governance in a political environment’ is built into review of induction arrangements currently underway led by HR
- Review management and senior officer development programme to incorporate support for officers who have been promoted within the organisation – links to leadership culture change actions.
- Launch ‘leadership learning’ programme

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
8. Ensure effective and respectful member officer relations	Monitoring Officer	Phases 1, 2a & 2b

### Actions to date:

- Training session for top three tiers on member officer relations protocol
- Externally facilitated workshop between CLT and lead members
- Review of member casework system
- Report to Standards Committee on various matters on ethical framework, including member complaints
- Meetings between statutory governance officers and leaders of groups
- Governance culture workshop for top two tiers with external facilitator using CfGS toolkit – sessions on 10 Jan and 7 Feb
- Member survey has closed with 24 responses (over 50%) and the process of sharing this with the organisation and with members has commenced (see elsewhere in the plan)

### Next steps:

- Analysis and next steps with outputs from Member survey (extended CLT item April, Standards Cttee 6 April)
- Link to wider culture change action plan

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
9. Assess and improve how the council’s real situation compares to its sense of self	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Training and self-assessment for Audit committee members
- Training and annual report for scrutiny members
- Externally facilitated workshop between CLT and lead members and regular lead member briefings and meetings
- Annual report on complaints data taken to Audit and Corporate Governance
- CLT Assurance meetings to review performance data
- Completed first of two workshops with external facilitator on CfGS’ seven characteristics of good governance with officers
- Member survey findings to be reported to Standards Cttee in February
- Two governance culture workshops held in January and February facilitated by Bethan Evans, with actions arising for inclusion in various improvement plans.

**Next steps:**

- Assess and incorporate actions from governance culture workshops into action plans
- Review: how officers and members monitor and act on data about the council’s performance; approach to resident / public participation in decision-making; options for gathering residents’ views on satisfaction with services and how members self-assess their performance.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
10. Improve organisational awareness of Slough's particular political dynamics	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

**Action to date:**

- Training on local government decision-making for officers and feedback report to CLT, agreeing next steps.
- Member-Officer relationships and culture development programme underway
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team with key links to resources relating to Slough's political environment, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group

**Next steps:**

- Governance and political awareness built into officer induction programme including for senior officers (see actions elsewhere on this)
- Consider programme of encouraging senior officers to observe formal meetings (and feed back?)
- Consider how to use induction, (and perhaps the Lord Mayor's office) to create more opportunities for members and officers to meet and mingle informally.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
11. Revise directorates' internal schemes of delegation in line with recently reviewed Scheme of Delegations	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

**Action to date:**

- Reviewed and amended Scheme of Delegation to Officers, including delivering training to senior officers on delegations
- Introduced internal schemes of delegation per directorate, including consistent sections on financial, HR and procurement delegations
- Amended contract procedure rules to set out thresholds for officer decision making
- Amended financial procedure rules to set out thresholds for officer decision making

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**Next steps:**

- Update internal schemes of delegation to reflect new senior officer structure
- Implement annual review of internal schemes
- Review thresholds and procedures for significant officer decision making

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
12. Improve Member Development	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

**Actions to date:**

- Bespoke training for scrutiny members
- Bespoke training for Audit and Corporate Governance Committee members
- Welcome induction event and handbook for new members
- Briefings with chairs and vice-chairs of scrutiny
- Briefings in advance of formal member meetings

**Next steps:**

- Agree member development plan, designed with input from councillors – Standards Cttee 6 April was not quorate however a member group will review the induction programme informally

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
13. Improve provision of information to Members	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

**Actions to date:**

- Review and communication on member casework, agreed with leaders of groups
- Weekly member bulletin rebranded and relaunched
- Briefings with lead members and scrutiny members
- Confidential budget papers available to scrutiny members in advance of budget scrutiny
- Rebranded member bulletin and incorporated Customer Service data infographic

**Next steps:**

- Produce a position statement on what information councillors can expect to be provided with and when (members' handbook)
- Include training on availability and functionality of Insite in induction programme
- Consider creating intranet or SharePoint pages dedicated to information for Councillors
- Implement regular programme of 'all member scrutiny briefings', or alternative if this idea cannot gain support
- Corporate push to improve consistency and completeness of officers' email signatures and phone book entries
- Each Executive Director-Lead Member partnership to have a re-set conversation to define what performance information is shared and reviewed, and at what frequency.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
14. Deliver accurate and efficient all-out election and maximise the intended benefits of the change to four yearly elections	Returning Officer	Phase 2a

### Action to date:

- Council decision to move to whole council election
- Boundary review
- Polling station review (underway)
- New Returning Officer and senior leads for election management
- Proposals in development by Strategy team relating to a longer-term strategic planning and delivery cycle linked to the four-year municipal cycle
- Progress towards delivery of election in line with project plan monitored regularly by RO, with additional campaigns relating to voter ID and voter fraud built in as appropriate.

### Next steps:

- Deliver the election accurately and well

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
15. 2022/23 Annual review of Policy Statement on Corporate Governance	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

**Actions to date:**

- New Policy Statement on Corporate Governance based on CIPFA framework approved by full council.

**Next steps:**

- Conduct desktop analysis of organisational governance, making links to Annual Governance Statement

16. Review and reprioritise use of Democratic Services Team’s limited resources	Monitoring Officer	Phases 1, 2a & 2b
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**Actions to date:**

- Recruitment of senior interim lead for governance and scrutiny, including fulfilling statutory scrutiny officer
- Commencement of recruitment to scrutiny role vacancy
- Advertised Scrutiny Post and other vacancies in the Democratic Services team - appointed two internal posts but no applications for scrutiny role.
- New Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager starts at SBC 24 April.

**Next steps:**

- Up-grade and re-issue scrutiny officer advert.
- Review: service provision with a view to streamlining offer, support for partnership meetings and review cost-effectiveness of Statutory Appeals service.

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
17. Ensure document storage and retention arrangements are robust	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Review of deeds by legal team, including advice on deeds packets
- Review and plan for storage of existing physical deeds

**Next steps:**

- Review circumstances around deeds and storage of legal documentation by SBC in-house.
- Review arrangements for electronic deeds storage.

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
18. 2022/23 Implement annual review of constitution	Monitoring Officer	Phases 2a & 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Rolling review of the constitution based on needs
- Consulted Extended CLT on whether any further elements of the constitution require to be updated
- Review underway.

**Next steps:**

- Conduct minor review of constitution for 2023 AGM with a view to more significant rolling review thereafter

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
19. Strengthen community engagement in the council’s recovery and improvement	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

**Actions to date:**

- Confirmed re-subscription to Citizen Space as the single online tool used by the council to consult and engage with residents.

**Next steps:**

- Review community participation and engagement in local democracy / decision-making

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
20. Improve how the council looks to the future to assure its own viability and set its decision-making priorities	Monitoring Officer / ED for Strategy	Phases 2b & 3

**Actions to date:**

- New five year corporate plan linked to recovery themes
- Proposals in development by Strategy team relating to a longer-term strategic planning and delivery cycle linked to the four-year municipal cycle

**Next steps:**

- Build cycle of corporate planning into corporate schedule and communicate the intended pathway to the organisation
- Long-term options for future viable governance of the authority explored and assessed
- Refresh the service planning cycle

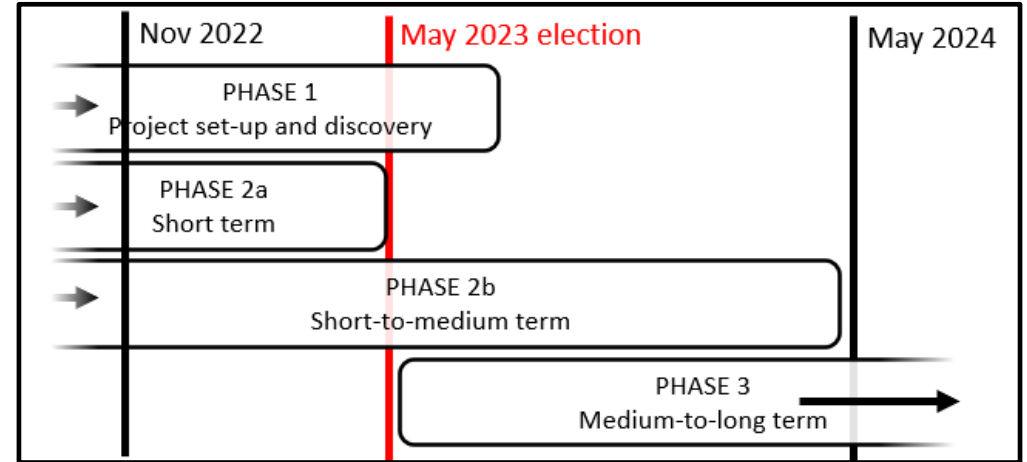
Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
21. Improve quality of local (external) partnerships	Monitoring Officer	Phase 3

- Review partnerships governance
- Implement changes that improve efficiency and effectiveness of partnership arrangements



### Timescales

- Further project and resource planning will be part of phase 1.
- While this is underway, the timescales given are fairly broad. All phases are expected to overlap.
- The same phases are used within the Democratic Governance Action Plans.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
1. Set up project management and reporting arrangements	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

- Align plan, materials and reporting with whole-council approach to recovery action planning and reporting.
- Seek programme/project management resource.
- Created informal 'Democratic Governance Improvement Group' chaired by Monitoring Officer – meeting regularly to review action plans and consider emerging issues.
- Member survey issued to assess baseline satisfaction with, and attitudes to, scrutiny.
- PMO resource now available – Lara Felix now learning the ropes and will be handling the monthly reporting cycle for the Corporate Governance Working Group and the IRB, including a refresh of the action plans.

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## Next steps:

- Align plan, materials and reporting with whole-council approach to recovery action planning and reporting, as this emerges.
- Aim to close this action within a month now that Lara is on board.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
2. Respond to CfGS review in relation to reorganising scrutiny arrangements	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

## Actions to date:

- Commissioned Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to undertake a review of scrutiny function. This has been published, endorsed by Council and member training delivered.
- Established which member/s will lead on the development of the scrutiny function
- Held two meetings of the Member Working Group on Scrutiny (January and February) and agreed key principles for the new design of scrutiny.

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## Next steps:

- Final review of detail e.g. role profiles for key members, to be reviewed virtually by Group Leaders
- Constitutional changes recommended by Member Working Group on Scrutiny to be considered by Constitution Member Working Group, for agreement by Council at AGM 2023.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
3. Formulate a cohesive work programme for scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

### Action to date:

- Work programming events held in-year with officer and member involvement
- Launch of three T&F Groups to conduct focused work and a work programme for the remaining panels focussing on Budget/savings, improvement and recovery
- Annual Review and work programming workshop held 2 March – attended by 10 members. Output forms the backbone of the Scrutiny Annual Report and may be considered by next year’s scrutiny members.
- Member Working Group on Scrutiny has agreed core Terms of Reference for next year’s Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, providing focus to next year’s work.

### Next steps:

- Work programming activity post-election with the new committee, informed by extended CLT item to generate longlist of T&F options.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
4. Re-instate regular all-member briefings outside of formal committee settings	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

- [see action in democratic governance action plan] Proposals to be made for regular programme of ‘all-member scrutiny briefings’ to improve all members’ knowledge and connection to the business of the council, increase scrutiny bandwidth and take ‘for information/learning’ items out of committee setting allowing better prioritisation of impactful items, as part of review of scrutiny

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
5. Elevate and support the role of the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

**Action to date:**

- Statutory Scrutiny Officer now meeting weekly with Chair of O&S Cttee
- Chair of O&S Cttee now periodically invited to Improvement Board meetings with Commissioners, Cabinet and senior officers, when O&S is under discussion.
- LGA mentorship reinstated for O&S Chair
- Reviewed the Special Responsibility Allowance attracted by the Scrutiny Chair position and other scrutiny lead roles, via an Independent Remuneration Panel, agreed 28 March Full Council

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**Next steps:**

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
6. Improved mechanisms for holding Cabinet Members to account	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

**Action to date:**

- Cabinet members invited to present and answer questions at budget scrutiny sessions in February 2023, and invited to receive T&F group reports in public committee meetings (also February 2023).
- Changes to constitution proposed to ensure councillors are mentioned as well as officers in various clauses about accountability at O&S.

**Next Steps:**

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
7. Recruit resource to vacancies in Democratic Services and Scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 1

**Actions to date:**

- Recruitment of interim head of governance and statutory scrutiny officer
- Scrutiny role and other democratic services posts have been advertised
- Two internal posts appointed and Manager post offered to external candidate.

**Next steps:**

- Re-grading of scrutiny officer post via JE panel is underway for re-issue

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Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
8. Improve the ways in which scrutiny members are kept apprised of forthcoming executive decisions and issues	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

**Action to date:**

- Significant improvements to early engagement with budget setting
- Regular meetings between O&S Chair and Chief Exec have now commenced.

**Next steps:**

- Embed mechanism to ensure that scrutiny members are availed of the public Forward Plan of cabinet decisions and are using it to inform their work
- Design effective use of corporate performance management information and KPIs by scrutiny councillors
- Support scrutiny members to understand their rights to access information

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
9. Improve year-round scrutiny of the financial cycle	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 1

### Actions to date:

- Significant improvements to early engagement with budget setting
- Additional round of finance training and detailed pre-meeting for December round of budget/savings scrutiny meetings carried out on 24<sup>th</sup> November.
- Three budget scrutiny sessions in February, leading up to final budget scrutiny session 23 Feb
- Whole-year focus on financial management in scrutiny embedded in draft Terms of Reference for next year's Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with guidance from CfGS.

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### Next steps:

Operation of Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee to include focus on financial cycle.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
10. Deliver sustained programme of Scrutiny member and officer training and skills development	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phases 2a & 2b

## Actions to date:

- Training delivered to all scrutiny members taking account of early draft findings of CfGS review.
- Have involved service-based officers heavily in the leadership and delivery of T&F group support, encouraging learning-by doing - excellent feedback about weekly meetings for officer leads of T&Fs to discuss progress and process and thereby share good practice – feeding back to extended CLT 22 February

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## Next steps:

- Commission the member training proposal set out by Centre for Governance & Scrutiny
- Consider options for co-option in order to bring in exemplars of effective scrutiny to the committee setting
- Deliver further training to lead officers at suitable intervals
- Deliver member training and induction, including about scrutiny and chairmanship, post-election.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
11. Review constitution re: scrutiny rules and practice, including call-in		Phase 2a

- Review of constitution underway re: scrutiny rules and practice, including call-in, for recommendation by working groups to Council at AGM 2023.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
12. Improve overall support for Scrutiny Members to continuously improve effectiveness of scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phases 2a& 2b


## Actions to date:




- See actions 5, 8 & 10.
- Offered intensive officer support of O&S Chair including regular weekly meetings with the statutory scrutiny officer.
- Pre-meetings more routinely in place for all committees.
- Member Survey and Annual Report has provided opportunities for members to reflect on successes and weaknesses of Scrutiny in 2022-23.


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## Next steps:



- See action 2 & 10.
- With the support of CfGS, empower scrutiny members to self-evaluate their performance in committee and plan steps towards further improvement.
- Implement system of pre-meetings with facilitated identification of key lines of inquiry for key items


Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
M-004		Academy (Revs and Bens) Migration of the council's revenues and benefits case management system to the cloud	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - No change.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - No change.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - integration issues with DIP document management due to Citrix issues is causing poor system performance. Working with service area to explore use of application outside of Citrix.</p> <p><b>06/01/23</b> - Project undertaking go-live activities 6 and 7 January. Minor test case errors outstanding. Manual workarounds in place.</p>	31-Jan-23	31-Jan-23		
M-001		*Northgate Housing Migration of the council's housing management system to the cloud	Tom McAuliffe	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - All year end activity complete. Recruitment for new PM underway. Workshop scoping for service charge module complete. Phase 2 continuing through internal governance review.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - Rent increase letter released on time. DD letters on track for mid-March delivery. Recruitment started for new PM. Phase 2 business case written and in internal review.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - good progress being made on annual year end activities. Development of MI reporting is starting 3rd week in February. Draft business case for phase 2 started. ECP mini BCs submitted for outstanding expenditure, with two retention payment to the supplier held.</p> <p><b>06/01/23</b> - Project being moved to the ICT and Digital programme for delivery. Workshops planned for January and project will be reset and rebaselined for delivery.</p>	31-Dec-22	31-Mar-23		

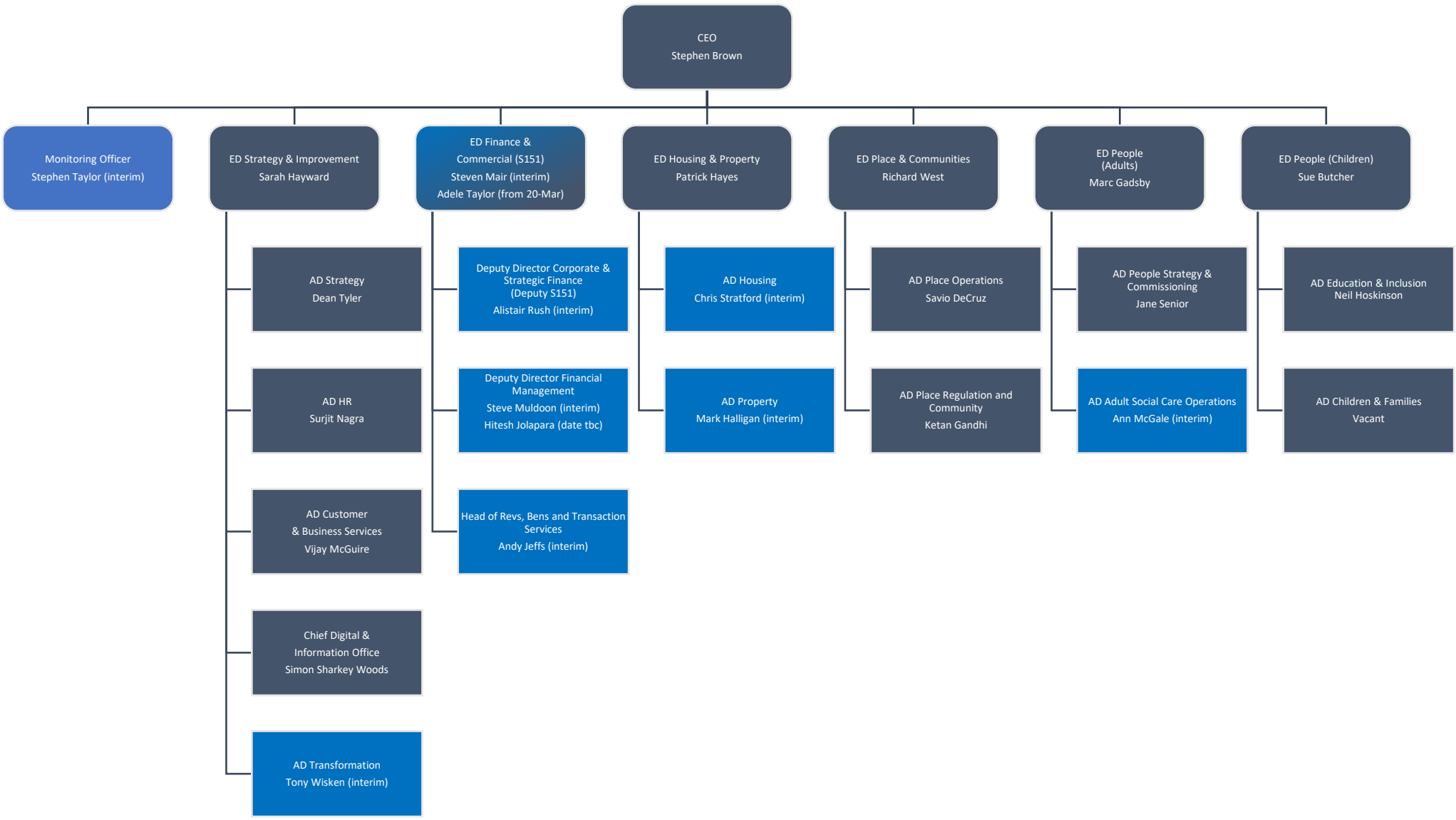
Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
M-008		ITSM Phase one Implementation of an IT service management application – case management and customer portal.	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - Phase 1 complete and application launched on time. Phase 2 being csoped for delivery.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - Soft launch of product in mid-March. Comms out to all staff after soft launch, formal launch late March including customer portal.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - Contract awarded to Freshworks. Awaiting completed contract for project to kick-off w/b <b>20/02/23</b>.</p> <p><b>06/01/2023</b> - Options appraisal complete. G-cloud 13 Framework newly launched. Procurement can't complete until access to framework is provided by CCS. Issue escalated to Procurement.</p>	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23		
Page 667 M-009		EDMS Implementation of a council wide electronic document management system	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - No change.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - technology product review complete. Resource models to be developed in coming month.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - Contract award approved by Cabinet and contract sealed. Development of draft busienss case for longer term service provision has started.</p> <p><b>06/01/23</b> - Report for new two year contract will be considered by Cabinet in January. Work has started on the future medium/long term technology and resourcing strategy.</p>	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23		
M-007		APAS Migration of the council's planning application to the cloud	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - Connectivity issue between VPN and AgileGIS identified. Proposed soluton in review.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - project remains on track to complete end of March.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - All January deliverables completed on time. VPN stablity testing underway by SBC. Service sign-offs scheduled fro early March, project to complete late March.</p> <p><b>06/01/23</b> - server infrastructure set-up complete and application loaded to infrastructure. Vendor undertaking confirguration and testing.</p>	30-Nov-22	30-Apr-23		Complete date extended by 1 month to ensure proposed VPN solution is working and in a stable state.

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
M-005		Flare Implementation of a new case management system for regulatory services	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - Contract award complete. Scoping/project kick-off workshop scheduled.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - Funding secured. Contract award approved by PRB 6/3/23.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - Desktop procurement exercise complete. Working with service area to ensure funding is available</p>	30-Sep-23	30-Sep-23		
M-012		Liquid Logic (Adult social care) Migration to the cloud of the council's Adult Social Care system, Children's Social Care & Early Help applications.	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - No change.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - Awaiting service area input and agreement on business case and funding</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - Final scoping workshop to be held w/e <b>10/02/23</b>. Once scope agreed, business case to be completed.</p> <p><b>06/01/23</b> - Requirements gathering and business case being drafted. Workshop planned with service area and vendor.</p>	TBC	TBC		Timelines to be agreed with service area once requirements gathering, BC drafting and workshop has completed.

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
M-002		Corporate and contact centre telephony Migration to a new service provider for corporate and contact centre telephony services	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - Integration with Microsoft Teams for corporate telephony users has failed testing. A support ticket is with MS to remedy the fault - known error. Awaiting confirmation that fault is fixed before completing testing and rescheduling the corporate site roll-out. Likely w/b 17th April.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - Contact centre went live with no loss of service. Minor issues were addressed quickly. Go-live dates for remaining sites will be reviewed as the porting dates were not accepted by supply carriers. This will mean that sites will go-live in much quicker succession than planned. No loss of service is expected, but issue resolution may take longer than expected.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - Contact centre staff training completed. Go-live dates for all sites negotiated with service areas and approved by project board. Working with corporate comms team on messages to staff. This remains a difficult project to complete on time. It is likely that there will be issues during each go-live as staff adopt the new system.</p> <p>....</p>	28-Feb-23	31-Mar-23		Change in project delivery dates: Project was split into two delivery schedules: contact centre, corporate sites/staff. This provided more time to complete the manual upgrades of physical phones across the 31 sites.
M-003		Laptop AutoPilot Automating process of building staff user profiles onto new laptops	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - No change</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - No change, awaiting completion of always on VPN project.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - No change, awaiting completion of always on VPN project.</p> <p><b>06/01/23</b> - Reviewing existing laptop images. Project cannot be rolled out until the Always On VPN project has completed. All non impacted activities are being delivered in parallel.</p>	31-Jan-23	31-Mar-23		

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
M-002		Core switch migration Upgrade and replacement of the core switch	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - Migration scheduled for <b>13/14</b> May. This date was agreed to accommodate local elections and alignment to the data centre application power down/up practice run.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - Consultancy support secured with CDW. Upgrade/replacement schedule being worked through.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - Project delivery brought forward to before the DC relocation. External support will be required and quotes are being sought.</p> <p><b>06/01/23</b> - Cable audit has completed. Reviewing opportunity to migrate some services ahead of the DC relocation in May as there are services which are currently not supported on the existing switch.</p>	31-Mar-23	31-May-23		End date changed to accommodate other project work and local elections.
Page 170 M-006		Data centre relocation Relocating the council's data centre to a central government, highly available and flexible location	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - Trial application power down/up exercise scheduled for weekend of <b>13/14</b> May.</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - The project has been delayed by one month. This is due to the delay in completing the new WAN contract. Without a contract in place there is no way to commission the circuits and services required for the DC move without breaking the council's procurement regulations.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - CCS data centre contract sealed. Preparatory work continues including likely core switch migration delivered ahead of relocation exercise.</p> <p><b>06/01/23</b> - Cable audit complete. Awaiting sealing of contract to allow commissioning of data lines to new data centre. Migration date agreed for May to minimise impacts on key council activity relating to FYE.</p>	31-Jan-23	30-Jun-23		

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
M-008		Office 365 Phase 2 Maximising the use of online collaboration and productivity tools available from Office 365	Stephen Menzies	<p><b>11/04/23</b> - No change</p> <p><b>07/03/23</b> - PoC service area identified (Democratic Services). Newly elected members training to be developed aligned to the new O35 adoption proposals.</p> <p><b>07/02/23</b> - Revised scoping document being prepared to include better council-wide adoption of online collaboration and productivity tools.</p> <p><b>06/01/23</b> - Initial project scoping complete. Wider piece around staff adoption and end-to-end support on adoption being developed.</p>	30-Jun-23	30-Jun-23		





Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board

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Progress Report  
25-May-23

*Report Owner: Sarah Hayward, ED Strategy and Improvement*  
*Report Author: Strategy and Improvement Team*

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- Organisational Structure - Senior Recruitment Update / Structure (3g & 8). CEX.

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## Section Four - Close.

- Future Meetings, incl. Forward Plan. ED Strategy & Improvement.
- Any other Business. Leader / CEX.
- Appendices - Supporting Evidence / Detail.



1. Day to day delivery of Recovery themes / actions is growing in maturity across the organisation. This is supported by:
  - The experienced staff we have recruited to the Transformation Team.
  - Headline plans broadly tracking as expected.
  - Increasingly open dialogue about the challenges and our response to them.
2. Per discussion at the Apr IRB, there needs to be a shift from a purely Direction focussed response to strategic Transformation of the organisation. This will be supported by the new “Recovery and Transformation Board” (initial meeting scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> May).
3. Officers will work with newly appointed Commissioners to review reporting with a view to adjusting as required.
4. 33% of staff responded to the opening round of the staff survey as of now. Senior managers have been urged to promote participation among their staff and to remind them that all responses are anonymous.
5. Informal consultation stage of the Associate Director / Head of Service restructure has completed.

# Recovery Combined 'Plan on a Page'

Feb-23 Mar-23 Apr-23 May-23 Jun-23 Jul-23 Aug-23 Sep-23 Oct-23 Nov-23 Dec-23 Jan-24 > Jan-24

## Oversight

◆ IRB (Feb-23, Mar-23, Apr-23, May-23, Jun-23, Jul-23, Aug-23, Sep-23, Oct-23, Nov-23)  
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (incl. Grant Thornton audit) (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (Jun-23, Sep-23, Dec-23)

## Financial Sustainability

Future Years Budget Exploration & Savings Ideation (Mar-23 to Jun-23)  
 2024/25 Draft Budget Preparation (Jun-23 to Sep-23)  
 2024/25 Budget Finalisation (Sep-23 to Jan-24)  
 S151 Arrives (Feb-23)  
 2023/24 Budget Update & Approval (Mar-23)  
 2024/25 Budget Update Available (May-23)  
 2024/25 Draft Budget (Sep-23)  
 Financial Settlement (Dec-23)  
 2018/19 Accounts Audit Complete (Mar-23)  
 2019/20 Accounts Audit Complete (Aug-23)  
 2020/21 Accounts Audit Complete (Nov-23)

## Asset Disposal

On-going Asset Disposal Programme (Feb-23 to Jan-24)  
 Q1 Receipts forecast: £36m (Mar-23)  
 Q2 Receipts forecast: £53m (Jun-23)  
 Q3 Receipts forecast: £34m (Sep-23)  
 Q4 Receipts forecast: £23m (Dec-23)

## Procurement & Contract Mgmt.

Contracts Register Reviews (focussed to ensure up to date and robust, then six-monthly thereafter) (Feb-23 to Jun-23)  
 Six-Monthly Register Reviews Start (Jan-24)  
 ◆ Mgmt. Framework (Feb-23)  
 ◆ Contracts Register on Finance System (Mar-23)  
 ◆ KPI's Monitoring (Feb-23)  
 ◆ Procurement process mapping (Mar-23)

## Subsidiary Companies

Increase Member Oversight (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 Present and Implement Annual Business Plans for JEH, GRE5, SCF (Mar-23 to Sep-23)  
 ◆ JEH, GRE5, SUR Business Plans to Cabinet (Mar-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Sep-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Nov-23)  
 DISH Review (Jun-23)  
 ◆ Undertake and Implement Recommendations for Governance Reviews (Jul-23 to Jan-24)  
 Exit from GRE5 & SUR 2024/25 (Jan-24)

## Democratic Governance & Scrutiny

P2a – Short Term (incl. CfGS review response) (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 P2b – Short to Medium Term (incl. improving Member and Officer decision making processes, introductory training) (Feb-23 to Jan-24)  
 P3 – Medium to Long Term (incl. improved partnership governance, longer-term planning & decision making) (Mar-23 to Jan-24)  
 ◆ Governance & Culture Workshop (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Whole Council Elections (Apr-23)  
 Agree Member Dev Programme (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 Deliver Member Development Programme (Mar-23 to Jun-23)  
 ◆ Present Reports on T&F Groups linked to Recovery (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Implement new Scrutiny Structure, delivery training and finalise annual work programme (Jun-23 to Jan-24)  
 Shadow O & S Arrangements (Mar-23 to Jun-23)  
 ◆ Post-Election Member Survey (Oct-23)

## Internal Audit

◆ First Tranche of IA Recruitment Complete (Feb-23)  
 Transition RSM to In-House Team (Mar-23 to Apr-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Audit Plan available (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Finance Board Update on IA way forward (Mar-23)  
 Review against PSIAS Standards (Jan-24)

## ICT & Digital

Corporate Telephony (Feb-23)  
 Updated ICT Strategy (Mar-23)  
 Data-Centre Relocation Completes (Apr-23)  
 Security and Resilience, incl. DR Improvements (Apr-23)  
 Service Management Customer Portal Go-Live (Mar-23)  
 Mobile Telephony (Sep-23)  
 Service Management – Ph 2 Go -Live (Sep-23)

## Mgmt. Structure & Recruitment





Recruitment Process Optimisation (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 ◆ ED & AD Levels Complete (Mar-23)

## Workforce & Culture






P1 - Defining Future & Quick Wins (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 P2 - Reshaping for Performance (Mar-23 to Aug-23)  
 P3 – Optimised Delivery (Aug-23 to Jan-24)  
 Leadership Roadshow (Sep-23, Nov-23)  
 CLT & Governance Restructure (May-23)  
 Improved PM (Mar-23)  
 Staff Survey (May-23, Jul-23, Jan-24)  
 Q'ly Perf Rep (Jun-23, Sep-23)

Note, RAG Status against individual milestones does not represent overall service status

# Recovery Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
1	Functional Capability Assessment	Sarah Hayward	Dean Tyler		01-Dec-22		=	<b>14/10</b> - Service plans have been completed, which will address gaps in capability. These are continuing to be iterated to ensure coherence across services and alignment with the corporate plan. SLT will act as the governance body for the service planning. Next steps are to develop reporting arrangements for monitoring progress in delivery, and ensure lessons for next year are captured.
2	Avoid Poor Governance or Financial Mismanagement	Adele Taylor	Liton Rahman	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	Continuous		=	<b>13/04</b> Finance action plan will be refreshed during April/May to reflect continued improvements for medium term.
3a	Financial Sustainability Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Liton Rahman	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-29		=	<b>13/10</b> - The Finance action plan covers 10 years in detail from 2015/16 to 2024/25 and is supplemented by a 14 year active financial model (to 2028/29). Key elements are: Accounts, Assets sales, Capitalisation direction, Revenue budgets, Borrowings, MRP, DSG, Internal audit, Risks and mitigations Finance structure and Directions/recommendations from DLUHC, GT, CIPFA, Directions. The plan is regularly updated.
3b	Democratic Governance Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Leader	01-Dec-23		=	<b>11/05</b> - There has been no further update on democratic services action plans due to the prioritisation of the elections. New members are currently being inducted and supported in their transitions to posts. Political and organisational reports are being developed alongside an exploration activity looking at the implications for workstream actions in response to this. <b>09/03</b> – Updates to a number of workstreams this month as preparation for the election, May AGM, new member cohort, updated constitution, new scrutiny arrangements, induction etc move into their final stages. This workstream’s relationship with the culture change programme is becoming clearer as the project environment continues to mature, making it easier to spot and make use of interdependencies.

# Recovery Directions Progress Summary




Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3c	Scrutiny Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee	01-Dec-23		=	<p><b>11/05</b> - There has been no update on the scrutiny front due to the elections. A new scrutiny panel is being inducted over the next coming weeks.</p> <p><b>11/04</b> – The Scrutiny Annual Report and Commissioners’ One year report were received at the last O&amp;S meeting of the year on 22 March. Full Council received the Scrutiny Annual Report on 28 March, and Members’ comments both in the report and at the meeting reflect improvements from the year-to-date. Following input from the member working group, constitutional changes to adjust the structure and practice of O&amp;S in Slough are being prepared for the AGM in May. Preparation is underway for induction with input from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and work programming with the new committee.</p>
3d	Internal Audit Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Mike Thomas	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-23		=	<p><b>13/04</b> - Actions have been reviewed by finance team to ensure that action owners reflect current structure and will be taken to each DLT for progress updates with exceptions to be reported into Finance and Commercial DLT for follow up by S151</p>
3e	Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Clare Priest	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	12-Jan-23		=	<p><b>05/05</b> -Training sessions for staff continue, with a further session held on 27 April. 110 staff have been trained to date. Process mapping in procurement to externally validate processes and procedures has completed and an improvement plan to implement recommendations is live. Work to develop a contract management framework has commenced</p>
3f	Information Technology Action Plan	Stephen Brown	Simon SharkeyWoods	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	11-Jan-23		=	<p><b>10/05</b> - Failures on aging equipment have meant that the team has had to change the timing of some key works to deal with a critical risk to services. The network core failure has been the most impactful event but by working with teams to achieve workarounds, the replacement of the equipment was brought forward 6 weeks and successfully completed. New resources have been recruited to support an uplift in the skills across the council, especially in respect of the use of the Microsoft 365 platform.</p> <p><b>11/04</b> - ICT&amp;D 3 year strategy formally adopted by the council. Final wording strengthened following Commissioner feedback and it is now clearer about corporate oversight and control. New IT service management system deployed and well received. Overall quality of the support service was negatively impacted by end-of-year activities, such as removal of legacy hardware, required to ensure savings targets could be met.</p>
3g	Suitable Officer Structure and Scheme of Delegation	Stephen Brown	Sarah Wilson	Leader	01-Oct-22		=	<p><b>Please see direction 8.</b></p>

# Recovery Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
4	Improvement Plan Monthly Reporting	Sarah Hayward	Tony Wisken	Leader	01-Sep-23		=	<p><b>11/05</b> - In-line with the below request, the IRB papers for May have taken a more summarised approach. In addition the first "Recovery and Improvement Board" has been scheduled for May which will provide additional Senior Officer over the recovery and transformation agenda. One of the desired outputs is a further improvement to the reporting to the IRB.</p> <p><b>13/04</b> - Gavin has signalled a readiness to move to a more summarised approach to IRB reporting, however the detail of this has yet to be determined. As agreed with Sarah Hayward, reporting for the Apr IRB will proceed as previous months.</p> <p><b>13/04</b> - CLT have agreed to stand up a "Recovery and Transformation Board" to govern the transformation agenda of the organisation. This will meet monthly aligned to the IRB schedule such that papers / materials can be agreed before going to IRB.</p>
5	Culture Change	Stephen Brown	Sarah Hayward	Leader	31-Dec-23		▲	<p><b>11/05</b> - Culture Programme plans continue to develop. A well received workshop with the CLT has taken place early May with a follow up planned for early June. This has raised quality and depth of conversation at the senior level.</p> <p><b>13/04</b> - Plans and overall governance around the Culture Change Programme continues to develop / build. Whilst progress is not as fast as we would like, momentum is growing and the increased support the Transformation Team is now able to offer is helping the workstream leads develop their plans.</p> <p><b>10/03</b> - 'Concept on a Page' agreed with Stephen Brown. Approval to be sought at Mar IRB by Commissioners to ensure our thinking is aligned. Plans continue to develop, however progress across all streams is being made, but the reporting needs to be improved.</p>



# Recovery Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
6	Subsidiary Company Review	Adele Taylor / Sarah Wilson	Carmel Booth	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	02-Apr-23		=	<p><b>19/05</b> - Subsidiary Company review tracking to plan.</p> <p><b>20/12</b> - Agreement from leader to extend terms of reference of cabinet committee to include companies, SCF governance review update presented to December Audit and CG Committee, SCF articles of association reviewed and due for approval January cabinet, JEH, GR5 and SCF annual business plans to be presented to cabinet by end of FY. I would tentatively suggest this could be green, but we have not made progress on DISH, but should have done by April. Maybe we should wait for the business plans to go through and the committee to receive its first report.</p> <p><b>05/12</b> - Update given to commissioners and elected members with timescale for formal cabinet reporting on each council as part of annual business planning. Of the eleven companies, six have been shut, four are currently being very actively managed, one, low risk, will follow in <b>23/24</b> (DISH). Capital programme reduced by c £65m, capital receipts of circa £50m will be generated</p>
7 Page 181	Evidence Based Decision Making	Sarah Hayward	Sarah Wilson	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	02-Apr-23		=	<p><b>14/04</b> - position statement developed for agreement with CLT including proposals for introduction for new technology to improve data collection and management.</p> <p><b>09/02</b> - First draft of Data Strategy created. Due at CLT in March.</p>
8	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment	Commissioners	Stephen Brown		31-Mar-23		=	<p><b>13/04</b> - Now considered BAU, however a restructure at the AD and levels immediate below is about to get underway.</p> <p><b>03/02</b> - ED for Strategy and Improvement has been appointed. This was the last remaining vacancy in CLT.</p>

2023/24 Savings Delivery Risk Assessment (figures in £'000s)

As @ 04-May-23	Saving Totals		Deliverability RAG Assessment					Saving Mitigations		
	Original (Baseline)	Total so far (excl. Non-Deliverable)	Non-Deliverable	Red (no credible plan)	Amber (at risk)	Green (on track)	Delivered	Agreed Sustainable	Agreed One-off	Proposed
Adults	5,688	5,688	0	0	763	4,925	0	0	0	0
Childrens	805	805	0	0	305	500	0	0	0	0
Strategy & Improvement	1,823	1,823	0	0	0	1,823	0	0	0	0
Finance	7,506	7,506	0	0	0	7,494	12	0	0	0
Place	3,700	3,700	0	0	0	3,680	20	0	0	0
Housing, Property & Planning	750	750	0	0	0	750	0	0	0	0
Cross-Council	2,150	2,150	0	750	200	1,200	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Slough Savings</b>	<b>22,422</b>	<b>22,422</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>1,268</b>	<b>20,372</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
			0.0%	3.3%	5.7%	90.9%	0.1%			
			→	→	→	→	→			
Movement from Previous Period			0	0	0	0	0			
Previous Period			0	750	1,268	20,372	32			

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Per discussion at the Apr IRB, these figures represent the latest position at year-end, with budgets set to fully deliver the savings targets.

- Savings for 2024/25 will be determined over the summer period (per the headline plan).
- Alongside determination of these savings, we intend to mature our oversight model further, with Finance Leads taking a savings assurance role for their respective Functional budgets.

Across 6 thematic areas – latest activity:

## 1. Getting the Basics Right

- a. 2023/24 budget monitoring processes set up – including timetable, trackers, templates – COMPLETE
- b. Savings trackers – meetings per Directorate with finance team before Period 2 closure to review detailed progress. Per month will be on an exception/risk basis – MEETINGS ARRANGED
- c. Asset tracker – agreement on process
- d. Allocation of centrally held budgets (as appropriate) – by end of May and prior to Period 2 monitoring
- e. Finalisation of key government returns and grants (including Public Health Grant) prior to end of Period 2

## 2. Governance and decision-making support

- a. Updated guidance on ECP supporting information - COMPLETE
- b. Detailed workshop on identification of savings for future financial years w/c 15/05/23 with CLT

## 3. Financial culture and awareness

- a. Workshop arranged with finance business partners to agree business partnering approach expected
- b. Planning initial training for Audit and Governance committee - 7th June committee.
- c. Planning underway to identify training for officers and members – more detail at next finance board.
- d. Focus on Internal Audit plan (see separate agenda item).

#### 4. Medium Term Planning

- a. Finalisation of outturn by end of May – on track
- b. Review of capitalisation direction model (and impact on medium term plan) - planned for early June following outturn
- c. Plans to map the new corporate plan to current resources to assist medium term financial planning – await confirmation of new corporate plan

#### 5. Transformation and automation

- a. Agresso User group been set up to co-ordinate activity - previously no single place that key financial system was discussed
- b. Projects underway in Revs and Bens that underpin savings – expect delivery end of June

#### 6. Deep Dive Projects

- a. At identification stage – likely to include:
  - Income and Debt management
  - Purchasing
  - Focus on improvement arc with external audit
  - Focus on improvement arc following internal audit reviews of key financial systems

**In year budget monitoring: (2023/24):**

Each Director now have been sent a copy of their budget for 23/24 and SFM's attending management team meetings  
First monitoring of budget from Period 2 (so closes on the last day of May).

Regular budget monitoring both internally but also reporting to committees and members throughout the whole year.  
Timetable sent with papers.

**In-year contingencies and centrally held budgets (2023/24):**

Finance working through list of centrally held budgets and allocating out those that now need to be held at directorate level. Will be allocated prior to Month 2 closure and subsequently reported on.

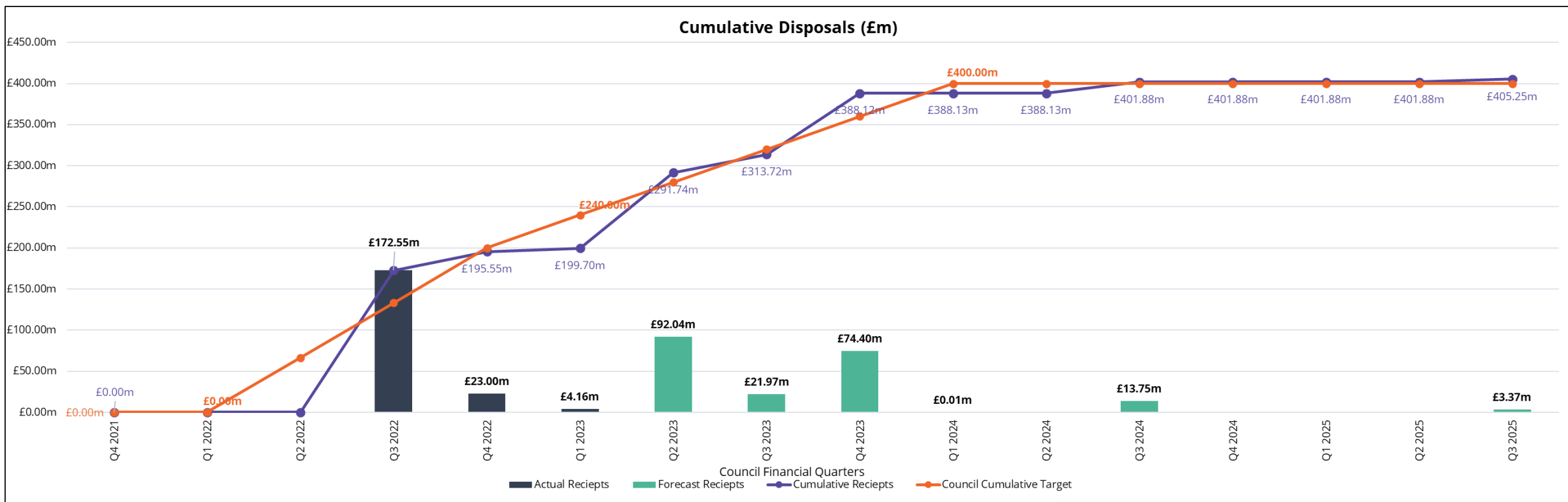
True contingencies or risk reserves will not be allocated out until the correct conditions have been met.

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**Monitoring of Savings:**

1. Detailed review before Period Close Month 2 per Directorate
2. Ongoing monitoring by exception and risk based approach

- During May expecting the following key roles to be filled (interim):
  - Both Deputy S151 posts in place now
  - Specific, experienced, team focussed on closing and statement of accounts work will be in place in coming few weeks
  - Posts focussed on co-ordination of budget monitoring, MTFS development all starting prior to next finance board
- Permanent recruitment for Deputy S151 posts now live – closing date on June 4th
- Permanent recruitment of other finance posts to follow in next few weeks with 2 starters in the budget monitoring team due prior to next finance board
- More success with procurement roles.



Quarters are SBC Financial Year Quarters

RAG	Risks
●	Records
●	Market / Economy
●	Skills / Capability
●	Protocol / Process
●	Slough Narrative

The priorities for the Asset Disposal Programme over the next month include:

- Driving for best bids for the sites that are currently being marketed and secure the approvals necessary to move forward with transactions.
- Issue instructions for a third tranche of sites to be marketed.
- Progress the Estate Strategy work to identify further disposal opportunities and to help clarify the size of the retained portfolio, moving forward. A baseline report has been drafted and is now being verified. Stakeholder Engagement schedules are being planned and are likely to take place in June/July.
- Draft a Cabinet report to recommend improvements to the current process, including:
  - The approach to valuations and demonstrating Best Consideration.
  - Increasing the delegation levels to the Executive Director, to reduce an otherwise excessive need to use the urgency procedures and to reduce the risk of compromising SBC's commercial position, particularly given the current market conditions.
  - Appropriation of assets currently held in HRA to GF.
- Further refine the summary monitoring view.
- Review assets held in JEH.



## Progress

1. Continued pressure at CLT level to improve timeliness and quality of report writing, now supported by RAG-rated corporate schedule, with all reports cleared by the Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer prior to submission to Commissioner.
2. Review of constitution has commenced and is in progress to inform review at annual council. COMPLETE.
3. Member Survey results have been shared with key officer teams and work is underway to identify new actions etc – was published for Standards Cttee on 6<sup>th</sup> April however the meeting was not quorate.
4. Proposed Member development and induction plans published for 6<sup>th</sup> April Standards Committee however the meeting was not quorate – will proceed with small member working group instead.
5. Contributing to revised staff induction programme with key governance / political environment content.
6. New Member Allowances Scheme agreed by Full Council 28<sup>th</sup> March following recommendation by IRP.
7. Reviewed Significant Officer Decision-making guidance and streamlined publication criteria (for inclusion in review of constitution), re-circulated to Extended CLT.
8. Extended CLT session on member survey, scrutiny annual report and member induction.

## Next Steps

1. Onboarding and induction of new Members, AGM 18 May, revised constitution etc.
2. Launch 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' governance training.
3. A process for the management of Asset Disposals is being developed in order to assist with the workflow of those decisions.

## Progress

1. The Scrutiny Annual Report and Commissioners' One year report were received at the last O&S meeting of the year on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Full Council received the Scrutiny Annual Report on 28<sup>th</sup> March, and Members' comments both in the report and at the meeting reflect improvements from the year-to-date.
2. Preparation is underway for induction and work programming with the new committee.
3. Annual Review and Work Programming Workshop held 2<sup>nd</sup> March, shaping the Scrutiny Annual Review to be received by committee 22<sup>nd</sup> March.
4. Member Working Group on Scrutiny (set up by Council) has completed its meetings, with decisions made about the shape of scrutiny next year. Following input from the member working group, constitutional changes to adjust the structure and practice of O&S in Slough are being prepared for the AGM in May.

## Next actions

1. Extended CLT item to review Scrutiny Annual Report – emphasis on peers feeding back on the benefits of officers involving themselves in T&F activity, with lessons learned.
2. Constitutional changes which will bring into place the planned changes to the structure of Overview and Scrutiny are due to be considered at Council on 18<sup>th</sup> May. COMPLETE.

- **A new Internal Audit team has been recruited** and the 'Head of Internal Audit' has been in post since 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023, the Internal Audit Manager since 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023, the Senior Internal Auditor since 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and the Internal Auditor due to start mid-June.

### **Pre 21/22 internal audits:**

- There is one action (out of 257) rated as low priority outstanding with actions in place to be completed.

### **21/22 internal audits:**

- Actions completed as at end of April number 155 (including closed as duplicates) or 47% of the total due with a further 12 or 4% not yet due. A concerted effort is being made by CLT to close the remaining 160 actions that are overdue.

### **22/23 internal audits:**

- 15 reports have been finalised and a further 10 reports are in draft and being responded to by management.
- 193 actions have been raised for 2022/23 from these reports.
- 62 actions are overdue and 23 complete.
- 53 are awaiting management responses (action owners and implementation dates).

### **23/24 Internal Audit Plan**

- The Audit Plan was approved by the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 14 March 2023. The Plan has been reviewed and updated by the in-house Head of Internal Audit in Q1 2023/24.
- Reports on progress of implementing recommendations are made to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, Finance Board and CLT Assurance meetings.

**Pre-2021**

Totals	Total	High	Medium	Low
Not Due	0	0	0	0
Overdue	1	0	0	1
Complete*	256	28	112	116
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>117</b>

**2021/22**

Totals	Total	High	Medium	Low
Not Due	12	1	9	2
Overdue	160	13	89	58
Complete	146	38	55	53
Closed as duplicate	9	3	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>114</b>

**2022/23**

Totals	Total	High	Medium	Low
Not Due	55	13	35	7
Overdue	62	15	32	15
Complete	23	6	10	7
Awaiting Management Responses	53	10	28	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>44</b>

- All internal audit actions have been allocated to and reviewed by actions owners and Executive Directors, including actions that are deemed not relevant due to changes in circumstances. Actions from previous year's audits are also reviewed to ensure they are relevant to the service area to which they have been assigned.
- The action tracker has been reviewed and updated to reflect the senior management restructure and the change in Directorates.
- High rated actions are being given priority and are reviewed monthly by the Council's Finance Board, DLTs' and will be reviewed quarterly by CLT Assurance meetings.
- Progress is being made on closing actions on the tracker. Evidence of actions completed is obtained and quality assured by the Internal Audit Manager, and, retained for use in follow up audits.
- Officers have strengthened the arrangements for monitoring and verifying completion of audit actions through monthly DLT meetings. This will also continue in the quarterly CLT Assurance meetings.

Contracts register is being used as a business as usual tool in forward planning procurement activity, this includes consideration of longer term procurement activity required for high value, high risk contracts.

Utilising existing IT systems for the contract register – implementation on Agresso is likely to be scheduled for July 2023.

The training programme on the council's contract procedure rules continues and reflects the revised rules approved by Council in November, a further course took place in April, 110 staff have been trained to date.

Moved away from relying on expensive consultancy support, by initiating recruitment to a permanent in-house team, engaged a cheaper consultancy to support specialist procurement where needed and to plug short term gaps in resources.

**Further key development activities**

1. Implement the contracts register on the council's finance system – by July 2023 (slight delay due to onboarding of managed service provider).
2. Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management. This is being done with the contract management pioneer programme– from January 2023.
3. Process mapping procurement - focus is on governance to provide the council with external validation on its processes and to make recommendations on improvements which are being implemented – From April 2023.
4. Establishment of Contract Management Assurance Board to drive best practice in contract management. As part of this process, the contract register steering group will be disbanded and the project ended as the project has met its aims and objectives. A lessons learned review was undertaken in April 2023.
5. Ensure KPI's are meaningful and monitored effectively – from January 2023.
6. Programme of continuous contracts register reviews to ensure the council is getting the best value for money – from September 2023 and six monthly thereafter.
7. Implement the actions in the procurement and contract management strategy that have not yet been undertaken, throughout the 2023/24 financial year.
8. Report went to February Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the Contracts T&F Group recommending improvements to contract management. Recommendations also reported to Cabinet on 27 February.

## The ICT & Digital Team Strategy and Plan

1. Following the approval of the ICT & Digital strategy by Cabinet on the 20<sup>th</sup> March the ICT & Digital Team has been focusing on establishing priorities for work, based on the three themes within the refreshed approach.
2. The required uplift in the approach to IT service management (how we provide service to staff) is initially focused on three areas. They are; incident management, asset management, and the process for managing starters/movers/leavers. As well as writing up and implementing standard operating procedures (SOPs), we will check they are effective internal audit testing before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.
3. Through detailed discussions with other teams and departments we have achieved greater clarity around what should sit where in terms of the control of data. The proposal breaks down as follows:
  - a) Council departments: Data entry and operational reporting
  - b) ICT&D: Data management, quality monitoring and central data platforms
  - c) Data & Insights Team: Research, insights and analytics to inform decision making
4. Although resource remains limited in this area as we attempt to recruit, the third theme around digital engagement is being progressed through the work of Craig Williams who is seeking to identify quick wins.



## Current activity and next steps

1. Review of the governance and effectiveness of ICT platforms that support both Adults and Childrens Services is nearly complete. The work has taken longer than expected but a proposal for a sustainable way forward will be completed before the end of May. Interim steps have been taken to provide a more robust service until the new approach is fully implemented.
2. The modernisation work undertaken over the past year has highlighted additional areas that need to be added to the ICT portfolio. The ICT&D SLT will be undertaking a refreshed planning exercise on 30<sup>th</sup> May that will seek to develop a comprehensive roadmap of activities and the interdependencies between them.
3. Three standard operating procedures (SOPs) are being developed to start bringing more consistency and control into the way IT services are provided by the team to council staff. As well as improving customer service, the three areas should address a number of weaknesses picked up in previous internal audits.
4. New elected members have now been provided with a new, business class laptop that will be their core device for their 4 year term. The setup has been built specifically for members and will be developed further over the coming months to make the user experience as simple and intuitive as possible.

1. Leadership Workshop (CLT) delivered on Tuesday 2nd May 2023. The Team identified a number of priority actions to drive changes in behaviours across the organisation from clear and measurable objective setting, to smarter working practices. These actions are to be incorporated into Cultural Change programme of work.
2. Further workshop to be planned with Leadership team (CLT) to monitor progress of prioritised actions and to establish key themes from the staff survey.
3. Post election, Members and cabinet development programme to be rolled out.
4. Joint working across services to review and prioritise “Quick wins” identified to help the organisation utilise tools more effectively and evolve the workforce into a learning organisation are being developed.
5. To manage the accountability of tasks across the organisation schemes of delegated authority and points of escalation are being reviewed.
6. We have improved the tracking of culture change recommendations from Gavin Jones, and ensuring these are effective linked this into workstreams for delivery.
7. Baseline measures to monitor current environment established. Together with the staff survey this will provide empirical data of the current culture at SBC. This will help track the impact of changes delivered.

# RTB (proposed) & IRB Calendar

Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3	1 2 3	3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5	1 2
9 10 11 12 13	6 7 8 9 10	6 7 8 9 10	10 11 12 13 14	8 9 10 11 12	5 6 7 8 9
16 17 18 19 20	13 14 15 16 17	13 14 15 16 17	17 18 19 20 21	15 16 17 18 19	12 13 14 15 16
23 24 25 26 27	20 21 22 23 24	20 21 22 23 24	24 25 26 27 28	22 23 24 25 26	19 20 21 22 23
30 31	27 28	27 28 29 30 31		29 30 31	26 27 28 29 30

Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4	4 5 6 7 8	2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3	1
10 11 12 13 14	7 8 9 10 11	4 5 6 7 8	9 10 11 12 13	6 7 8 9 10	4 5 6 7 8
17 18 19 20 21	14 15 16 17 18	11 12 13 14 15	16 17 18 19 20	13 14 15 16 17	11 12 13 14 15
24 25 26 27 28	21 22 23 24 25	18 19 20 21 22	23 24 25 26 27	20 21 22 23 24	18 19 20 21 22
31	28 29 30 31	25 26 27 28 29	30 31	27 28 29 30	25 26 27 28 29

IRB & RTB Updates / Papers due	12:00pm to Strategy & Transformation
Publish final papers for RTB	Transformation Team to distribute
Publish final papers for IRB	9:00am to IRB Administration
IRB Papers due for CLT	9:00am to CLT Administration
Recovery and Transformation Board	Monthly, usually the 3rd Wednesday
Improvement & Recovery Board	Monthly, usually the 4th Thursday
CLT to pre-approve IRB papers	Wed before IRB (RTB approves after May)

# Forward Plan

Function	CLT Member	Cabinet Member	Initiative / Description	May (25/05)	Jun (22/06)	Jul (22/07)	Aug (24/08)	Sep (28/09)	Oct (26/10)
Finance	Adele Taylor	TBD	2023/24 Budget Deliverability				Deep Dive		
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	TBD	Streamlined Recruitment Process		Update				
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	TBD	Operating Model						
Finance	Adele Taylor	TBD	Revenue and Benefits						
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	TBD	Culture Change Programme			Deep Dive			
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	TBD	Scrutiny						
Finance	Adele Taylor	TBD	Internal Audit	Deep Dive					
Finance / Democratic Services	Adele Taylor / Sarah Wilson	TBD	Subsidiary Company Oversight	Deep Dive					
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	TBD	Democratic Governance		Deep Dive				
Strategy & Improvement	Sarah Hayward	TBD	Information Technology			Deep Dive			
Finance	Adele Taylor	TBD	Procurement and Contract Management						
Chief Exec	Stephen Brown	TBD	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment						
Children's	Sue Butcher	TBD	SCF Business Plan SCF Improvement Plan DfE / SEND Response	Deep Dive					

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Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board Appendices

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Contents

- Previous IRB Decisions Taken
- Key Service Updates

# Previous Improvement and Recovery Board Decisions Taken

Ref	Status	Description of Decision	Impact / Rationale of Decision	Date Raised	Raised By	Owner	Consulted Parties	Date Last Updated	RAG	Date Closed
D-001	Closed	Stephen Brown committed to providing a regular savings monitor to lead Members.	Lead Members will be communicated to effectively regarding the savings plans and progress.	22-Aug-22	IRB	Stephen Brown		22-Aug-22	G	13-Oct-22
D-002	Closed	Future reports to the Board should include an update on compliance with the Intervention Directions.	Commissioners will gain increased confidence that SBC are fully addressing the Intervention Directions.	25-Aug-22	IRB	Stephen Brown		13-Oct-22	G	

# Complaints

1. Recommendations resulting from the Task and Finish Group - Complaints Handling progressing. Draft for 2 stage Complaints Process and webpage - end of May.
2. Q4 complaint report – to be completed by end of May.
3. Annual complaints report will be developed following receipt of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) annual report – expected July. Annual report will then be tabled for CLT Assurance Board and Audit and Governance committee.
4. Bespoke weekly complaints reports detailing all outstanding casework per service continue to be issued to AD's requesting action to close outstanding casework. Services continue to use these reports effectively with a notable improvement on the reduction of outstanding complaints for some services.
5. 13% decrease in complaint numbers year on year for the month of April.
6. The average number of days taken to resolve complaints has improved over the past year. Q1 currently showing 6.4 working days compared to 25.5 from the same quarter last year.
7. Service quality check meetings continue to take place quarterly - with the last suite of meetings completed in April. The meetings focus on identifying service improvements which can be used to improve service.



1. Building capacity into the team - successful appointment of an experienced interim Recruitment Lead and a permanent Recruitment Coordinator.
2. Complete review of the Agency supply chain – to ensure fit for purpose.
3. Conducting a review of all advertising streams for our permanent position adverts. End goal to reach target audiences through optimisation and be in control of the adverts and pricing.
4. Initial review of the recruitment process has been completed and bottlenecks and blockers have been identified. Proposals being considered for changes.
5. Project for an Applicant Tracking System to assist with streamlined process and to ensure a positive candidate experience has commenced.

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