

**Test Valley Borough Council
Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**

1 Scope of responsibility

- 1.1 The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3 The Council has approved and adopted a local code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*. A copy of the Local Code of Corporate Governance is on the Council's website at:
<http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/aboutyourcouncil/corporatedirection/local-code-corporate-governance>, or can be obtained from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
- 1.4 This statement explains how the Council has complied, and continues to comply, with the principles underlying this code and also meets the requirements of regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an annual governance statement.

2 The purpose of the governance framework

- 2.1 The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads its communities. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, value for money services.
- 2.2 The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk at a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

2.3 The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks occurring and the impact should they happen, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

2.4 The governance framework that has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2024 is explained in the following sections.

3 The governance framework

3.1 The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Council's governance arrangements are as follows:

- The Council has fulfilled the following key roles (now formally adopted as part of the Local Code of Governance):
 - To promote the well-being of the area and provide leadership to the community;
 - To ensure the provision of high quality services provided in-house, by private sector companies, (where the ability to influence exists), jointly with other Councils or agencies, or by the voluntary sector;
 - To be accountable and provide stewardship for the use of public funds and resources;
 - To build a strong sense of community.

3.2 In fulfilling these roles the Council is committed to following the seven core principles of good corporate governance identified in the CIPFA/SOLACE Guidance.

3.3 Partnership Working

3.3.1 A single strategic partnership for the Borough is in place called the Test Valley Partnership. It brings together the key partner agencies from across the public and voluntary and community sector. It meets twice a year and provides a place in which the key strategic issues facing the borough can be discussed, joint work developed and statutory duties (such as community safety) met.

3.3.2 The Test Valley Partnership and its umbrella groups (community safety management group, community resilience forum and the civilian military forum) all continued to meet during 2023/24. The partnership reviews its programme of work in light of where evidence is demonstrating a focus is required.

3.3.3 During this year the partnership has continued to demonstrate its added value by bringing partners together to work on key issues affecting communities in Test Valley by aligning work and resources and taking a focused and targeted approach to where it can make its greatest impact. A good example of this in practice has been the response to the Cost of Living crisis.

3.3.4 The headline outcomes were:

- A cost-of-living **information hub** on the Council website with input from a host of agencies.
- In 2023/24 the Cost of Living Grant scheme has awarded £21,000. This has enabled community-based organisations, from the hyper-local to the borough-wide, to support households struggling through the increasing cost of living. Projects funded include placing Citizen's Advice case workers at Foodbanks to extend their reach, clothing, shoe and school uniform provision for children, a travelling food pantry providing subsidised, healthy food in the rural areas, advice cafes, free dentistry, and a range of food support and breakfast club type projects.

3.3.5 As the Council's place-based approach has continued to develop, partnership websites such as Andover Vision and Romsey Future have been developed, where appropriate, due to the collaborative nature of the projects e.g. Romsey South of Town Centre. Consultation and project information has been posted to these websites with clear links back to relevant Council Services.

3.4 Community Working and the Corporate Plan

3.4.1 The Council has a clear vision of its purpose and desired outcomes for the short, medium and long term. These are encapsulated in its Corporate Plan and in its delivery vehicle, the Corporate Action plan through a range of corporate and service strategies.

3.4.2 There has been considerable consultation and stakeholder involvement in the development and progression of these plans and strategies and they are made available to the public through a variety of means including the Council's website , online newsletter and Test Valley News.

3.4.3 In April 2023 a new Corporate Plan "A Place for Everyone – Supporting our communities to thrive" was approved by Full Council. This followed an extensive evidence-led process that brought together the strategic influences facing the authority and an innovative and robust package of community engagement working with the Involve Foundation (a leading national organisation) to design and deliver a series of deliberative events across the borough to enable a representative group of the borough's population to come together to explore the future focus of the council's corporate plan priorities. Drawing upon lived experience, data and insights and facilitating deliberation amongst participants culminated in a series of robust outcome statements that informed the development of the council's strategic priorities.

3.4.4 The process to develop the Corporate Plan actively engaged Councillors throughout with involvement in the first phase of engagement at local events and with the active engagement of the council's overview and scrutiny committee throughout the process.

- 3.4.5 The Council has a longstanding strategic commitment to work with its communities collaboratively and the new corporate plan strengthens this further with recognition of how our strategic priorities will need to be agile in responding to the different needs of our communities within the borough. At the centre of this is the democratic role elected councillors play in bringing communities together to ensure inclusivity when undertaking local action planning and priority setting. The Council's Member and Community Development Group, chaired by the Leader of the Council, supports community councillors to engage more effectively with local residents and communities and has undertaken work to review and update its action plan which will ensure members are supported effectively in their role as community councillors.
- 3.4.6 In 2023 a focused programme of work to develop this further has been undertaken, supporting councillors to come together with local partners (such as parish councils) within their communities to explore the emerging issues and priorities and to begin a process of local (community-led) action planning. Further strengthening the approach to place-based working, this has involved the council's senior managers working alongside the community team and local councillors in delivering this programme of work. It forms a key part of the council's ongoing organisational development to enable us to be able to support our communities to thrive.
- 3.4.7 Building upon the practice and learning gained as part of the council's participation in the Innovation in Democracy Programme and our use of the approach to develop the new Corporate Plan, further opportunities to embed and develop our approach to innovative engagement practice through the use of deliberative engagement has taken place in 2023/24. This has included topics such as the future priorities for the Business Improvement District, the Council's approach to Communications and with plans for the year ahead for a second citizens assembly to take place in Romsey in summer 2024.
- 3.4.8 The Council formally reviews its progress and performance against its corporate priorities through an Annual Corporate Action Plan Report <https://www.testvalley.gov.uk/aboutyourcouncil/corporatedirection/corporate-plan-for-2019-to-2023> which is presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSCOM) and the Cabinet.
- 3.4.9 The Council's Consultation Portal provides a single link to all our current 'live' consultations, giving residents the opportunity to get involved, as well as access to details of the feedback from previous consultations.
- 3.4.10 There are a number of tools in place to enable the Council to hear the widest range of views from local communities, in a consistent way, as part of an evidence led approach to decision making. These include:
- Statement of community involvement.
 - Community Planning Toolkit.
 - Specialist advice and support through Community Engagement Officers and policy Team.
 - Equality objectives which set out how the Council will ensure an inclusive approach to consultation.

3.5 Committee Role in Governance

- 3.5.1 The Corporate Plan is supported by a performance management framework (including performance indicators) to measure progress and performance against the Corporate Action Plan is reported annually to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.5.2 At its meeting on 6 April 2022 Council resolved to form an Audit Committee with effect from 18 May 2022 replacing the arrangements previously undertaken by the OSCOM Audit Panel. This committee has embedded itself effectively into the overall Council governance environment and met four times during the year.
- 3.5.3 Full Council is ultimately responsible for approving amendments to the Council's Constitution. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Constitution which is undertaken at least annually to ensure that it is up to date with current legislation and best practice.
- 3.5.4 The Cabinet has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Council's business unless that business is delegated specifically to another committee (e.g. Planning, Licensing) and ensuring that governance arrangements and compliance is adequate for the conduct of that business.
- 3.5.5 As part of the Council's open and transparent approach, Overview and Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for scrutinising the decisions of the Cabinet and reviewing the Council's policies and functions and making recommendations to the Cabinet as appropriate.
- 3.5.6 The Council's Audit Committee takes responsibility for audit and risk management issues, reviewing the Council's work in these areas and monitoring the progress and performance of both Internal and External Audit.
- 3.5.7 The Council's General Purposes Committee, together with the General Purposes Employment Appeals and Ethics Sub-Committee, have the role of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct amongst Members and assisting them to observe the Authority's Code of Conduct. The work of the Sub-Committee is supported by the appointment of Independent Persons as required by the Localism Act 2011. The General Purposes Committee may receive reports as to the operation of the Code of Conduct. In addition, the General Purposes Employment Appeals and Ethics Sub-Committee will be required to determine complaints which are referred to it by the Monitoring Officer following investigation and direct or recommend any further action required consistent with the Localism Act 2011 and associated regulations.
- 3.5.8 Members of OSCOM undertake task and finish panel reviews. Once an area for review has been identified, the lead member/chairman of the panel presents the draft scoping document for the review to the full committee for consideration.

- 3.5.9 A full report is then subsequently presented to OSCOM once the review has been completed or reached an appropriate stage. This process has ensured more effective and focused reviews and a clear line of responsibility to the main committee. In addition, there is a standing Budget Panel which meet regularly throughout the year and covers the budget setting process of the Council. This panel reports to OSCOM on a regular basis and brings any issues of concern to the attention of the Committee.
- 3.5.10 The roles of the Cabinet, OSCOM, and other committees of the Council as well as specific roles assigned to the Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holders and senior officers of the Council are defined and documented within the Council's Constitution.
- 3.5.11 The Constitution clearly identifies the powers, duties and responsibilities delegated to the Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holders and Officers, and includes rules for how Council and committee meetings should operate and the relationship between Members and Officers.
- 3.5.12 The conduct of Members and Officers is regulated by separate codes of conduct within the Council's Constitution. The Council's General Purposes Committee together with the General Purposes Employment Appeals and Ethics Sub-Committee promote high standards of conduct by Members and the latter considers allegations of breach of the Code of Conduct by Members where referred to them.
- 3.5.13 Having regard to the benefits of remote meetings, the Council responded to the Government's consultation/call for evidence on the subject though legislation has not been forthcoming reinstating remote meetings. The Council has been able to continue to avail itself of the ability to conduct non-committee business remotely or in a hybrid fashion where appropriate. Officers are investigating the potential for live streaming Council meetings.

3.6 Supporting the Committee Role

- 3.6.1 The Council has a Strategy and Innovation Service to strengthen the Council's ability to develop and manage its corporate planning processes. The Service leads on key projects and programmes including the Council's approach to modernisation in its ways of working.
- 3.6.2 The quality and value for money of services provided to users is measured through the Authority's performance management system. This includes the measurement and review of performance against national and local performance indicators and actions taken to address areas for improvement. Performance is monitored regularly throughout the year.
- 3.6.3 The conduct of day-to-day Council business is regulated through policies and procedures such as Contract Standing Orders and Financial Procedure Rules. The delegations to Members and Officers are kept continually under review and revised as appropriate.

- 3.6.4 A comprehensive set of Human Resources policies ensures compliance with employment legislation and promotes good personnel practices. These include disciplinary and capability processes to deal with conduct or performance which is unacceptable. These policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and revised.
- 3.6.5 A People Strategy helps shape the cultural direction and people management practices for the future to enable the Council to achieve its ambitions over the next 3-5 years. This has been enhanced over 2023/24 through a process where all senior managers have participated in an exercise to review our values as an organisation and the culture within which we work.
- 3.6.6 Whilst being able to respond to the changing needs of local government and the borough's residents, this forms part of the Council's Corporate Framework with close links to the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy. Work has also been undertaken during the year to identify and review hard-to-recruit-to posts.

3.7 Finance and Risk Management

- 3.7.1 The Council has in place a Medium Term Financial Strategy, updated annually, which supports the aims of the Corporate Plan. The Medium Term Financial Strategy has been materially affected by macro-economic factors of high inflation and sustained increases in interest rates. The greatest risk to the MTFS is the uncertainty surrounding the potential for a business rates re-set which could see a material reduction in a key income stream, the timing and extent of which is beyond the Council's control.
- 3.7.2 Risk management is outlined in a Risk Management Strategy. Corporate and Service specific risks are subject to ongoing review and progress in managing the corporate risk register is reported to the Audit Committee on a six monthly basis.
- 3.7.3 Risk management is embedded within the Council's processes e.g. reports to decision-making committees use a template which includes a section on risk assessment which must be completed before the report can be considered. Risk registers are also established and managed for all major projects.

3.8 Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

- 3.8.1 Elected Members and all officers are aware of their obligations under equality legislation, as well as the standards of behaviour and language which are expected from representatives and employees of the Council. Ongoing training is provided for both Members and officers.
- 3.8.2 Equality considerations including full impact assessments where necessary and appropriate are built into the Council's decision-making process. The Council has reviewed its corporate equalities objectives, alongside its duties under the gender pay gap publication requirements and Public Sector Equality Duty. The Council continues to deliver training on the Equality Act 2010 to new members of staff and to Members.

- 3.8.3 There is an area of Portfolio responsibility focused on “Diversity and Inclusion”. The Council has published information that demonstrates compliance with the Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010 on its website.
(<https://www.testvalley.gov.uk/aboutyourcouncil/corporatedirection/equality---diversity/equalities>)
- 3.8.4 The Council has established Disability Focus Groups that contributed towards the development of the new Corporate Plan. The groups are helping the Council and its partners on an ongoing basis.
- 3.8.5 The Council is a statutory partner with regards safeguarding its residents of all ages under both The Children Act 2004 and The Care Act 2014. The Council has in place a Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and this and the associated procedures are monitored regularly to ensure compliance with these duties. The Council also liaises with both the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board to ensure this.
- 3.8.6 On an annual basis, the Council is required by the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) to complete the required Section 11 audit which is a self-assessment of its position with regards its safeguarding duties. The last full audit which took place in 2023 concluded that the Council is compliant with Section 11 of The Children Act. Some minor areas of learning were identified through this process and actions have been implemented to address these. This will be reviewed by the HSCP in spring 2024.
- 3.8.7 On a bi-annual basis the Council is also required by the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board to undertake an audit of its position with regards its safeguarding duties, the last audit was undertaken in 2022 and concluded that the Council are compliant with our safeguarding duties. The 2024 audit will be due in March 2024.
- 3.9 Environmental and managing a changing climate
- 3.9.1 The Council approved a Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) in 2020 to identify the steps it will be taking to work towards achieving carbon neutrality. Evidence has been gathered to provide information on greenhouse emissions, decarbonisation and how the Council can deliver its services in a more environmentally friendly way.
- 3.9.2 Measures have been introduced which have reduced the Council’s emissions. Work is ongoing to review the content of the CEAP considering both measures within the organisation but also supporting communities within the Borough to reduce their emissions.

3.10 Officer structure

- 3.10.1 The Chief Executive is the Council's Head of Paid Service and has overall corporate management and operational responsibility for the way in which the Council delivers its services. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services is designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer and has responsibilities under section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 for ensuring that the Council complies with relevant laws and regulations and internal policies such as Contract Standing Orders. The Head of Finance and Revenues is designated as the Council's Section 151 Officer with responsibility for ensuring the "proper administration of financial affairs".
- 3.10.2 The Head of Finance and Revenues also has responsibility under section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 for reporting to the Council and the external auditor if the Council has made, or is about to make, expenditure which is unlawful.
- 3.10.3 These three statutory officers meet regularly throughout the year (plus as required on an ad hoc basis) to discuss significant corporate issues.
- 3.10.4 The CIPFA statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government recommends that the Chief Finance Officer reports directly to the Chief Executive and be a member of the 'Leadership Team', of equal status to other members. The Council does not strictly comply with this requirement in that the Head of Finance and Revenues reports to the Deputy Chief Executive; however, he is a member of the Management Team (which is the local comparison with the CIPFA Leadership Team reference). In practice, the Head of Finance and Revenues is able to report directly to the Chief Executive and Members as and when required and is involved and consulted in all matters which have financial implications for the Council.

3.11 Complaints and Whistleblowing

- 3.11.1 The Council's Constitution contains a Confidential Reporting Code for Employees which safeguards "whistle-blowers" who raise legitimate concerns about the Council's actions and specifies how their concerns should be addressed. The Code is monitored by the Audit Committee.
- 3.11.2 Financial Procedure Rules require all staff to raise concerns about the use or misuse of Council resources with the Head of Finance and Revenues or Internal Audit who will carry out an independent investigation of the circumstances. Internal Audit also actively encourages staff to raise matters of concern through "Speak Up" campaigns. A form is available on the Council's intranet for staff to raise concerns (anonymously if desired) about the use of Council resources and this facility has been extended to the website so that members of the public can raise concerns in this area.
- 3.11.3 The Council also has a formal complaints procedure for members of the public to raise issues, e.g. where they are dissatisfied with the service they have received, and an annual report is prepared for the Audit Committee summarising these complaints and how they were resolved.

3.11.4 The Council has a detailed Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy which includes Whistleblowing and sets out the roles, responsibilities of officers and Members and actions to be taken when fraud or corruption is suspected. In addition, an Anti-Bribery Policy has been approved to address the requirements of the Bribery Act 2010.

3.12 Training and awareness

3.12.1 The Democratic Services Manager is responsible for identifying and providing for Councillors' training needs. The Council has a cross-party Member and Community Development Group which is supported by officers from a range of services.

3.12.2 This Group has continued to work to promote an enhanced 'Community Councillor' role for Councillors that focuses on them acting as a catalyst for change to encourage communities to reach their full potential. This work has brought together the needs and expectations of our communities in order to make balanced decisions, and has ensured a culture of democratic accountability is embraced throughout the Council.

3.12.3 The Group assists the Council in developing a programme of Councillor training and development that is shaped by the Councillors themselves, ensuring that training and development activities offered is tailored to individual Councillor needs as well as the needs of Councillors generally, the council and communities. This work has been shared with the Councillor Commission and has become a key part of the ongoing work that supports this national project.

3.12.4 All new Councillors are provided with induction training to assist them with understanding and successfully carrying out their different roles, with an ongoing programme of training and development provided on specific issues where appropriate e.g. planning, and to build key skills and knowledge.

3.12.5 All officers also receive induction training and appropriate professional and skills training and development identified, for instance, through annual performance discussions.

3.12.6 An exercise was undertaken during the year to remind all officers with responsibility for procuring goods and services of the requirements of Contract Standing Orders. This has proved to be successful, with the Procurement Officer reporting an increase in requests for support in undertaking procurement exercises.

3.12.7 Publications such as Test Valley News are sent to all households and the Council's website is an important source of information about the Council and its services. The Council's website has been designed to make it more accessible to residents and businesses of Test Valley and to make it easier to undertake transactions online.

3.12.8 In addition, the council has continued to grow its email newsletter with the inclusion on specific topics that residents can subscribe to. This includes Green Test Valley, Business Matters, Events and News and Regeneration. During the last year for news and events there has been an increase of 2000 subscribers demonstrating this method of communication is becoming a key part of reaching a wider audience. A Communications Strategy has been produced to support the emerging Corporate Plan.

4 Review of effectiveness

- 4.1 The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework, including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the senior managers within the authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the annual report of the Internal Audit Manager, and also by comments made by the external auditor and other review agencies and inspectorates.
- 4.2 The Council's Internal Audit team, located within the Finance and Revenues Service, carries out a continuous review of the Council's systems to provide independent assurance that the control environment is effective in achieving the Council's objectives. The team objectively examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of the control environment as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of the Authority's resources.
- 4.3 The performance of the Internal Audit team is monitored by the Council's Audit Committee and Section 151 Officer. The Internal Audit Manager presents the Internal Audit Charter, Strategy and Annual Audit Plan to the Audit Committee and produces an Annual Report giving an opinion of the adequacy of the Council's systems of internal control.
- 4.4 An external assessment of the internal audit function's conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) was carried out in February 2024. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards are a mandatory requirement, the objectives of which are to:
- define the nature of internal auditing within the UK public sector,
 - set basic principles for carrying out internal audit in the UK public sector,
 - establish a framework for providing internal audit services, which add value to the organisation, leading to improved organisational processes and operations, and
 - establish the basis for evaluation of Internal Audit performance to drive improvement planning.
- 4.5 The external assessment concluded that the function "generally" conforms to the standards A report of the outcomes together with a development plan is reported to the Audit Committee.

- 4.6 There is evidence that the work the Internal Audit function has delivered is effective. It is a highly respected service that is engaged with the organisation and which provides ongoing support in key areas, as well as effective assurance on controls.
- 4.7 The Internal Audit Manager has provided substantial assurance in respect of the Council’s risk management, control and governance arrangements. “Substantial Assurance” means that systems in place are generally sound, but some best practice developmental areas have been identified to strengthen the Council’s governance arrangements. These form the basis of the action plan appended to this Statement.
- 4.8 The Council is regularly audited by the External Auditor (Ernst and Young LLP) who independently examines the Council’s accounts and financial systems and who presents an [Annual Audit Report](#) to Members, the latest available covering the financial year 2021/22. This was a positive report with an unqualified opinion on the Council’s accounts, system of internal control and arrangements to achieve value for money. Due to issues at a national level with auditor capacity in the public sector it is not expected that an audit opinion will be received for the 2022/23 financial year.
- 4.9 EY have, however, been able to issue a value for money statement in respect of the 2022/23 financial year which identified no weaknesses in the Council’s financial sustainability; governance; or efficiency and effectiveness.

5 Declaration

- 5.1 We have been advised on the implications of this review of the effectiveness of the governance framework and of any significant governance issues. A plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place as shown in the attached annex.
- 5.2 We propose over the coming year to take steps to address these matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Signed: **Signed:**

Leader of the Council

Chief Executive

Governance Actions for 2024-25

No significant governance issues have been identified. The following are best practice developmental areas to strengthen the Council's governance arrangements.

Issue	Action to be Taken	Timescale	Lead Officer
<p>Risk Management To develop the links between the Corporate Risk Register and Service Registers following a change to the way the Corporate Risk Register is presented.</p>	<p>For the Internal Audit team to work with all services to ensure a consistency of approach in preparing and reviewing Service Risk Registers.</p>	<p>31/03/25</p>	<p>Head of Finance and Revenues</p>
<p>Service Planning and Performance Management Embed the council's new performance management framework launched in April 2024</p>	<p>To deliver an integrated approach to performance management, the preparation and monitoring of the Corporate Action Plan, new approach to Service Planning, Performance indicators/ impact measures and risk.</p>	<p>September 2024</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Innovation</p>
<p>Procurement, Contract Management and Monitoring To strengthen procurement, contract management and monitoring practices in light of changes required by the Procurement Act 2023.</p>	<p>Update the Contract Standing Orders section of the Constitution to ensure the Council's policies and procedures reflect changes to legislation.</p> <p>Implement training on the requirements of the Act to ensure all officers who procure goods on behalf of the Council are aware of their responsibilities.</p> <p>To introduce a more rigorous approach to contract monitoring within services.</p>	<p>31/07/24</p> <p>30/09/24</p> <p>31/03/25</p>	<p>Head of Finance and Revenues / Head of Legal and Democratic</p> <p>Head of Finance and Revenues / Head of Legal and Democratic</p> <p>Head of Finance and Revenues</p>