



ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

2023 ACTION PLAN OUTCOMES

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We have monitored the actions identified in the 2023 Annual Governance Statement and those action identified as “in progress” from the 2022 Annual Governance Statement and set out below a summary of the outcomes in relation to each of these.

Principle 1 – Behaving with Integrity (Doing the right thing in the right way) We will behave with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
<p>To ensure governance arrangements and organisational culture are legally compliant, up to date, fit for purpose and clearly articulated in the Council’s Constitution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage with Members and officers to understand the strengths and weaknesses in our Constitution and governance culture and the arrangements in place of effectively embed requirements. • We will work with those with specialist knowledge and oversight to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review and refresh relevant constitutional content; and ○ Ensure values led systems and proportionate processes enable compliance in line with values and behaviours. • We will seek formal approval to amendments through the identified routes for each relevant provision 	<p>We have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaken a review of constitution substantively amending decision-making categories and procedures to remove duplication and bureaucracy whilst maintaining proportionate transparency and accountability. • Updated Contract Procedure Rules to remove duplication and introduce simpler language and processes. Adopted by Council on 24 May 2024. • End to end review of constitution to update language and references to ensure remains fit for purpose. • Involved Members and stakeholders throughout. • Constitution published as one accessible and searchable document. • Rolled out training to relevant stakeholders in relation to changes. 	<p>Completed</p>

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Principle 2 – Ensuring openness and engagement (Sharing information and inviting participation)			
We will ensure openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.			
	Actions Identified	Outcomes	Status
2022 AGS – Carry Forward Action Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review arrangements from decisions in relation to the receipt of income. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of decision-making arrangements has taken place as part of a wider constitutional review and has been implemented following approval by the annual council meeting. 	Completed
To ensure early and meaningful consultation, underpinning effective collaboration with citizens and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will convene a consultation officers' group – bringing together key contacts undertaking activity to improve communication, share best practice and enable better timetabling to avoid issues like consultation fatigue. We will develop a shared cross-corporate approach for plotting upcoming consultation activity and major communication to provide holistic overview, strengthen reporting and enable better elected Member oversight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We created the Consultation and Engagement (C&E) Network in early 2023 – a group of colleagues from across the council that support this area of work. Members meet regularly to share upcoming work and examples of good practice, and work towards shared goals - such as the roll out of new software. Continued communication to raise awareness has helped the network grow to a fair number of active participants. During 2023 we created a planner of upcoming C&E activity, populated by the network members and through the meetings, which doubles as a report of activity taken place. 	Completed
To ensure appropriate governance in partnership arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will undertake a benchmarking exercise to understand the approach to partnership governance taken by peer West Yorkshire authorities and Core Cities. We will review our approach to understanding the breadth of our partnership working., and We will review Partnership Governance and Risk Checklist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have reviewed partnership governance arrangements as part of annual internal review of control and will be undertaking a light touch review to ensure that governance arrangements are applied appropriately and proportionately to support our partnership work. 	Carried forward to 2024.

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Principle 2 – Ensuring openness and engagement (Sharing information and inviting participation)			
We will ensure openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
To take stock of Locality and Community approaches with a focus on People, Assets and Governance, using this as the primary vehicle for delivering the Best City Ambition right across the city.	<p>We will undertake a full review of the Community’s Committee’s role, purpose, and governance arrangements, involving all 99 Councillors, using the scrutiny process as a mechanism for support, member engagement and accountability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board agree review scope. • 1st Member Working Group meeting. • Up to four member workshops to be developed to engage and seek feedback and ideas from Elected Members. • Working Group recommendations presented and approved via appropriate governance arrangements. • New Community Committee arrangements commence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) was considered as part of the Community Committee’s review in January 2024. • A workshop has been arranged for October 2024 to provide all Elected Members with a comprehensive overview of ABCD. • A newsletter is being developed that will be shared with all Elected Members and other stakeholders keeping them up to date on the ABCD initiatives and community work. 	Completed
To ensure the Council’s website is accessible to the public.	<p>We will put arrangements in place to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augment our Web Team using an external partner to accelerate migration to Drupal. • Progress redevelopment from SharePoint to Drupal in line with our technology strategy. • Continue with work to redevelop websites for National Adoption Agency, Leeds Directory, Leeds Adults Safeguarding Board, Leeds Libraries etc... • Extend deployment of Chatbot on the site in line with additional knowledge. 	Our bespoke Homepage WebEstate (leeds.gov.uk) sets out details of the arrangements in place to deliver this action; and provides progress reporting.	In Progress.

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Principle 3 – Defining Outcomes (Having realistic priorities for what we can and should achieve)			
We will define outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits			
	Actions Identified	Outcomes	Status
2022 AGS – Carry Forward Action	We will develop an externally facing strategy hub to be created, where strategic framework can be clearly outlined, and the relevant documents hosted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the lack of necessary staffing resource, this project has been placed on hold and will not be carried forward for the time being. 	N/A
To ensure that the city plan continues to be evidence based, current, realistic and enables the whole organisation’s performance to be measured and held to account.	We will renew the Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping and convening partnership board. Completion of JSA. We will refresh the Best City Ambition. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals to Executive Board Approval at Full Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The JSA is in the process of being completed for 2024. An initial draft has been done and the final version was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in July 2024. The updated Best City Ambition was presented to Executive Board on 7th February 2024 and the presented to Full Council on 21st February 2024 at which the Council was asked to accept the recommendations of the Executive Board and adopt the updated Best City Ambition. 	Completed

Principle 4 – Determining Effective Interventions.			
We will determine the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.			
	Actions Identified	Outcomes	Status
2022 AGS – Carry Forward Action. Procurement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and simplify the Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs), procurement documentation and tools to make user friendly and aid self-service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPRs have been reviewed as part of a wider review of the constitution. 	Completed
Review and update Procurement Strategy and processes when Procurement Bill enacted to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carried forward pending implementation of the new Procurement Bill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The New Procurement Act will go live on 28 October 2024. Appropriate actions are in hand and reflected in the 2024 action plan. 	Carried forward to 2024.

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Principle 4 – Determining Effective Interventions.			
We will determine the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
ensure compliance with the new regulatory regime.			
To ensure arrangements continue to mitigate and manage the financial challenge in the context of our ambitions and values.	<p>We will continue our Financial Challenge savings programme, identifying savings to support the in-year budgetary position and looking ahead to the next three years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-year savings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing and reported to Executive Board through financial health reports. • Longer term budget gap: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated gap reported to Executive Board through refreshed Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). • Savings proposals to help close the three-year gap. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented to subsequent Executive Board meetings during Autumn/Winter 2023-24. • Considered by relevant Scrutiny Boards. • Feed into Full Council budget reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports have been received by relevant council bodies as indicated. 	Completed

Principle 5 – Managing Risk and Performance (Ensuring that we can implement our plans)			
We will manage risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
To ensure effective arrangements for performance monitoring to plan and monitor performance in line with our strategic objectives and identify and deal with any failure in service delivery.	<p>Articulation of Best City Ambition medium-term progress monitoring framework, which will incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures and indicators included in key strategies. • Leeds social progress index. • 3-yearly JSA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are in the process of strengthening the progress monitoring framework for the Best City Ambition, including the Leeds Social Progress index. • We will also be reviewing the council's overall performance monitoring framework to categorise those KPIs 	In Progress

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Principle 5 – Managing Risk and Performance (Ensuring that we can implement our plans) We will manage risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
		<p>relevant to the City and those that are organisational. This work will continue throughout 2024/25 and is reflected in the 2024 action plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Best City Ambition (BCA) scorecard is in development which will integrate with the Leeds Marmot City indicators into a single performance/analysis product – with a focus on drawing out the poverty and inequality agenda in how the information is tracked and reported. • We are also now integrating Office for Local Government (OFLOG) measures into performance reporting. 	
To ensure our information management and governance arrangements remain up to date, fit-for-purpose, routinely embedded and complied with.	<p>We will engage with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) consensual audit, learn from its findings, and implement any resulting actions in a timely way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit commences. • Action plan to commence. • Action plan update to Corporate Governance and Audit Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ICO consensual audit took place in November 2023 and was reported to Corporate Governance and Audit Committee. • Actions from this audit, together with those from our own assessment and inform action plans which are being delivered and will be reported to Corporate Governance and Audit Committee as reflected in the 2024 action plan. 	In progress
To ensure that financial sustainability measures are robust and effective.	<p>We will continue to review our in-year budget position and MTFS to ensure the robustness and effectiveness of a range of Financial Sustainability measures, including continuing to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports have been received by relevant council bodies as indicated. 	Completed

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Principle 5 – Managing Risk and Performance (Ensuring that we can implement our plans) We will manage risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
	ensure the adequacy of the Council’s General and Strategic reserves. In-year financial sustainability and adequacy of reserves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing and reported to Executive Board through financial health reports. • Including Executive Board Outturn Report. Longer term financial sustainability and adequacy of reserves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported to Executive Board through refreshed MTFS. • Full Council budget report. 		

Principle 6 – Developing Capacity (Getting best out of our resources and our people) We will develop the Council’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
2022 AGS – Carry Forward Action Integrated Digital Services (IDS)	We will undertake an iterative review of arrangements for governance and decision making in relation to Integrated Digital Services to ensure controls are articulated, communicated, and embedded within the service and across the Council.	Arrangements are set out in the Integrated Digital Services – STATEMENT of Internal control (leeds.gov.uk) received by Corporate Governance and Audit Committee in February 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arrangements set out provide a framework for transparent and accountable decision making within IDS in accordance with the Council’s Corporate Governance Code and Framework. • The 100% Digital Leeds has been recognised as one of the most successful, high-profile, and well-respected digital inclusion 	In Progress

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Principle 6 – Developing Capacity (Getting best out of our resources and our people) We will develop the Council’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
		programmes in the country by the King’s Fund, The British Academy, The Fabian Society, Local Government Association and NHS England.	
To provide elected members with knowledge and skills to support Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) initiatives and to develop a clearer and more consistent approach to member engagements with ABCD.	Create learning and development opportunities for elected Members on the ABCD model and the programme in Leeds by providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for Senior Locality and Locality Officers serving 14 wards with an existing ABCD project. • Information and one-to-one / ward team member briefings to elected Members in wards with existing ABCD activity. • Briefing and information for all elected Members. • Develop Members understanding of the ABCD model in Leeds. • Build momentum and support with elected Members to assist the potential for introduction of ABCD projects in more communities across Leeds. • Overview and exploration of ABCD at Community Committee Chair Forum. • Regular updates to Members highlighting activity in specific wards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training has been provided to Locality Officers in September 2023 with Senior Locality Officers receiving quarterly meetings. • All Elected Members have had access to a full ABCD briefing pack. This is incorporated into the New Members Introduction pack. • We are currently developing a quarterly refresher session on PALs that will be available as and when officers and Members wish to learn more on ABCD. • ABCD has been included as part of the Community Committee review. • We are currently developing a newsletter to provide an update which will be shared with all stakeholders. 	In progress

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Principle 6 – Developing Capacity (Getting best out of our resources and our people) We will develop the Council’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We receive enquiries from the ABCD inbox which are responded to as and when these are received. 	
<p>To ensure that our human resources are managed efficiently and effectively, responding to our staff survey.</p>	<p>Using our June 2023 staff survey data, we have identified six organisational wide issues to take forward. Between August – December 2023, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all staff know about the survey findings and are engaged in conversations around next steps and continue to refine our analysis. Develop and deliver a response plan which includes actions at service and corporate level. Work with services to share best practice and offer support to those who need it most. Provide regular updates on progress and outcomes for Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board. Provide regular updates on progress and outcomes for Cabinet (Executive Board) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All actions have been undertaken, with targeted additional support provided to specific services. This will capture local actions and delivery plans and enable reporting back via leadership/scrutiny boards. 	Completed

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Principle 7 – Effective Accountability (Ensuring our processes are clear, robust, and open to review) We will implement good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability.			
	Actions Identified	Outcomes	Status
<p>To ensure that the Internal Audit service supports effective and sustained transformation and improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will further review our approach to assurance mapping which will be reported to Corporate Governance and Audit Committee to support ongoing audit planning and to underpin assurance reporting. We will further develop and embed a proportionate directorate led approach to recommendation tracking to evidence effective contribution to continuous improvement across the authority. We will offer increased support to emerging transformational projects. This includes the Core Business Transformation (CBT) project, and other key transformation projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have integrated assurance into our audit planning process as our risk assessment criteria includes identifying other assurance mechanisms in place for the area under review. For 2024/25 we will develop a list of these assurance mechanisms that will be updated on a continuous basis going forward to feed into our ongoing planning process. We continue to develop and embed recommendation tracking. We have reviewed the information provided to CGAC and have automated areas of the process. We will continue to develop our arrangements and it is our intention to implement spot checking of the responses in 2024/25. In 2023/24 we have been involved in a number of projects across the authority, including CBT and transformation within Children & Families. In 2024/25 we will continue with this support and will provide support to emerging transformational projects, especially those linked to the Financial Challenge and Organisational Redesign work. 	<p>Completed</p>

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Principle 7 – Effective Accountability (Ensuring our processes are clear, robust, and open to review) We will implement good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability.			
Actions Identified		Outcomes	Status
To ensure audit committee have effective oversight within appropriate terms of reference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will undertake a review of Corporate Governance and Audit Committee in accordance with CIPFA 2022 Audit Committee / Practical guidance for Local Authorities and Police. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee have received and approved the annual report to council, and received assurance that the committee has appropriate oversight and control. 	Completed