Huntingdonshire District Council

Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

Scope of Responsibilities

Huntingdonshire District Council (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 provides value for money. 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. That duty has grown in importance with the reduction in resources being made available for Local Authorities as part of the Government's on-going austerity programme.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, which include the arrangements for the management of risk, whilst facilitating the effective exercise of its functions.

The Council has established governance arrangements which are consistent with the seven principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) Framework – Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. It has adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations (2015), as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2021, require the council to conduct a review, at least once a year, on the effectiveness of its system of internal control and include an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). It is subject to review by the Corporate Governance Committee when they consider both the draft and final Statements of Account and is approved by the Corporate Governance Committee in advance of them agreeing the Statement of Accounts.

The Council's financial management arrangements are largely consistent with the governance requirements of the Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010). The principles being that the Chief Financial Officer:

- Is actively involved and able to bring influence on the Authority's financial strategy.
- Leads the whole Council in the delivery of good financial management.
- Directs a fit for purpose finance function.
- Is professionally qualified and suitably experienced.

The issues identified as a governance issue and the progress made by management throughout the future financial year 2024/25 to address these issues will be reported regularly to the Corporate Governance Committee with an assessment made in reducing the risk as part of their governance role within the Council.

What is Governance?

Governance generally refers to the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes are defined and achieved.

The Council approved a new local Code of Corporate Governance in May 2023. It is consistent with the seven principles set out in 'proper practice' for the public sector, namely 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework' published by CIPFA/SOLACE[1].

The Council aims to achieve good standards of governance by:

1. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
2. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
3. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.
4. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
5. Developing its capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
6. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
7. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

Appendix 1 demonstrates what the Council does to achieve these standards.

The overall aim of the local Code of Corporate Governance is to ensure that:
- resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities.
- there is sound and inclusive decision making.
- there is clear accountability for the use of those resources to achieve desired outcomes forservice users and communities.

Underpinning the Code is the Council's commitment to equality of opportunity in its approach to policymaking, service delivery and employment.

The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture and values by which the Council is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads its communities. It enables the authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money. It also enables the Council to demonstrate to the public that it has effective stewardship of the public funds it is entrusted to spend.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level consistent with the risk appetite of the Council. 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. 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 and potential impact of those risks being realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The Council's Governance Framework

The Council's framework for Governance is set out in the Constitution, is detailed in the Local Code of Governance and can be summarised in the below graphic:
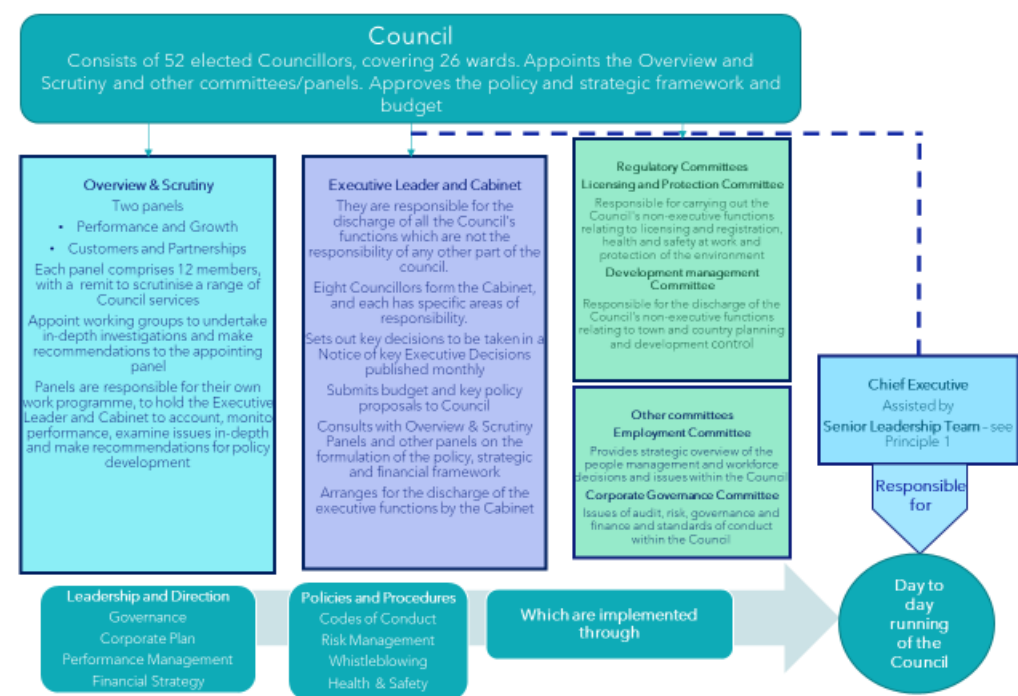
The organisation welcomed a new Chief Executive in September 2023 and a new Corporate Director, Place in March 2024.

The Council's strategic vision and corporate priorities are set out in the Corporate Plan 2023 - 2028. The control environment encompasses the strategies, policies, plans, procedures, processes, structures, attitudes, and behaviours required to deliver good governance to all.

These are set out in the table below, the Governance Framework, which links areas of assurance to documented activities of process and control. Many of the key governance mechanisms remain in place and are referred to in previous statements which are available on the Council's website. The local Code of Corporate Governance, which was updated in May 2023, is also available on the website and describes in more detail the governance processes in place.

Assurance required upon	Sources of Assurance	Assurances received
- Delivery of Corporate Plan priorities - Services are delivered economically, efficiently & effectively - Management of risk - Financial planning and performance - Effectiveness of internal controls - Community engagement & public accountability - Shared service governance - Project management & project delivery - Procurement processes - Roles & responsibilities of Members & Officers - Standards of conduct & behaviour - Training and development of Members & Officers - Compliance with laws & regulations, internal policies & procedures	- Constitution (incl. statutory officers, scheme of delegation, financial management and procurement rules) - Council, Cabinet, Committees and Panels - Corporate and service plans - Shared service joint committee - Policy framework - Risk management framework - Project management methodology - Financial Performance Monitoring Suite - Medium Term Financial Strategy - Customer Service Strategy - Consultation and Engagement Strategy - Complaints' system - Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer - HR policies & procedures - Whistleblowing & other countering fraud arrangements - Staff and Member training - Codes of conduct - Corporate/Senior Management Team - Independent external sources - Regular monitoring of outcome measures - Monitoring of economic indicators & associated financial receipts - Effective joint working arrangements - Risk & Control Group and Board	- Regular performance and financial reporting - Annual financial report - External audit reports - Internal audit reports - Officer management groups - On-going review of governance - External reviews and inspectorate reports - Customer feedback - Peer reviews - Council's democratic arrangements incl. scrutiny reviews and the 'audit' committee - Corporate Governance Committee annual report - Staff surveys - Community consultations - Consultants' reports - Services' reports - Risk &Control Group activity

The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the Senior Leadership Team, who are responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Internal Audit Manager's annual report and comments made by the external auditors.

The Council's Local Code of Governance includes examples of how the organisation meets all of the principles of good governance. The Council continuously reviews how it achieves good governance; in 2023/24 this included the recruitment of two Independent Members and a review of its Terms of Reference, both of which were proposed and approved by Full Council in April 2024.

The Council approved its CIPFA Code of Financial Management in December 2022. This demonstrates how the Council complies with the code to provide evidence of good financial management and also identified areas for further development. The Council was compliant with the CIPFA code of Financial Management in 2023/24.

The governance framework has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2024 and up to the date of approval of the statement of accounts.

Review of Effectiveness

The Council has a 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 Directors and Service Managers within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Annual Internal Audit Opinion, and by comments in Huntingdonshire District Council's Statement of Accounts 2021/22 made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates. During 2023/24, the works undertaken by the Internal Audit team provided the foundation for the Annual Internal Audit Opinion that the Council's governance, internal control environment and systems of internal control provide reasonable assurance over key business processes and financial systems.

With regard to Risk Management, a revised Risk Management Strategy was approved by Council in December 2023 and is being deployed across the organisation. An LGA peer review of Internal Audit in March 2023, using the CIPFA - 'Internal audit: untapped potential' publication as a framework, has firmly embedded risk management as a foundation to Internal Audit's ongoing assurance work. Work has continued throughout 2023/24 on implementing the recommendations of this review, with a follow up review in February 2024 making a further five recommendations, all of which have been actioned.

A Corporate Peer Challenge review of the organisation, to give senior peers from other organisations the opportunity to assess, and feedback opinion on, how effectively the Council delivers its services was undertaken in May 2024.

In addition to the Peer Review, BDO undertook a readiness for External Quality Assessment (EQA) in May / June 2024 with a final report being issued in August 2024. This highlighted the need to take action to bring the service up to the required standard to go through the formal EQA process.

An action plan was set out which is being put into place alongside the recommendations of the LGA Peer Review. This includes addressing the weaknesses identified in the following areas:

- Independence & objectivity;
- Ethics & professionalism;
- Governance, risk management and control processes;
- Engagement workpapers and supervision; and
- Engagement communication

The Council's Constitution details Directors' responsibilities for the maintenance of controls within their departments. The system of internal control is subject to regular review by Internal Audit. The work of the service is informed by the Council's risk register, with the allocation of audit resources controlled through an annual risk- based operational plan, which is agreed by Corporate Governance Committee.

In addition to these arrangements the Council receives and responds to reports from other review and assurance mechanisms.

The external audit of the financial statements for 2022/23 was completed in November 2024. As a result of Central Government's reset of the Public Sector Audit environment a disclaimed opinion was given.

Due to the prior year disclaimer and the limited work that has commenced on rebuilding assurance , we are anticipating a disclaimer of opinion for 2023/24.

Significant Governance Issues 2023/24

The external auditors have completed their "Value for money" review of the organisation for 2023/24 and identified a significant risk that the internal audit function was not operating effectively in 2023/24. They considered each of the areas of concern raised by BDO and determined that, although the review was performed during 2024/25, the findings were relevant to 2023/24 and have assessed there to be a significant weakness in governance arrangements for 2023/24 . They do, however, recognise that since receiving this report in 2024 management have been proactive in addressing the areas of concern highlighted and reporting progress to the Corporate Governance Committee.

Other Governance Issues we have identified in 2023/24

The AGS identifies governance issues and risks for the Council to address.

Ref	Area	Action Plan for improvement	Progress to March 2024	Carry forward Issue?
22.1	**Risk Management**	The Risk Management (RM) process has been reinvigorated, with a revised RM Strategy being finalised and launched. Corporate risks within the Risk Register to be reviewed and updated. This will be followed by Service level risks within Risk Register being reviewed and updated. A new Risk & Controls Group has been established and a Risk & Controls Officer appointed to support Risk Management effort.	The new Risk Management Strategy was approved by Council in December 2023 and work has commenced to fully embed a risk management culture across the organisation. Additional resource has been approved to enable additional training of managers and oversee the update of the risk management software to facilitate effective risk management awareness.	Yes
22.2	**Cyber Security, new threats**	Completion of all agreed previous cyber audit actions. The ICT service is progressing these actions, monitored by Senior Management.	Cyber Security is a continuing risk which the ICT service seeks to mitigate through effective controls and staff training and awareness.	Yes
22.3	**Debtors and Creditors**	Systems, processes and resources will be reviewed across the debtors' and creditors' functions establishing action plans to support delivery of improvements and address the control failings identified during quarterly reviews. Audit will review the processes once implemented and will monitor compliance.	Processes have been updated and reviewed and compliance demonstrated, no failings were identified by external audit. Controls in this area are now business as usual and this is not a strategic area of concern.	No
22.4	**Audit Actions**	To improve the implementation of agreed audit actions. SLT will monitor outstanding actions, receive monthly reports from Internal Audit, and ensure actions are progressed. Direct progress updates from action owners are now provided to Committee. Actions are to be part of Service Plans and to be monitored through 1.2.1 discussions to prevent actions becoming overdue.	All overdue actions are reported regularly to Corporate Governance Committee. The number of actions outstanding has reduced as actions are closed or replaced with revised actions to achieve the control outcome. Progress in this area has been significant and is no longer a strategic area of concern.	No
22.5	**Small works expenditure**	Audit actions have been agreed to redress. These are agreed to be implemented by the end of 2022.	An analysis of expenditure in this area has identified its level as significantly lower than previously identified and an appropriate level of retender is currently being progressed.	No

Ref	Area	Action Plan for improvement	Progress to March 2024	Carry forward Issue?
			The audit actions have been completed with the tendering of the Medium Term Civils contract.	
22.6	**Information Governance /GDPR**	Recommendations across a number of areas to reduce the Council's information risk, increase accountability in GDPR terms, improve staff engagement with IG and awareness of IG and data protection matters and support improved ways of working which embed IG principles across the Authority. A self-assessment report commissioned on the Service highlighted the areas requiring attention. Recommendations made within the report have been agreed and form part of the Action Plan. Mandatory training at day 1 of new starter induction has been agreed; and refresher training for all staff has been launched.	Actions implemented	No
22.7	**Contractor Management, additional risks**	A number of new measures have been introduced to improve control in this area: • Recruitment & Procurement officers will oversee each consultant appointment • Procurement will provide oversight and guidance on all contract matters; sponsors to be accountable for their contracts • All contractor sponsors, Procurement and HR to ensure compliance with PCR2015, IR35 and good commercial practice. • Project managers will work with Procurement to ensure proper evaluation of need in line with PCR2015 • PMO, Procurement and Works SLT will ensure that clear and evidenced decision making is done and recorded through the governance framework. • HR has commenced a new monitoring system for contractor/consultant/other temporary staff.	Actions implemented	No
22.8	**Market Towns Programme**	An independent consultant reviewed the programme performance to date, resulting in a programme improvement plan with recommended actions. These are being implemented and will be monitored as a standing item in the programme board.	Action plan implemented and completed. MTP Board meets on a regular basis and effective programme management is demonstrated.	No
22.9	**Project Management/Capital schemes**	Formal governance structure has been established, comprising the work programme board, the project management steering group and the gateway model (applied to each programme/project).	This work, and actions, is now covered by the Major Change Board, with smaller projects feeding through the "New Ideas" process.	No

Ref	Area	Action Plan for improvement	Progress to March 2024	Carry forward Issue?
		Capital schemes will follow the same processes from project inception and business case to lessons learned.		
22.10	**Network Access**	ICT is setting up a regular review process to confirm users are current and legitimate. This is also supported by a leaver's notification process to ICT.	This has been actioned.	No
22.11	**Policies**	A review and inventory of all policies and strategies has been undertaken. Further work is planned to ensure the policies are fit for purpose and accessible.	Work is ongoing in this area.	Yes
22.12	**Morbidity/Growing number of years of ill health/Continued impact of COVID**	Increasing pressures are being felt by many parts of the public service system, primarily through the growing demand on support costs, a rise in complex individual cases which cuts across many service providers, through such things as disabled facilities grants and personal care costs. This is not something that any single agency has total responsibility for, and it requires joint working to deliver effective solutions focussing on wellbeing and life choices as well as housing, open spaces, transport infrastructure and the design of place.	Measures to reduce pressure on services are linked to the Council's Corporate plan: Priority 1 - Improving quality of life for local people Priority 2 - Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations Priority 3 - Deliver good quality, high value for money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations	Yes
22.13	**Wider economic environment**	The Council's financial robustness is closely linked with the success of the overall local economy, driven in large part to a prosperous commercial sector. External economic factors do directly impact on the Council's financial plans and forecasts for new homes bonus, council tax and business rates incomes, and the level of demand for our services. We take our role on supporting the conditions for stable growth very seriously.	Measures to sustain financial robustness are linked to the Council's Corporate plan: Priority 1 - Improving quality of life for local people Priority 2 - Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations Priority 3 - Deliver good quality, high value for money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations	Yes
22.14	**Housing Affordability**	The challenge of residents to afford market housing, and market rents represents a significant challenge to our residents and communities. In the worst cases this can contribute to homelessness, and direct financial consequences on the Council, as we must fund any shortfall between market rent and Local Housing allowance rate. Greater demand for housing, linked at times to emergency housing for migrants could exacerbate this issue.	Whilst Priority 1 of the Corporate Plan seeks to improve the quality of life for local people, the affordability of housing and market rents is not something the Council is able to control.	Yes

22.15	**Environmental pressures and sustainability challenges**	There is growing recognition of the significant consequences of a failure to properly account for human actions, and wider climactic events which are becoming increasingly common. The national risk register includes flooding and severe weather events as risks that as a country we should prepare for, and increasingly we have seen the impacts of these locally. We also recognise the health impacts of pollution and poor human behaviour in terms of pollution and improper handling of waste as key challenges to the beauty and sustainability of our area.	The Council is drafting a Climate Strategy to identify where it can mitigate its contribution to Environmental pressures.	Yes
22.16	**Partner agency operational pressures**	There is evidence to suggest that as parts of the public sector reduce their input into communities, that the demand transfers to other agencies. In Huntingdonshire, whilst partners work well together there continues to be the challenge of controlling additional demand and the corresponding budget pressures that it brings. Elsewhere financial pressures in one sector, have had significant financial and capacity impacts on the authority. The impact of Covid has further emphasised these challenges, as the demand and income pressures generated by Covid-19 have begun to impact. Collective work on recovery to properly understand the links between cause, and financial impact will be central and driven through shared recovery activity across all public sector partners.	The Council continues to work with partners to understand their plans and to mitigate impacts to HDC wherever possible.	Yes
22.17	**Contractor management**	An internal audit identified weaknesses in the following areas: • IR35 compliance • Contract management (incl. inconsistent and non-compliant with procurement rules) • Contractor management • Contractor selection • Governance • Time management	• HR & Recruitment oversee all engagement of contractors, with Procurement support sought where applicable, ensuring legislative requirements are met and the appropriate documentation sought and testing of employment made. • A register of all contractors employed within the organisation is presented to SLT each month for review and comment upon ongoing use. • Use of contractors has decreased across the council.	No

22.18	**ICT - Cyber security (4 red actions)**	1. Staff not provided with adequate cyber-security risk training and awareness. 2. Endpoints with outdated Anti-Virus definitions. 3. Unsupported operating systems in use on the Council's network. 4. Excessive number of Domain Administrator privileged accounts.	Completion of all agreed cyber audit actions. The ICT service is progressing these actions, monitored by Senior Management.	No - now covered by Cyber Security concern, see Ref 2
22.19	**Finance**	Critical over-dependency on one key officer Only one professionally qualified officer No deputy S.151	Senior Finance Business Partner recruited to Chief Finance Officer role and appointed as Deputy S151 Director of Finance and Corporate Resources recruited (commenced June 2022) and appointed as S151.	No
22.20	**Role of Chief Finance Officer**	CFO position – not sitting at CLT/ not part of key decision making	Director of Finance and Corporate Resources (S151) recruited as member of SLT	No
22.21	**ICT - Cloud Services (2 red audit actions)**	1. No documented information held about each application's dependencies which could be used to assess the application's feasibility for projected migration plans. 2. Once applications have been hosted, there is no further risk assessment made to review effectiveness of the hosted landscape. Additionally, there is no plan to further assess applications where it is currently not appropriate to migrate them	• Criteria determined for assessing migration to cloud. • Framework defined to ensure all potential scenarios factored into the criteria. • Corporate Applications Roadmap drafted to ensure which applications the councils would migrate to the cloud as well as which ones must be migrated to the cloud. • Management assess the possible dependencies of each system.	Yes
22.22	**Towns Programme**	Loss of resourcing – the two interim officers are planned to leave in the short term (July & September). First recruitment campaign was unsuccessful; this is being tried again but there is a risk of being unfulfilled and a further risk of no time for a handover period. Capacity & capability risks and issues need to be resolved to continue the programme.	Permanent resources have been recruited to deliver the programme.	No
22.23	**Accounts Receivable /Debtors Service**	This area continues to receive a limited assurance opinion.	An action plan was implemented, addressing all but two of the outstanding audit actions. Work continues to complete these actions, being regular reconciliation of the debtors ledger with TechOne and monthly management reporting.	No

			Processes and controls in this area continue to be reviewed.	
22.24	**Project Management**	Number of key projects that pre-date new project management processes that are highlighted as failing. The Work Programme spreadsheet shows that some projects are flagging red or amber/red. There are reported issues with governance; non-compliance and cultural issues.	New team and processes implemented, including monthly Major Change board updating on all live projects including the project status, progress against plan and compliance with governance. SLT attends these board meetings and are fully briefed on open projects.	No
22.25	**Data Protection Officer (DPO)**	The post is recently vacant due to postholder leaving. The DPO is a statutory role. It also covers the other 3Cs authorities under contractual obligation. The Deputy post is also vacant with an Acting postholder, who cannot fulfil the DPO role. A recent recruitment exercise was unsuccessful for the DPO role. Another is planned but, if successful, is unlikely to result in an immediate starter leaving the notice period without a DPO.	A new DPO has been successfully recruited to post with cover being provided on a part time basis by the previous incumbent.	No
22.26	**Payment Card Industry**	Risk of non-compliance with some of the PCI requirements.	Services of PCI DSS expert consultants employed to improve the organisation's compliance with PCI DSS. A new programme of work has commenced looking at compliance on a channel by channel basis, adapting ways of working and systems used, balancing the cost of compliance with the risk arising from non-compliance.	Yes
22.27	**Impact of COVID Pandemic**	The Council should continue to consider the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its governance arrangements	The Council has moved into a state of "business as usual" with regards to COVID-19 arrangements; where allowable meetings can be held virtually although members cannot vote virtually. Staff continue to work in a hybrid manner and the Council continues to operate as normal.	No

Ref	Area	Action Plan for improvement	Progress to March 2024	Carry forward Issue?
23.1	**Internal Audit, external assessment overdue**	BDO has been commissioned to undertake a readiness review to identify areas when improvements are needed. An external review will be commissioned in 2024/25	BDO appointed.	Yes
23.2	**Procurement capacity to deliver change**	Additional resources being recruited to implement new Procurement regulations for 2024/25 and draft Social Value Procurement policy. Further resource being recruited to embed effective Contract Management across the organisation.		Yes
23.3	**Officer and Member governance training needs.**	Areas of governance knowledge weakness being identified through skills self-assessments and training plans created to address these.	Skills assessments completed by SLT, CGC members and Executive Members involved in governance. Training sessions organised for coming months.	Yes

Whilst not a governance issue, it should be noted the Council implemented the Garden Waste Subscription service at the end of 2023/24 with a go live date of 1st April 2024. This major change was supported through the Programme Office and overseen by an implementation board. To date, the implementation has run well with few issues. A review of the transition of this activity from implementation to "business as usual" is proposed as part of the Internal Audit plan for 2024/25.

Opinion

After conducting a review of the governance arrangements across the Council and overall compliance with theCouncil's Code of Corporate Governance, we are satisfied that the arrangements are effective.

We are also satisfied that this statement allows the Council to meet the requirements of the Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015, to prepare an AGS to accompany the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts.

Certification

As Leader and Chief Executive, we have been advised on the implications of the results of the review of effectiveness of the Council's governance framework, by the Audit Committee and Cabinet.

Our overall assessment is that the AGS is a balanced reflection of the governance environment and that an adequate framework exists within Huntingdonshire District Council to ensure effective internal control is maintained. We are also satisfied that there are appropriate plans in place to address any significant governance issues and will monitor their implementation and operations as part of our next annual review.

Signature	Sarah Conboy Executive Leader	Signature	Michelle Sacks Chief Executive

30 January 2025

Signed on behalf of
Huntingdonshire District Council

Appendix 1: Demonstrating the Principles

Principles	Council Arrangements	Supporting Examples
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law	Code of Conduct for Members based upon the LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020.	See Part 5, Codes and Protocol, of the Constitution
	The seven Principles of Public Life apply to all public sector employees and members.	See Part 5, Codes and Protocol, of the Constitution
	Acceptance of code by Councillors	Signed declaration of Acceptance of Office
	Declaration of Interests, rules for declaration. Confirmation of no declarable interests at the start of each Committee meeting	Register of Interests Committee meeting notes
	Gifts & Hospitality, rules for declaration	Register of Gifts & Hospitality
	Code of Conduct Complaints Process	Annual Complaints report
	Employee Code of Conduct	Annual confirmation of the code
	Defined delegation of responsibilities to Officers	See Part 3 of the Constitution
	Appointment of Monitoring Officer to validate the Council is operating in a lawful manner	See Article 12 of the Constitution
	Whistleblowing policy to allow the reporting and investigation of breaches of Conduct or Council Policy	Whistleblowing Policy
	CIPFA Code of Financial Management	Annual review of compliance with code. Finance Regulations
	Procurement Governance Framework	Code of Procurement Contract Regulations
	The Council has adopted a series of policies that apply equally to the roles of the member and employee which includes a dignity at work policy and corporate equality policy	Constitution Regular review of policies
	Promoting an ethical culture	Council's icare values
	Creation of an Assurance Board to seek assurance the Council's governance arrangements are effective and give the comfort required.	Assurance board agendas and meeting notes.

Principles	Council Arrangements	Supporting Examples
Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	Details of Council's priority outcomes are included in the Corporate Plan	Agreed through Council and published on website
	Details of the Council's activities and achievements are included in the Annual Report	See Council meeting agendas on HDC website
	Details of the governance activities, changes and challenges are included in the Annual Governance Statement	See HDC website – Council & Democracy/Council Open data and Information/Our Policies & Procedures
	All meeting agendas, content and key decision requirements are published in advance.	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/View Upcoming Committee Meetings
	The calendar of upcoming meetings is publicly available.	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/View Upcoming Committee Meetings
	All committee meetings are streamed and can be viewed by the public (except for limited exceptions)	Streaming links available on the website
	Formal External Engagement and Communications Strategy	Reporting of Engagement and Communication activities and outcomes
	Formal Internal Engagement and Communications Strategy	Evidence of internal activities
	The Council promotes the formation of an Employee Representative Group for engagement regarding employee matter	Monthly meeting agendas and notes
	Data required by the Local Government Transparency code is published on the Council's website, and the Council has adoption a Publication Scheme setting out which information is published without requiring a Freedom of Information request.	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/Council Open Data and Information/Freedom of Information

Principles	Council Arrangements	Supporting Examples
Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	Details of Council's priority outcomes are included in the Corporate Plan	Agreed through Council and published on website
	A Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is prepared on an annual basis to demonstrate to the affordability of plans and expected outcomes	Agreed through Council and published on website
	Service plans are prepared on an annual basis, demonstrating links to the Council's Corporate plan and delivery of key services, and performance indicators to measure their effectiveness.	Annual service plans
	A Treasury strategy is produced on an annual basis, demonstrating compliance with the Prudential code and effective use of the Council's resources	Treasury Strategy presented to Council and available on the website
	A Commercial Investment Strategy (CIS) is in place to reduce the Council's reliance on central government funding	CIS approved by Council and available on the website
	Budget and operational performance monitoring reports are generated on a monthly basis to show achievement against published plans	Reports presented at monthly Corporate SLT meetings
	Risk registers are maintained at Service and Corporate levels to identify potential/known threats to the organisation or service, and mitigating actions put in place to reduce these.	Risk registers maintained within the 4Risk system, and Corporate Risk Register reported on the website.
	A Climate Strategy policy is being produced to define the Council's approach to minimising its environmental impact and operating in a more sustainable manner.	
	The Council has commenced a review of its Local Plan, considering the needs of the district over the longer term and the plans that need to be put in place to deliver the necessary infrastructure to support this.	Public consultation and preparation of plans
	The Council has an Economic Development team to attract new businesses and investment to the district. It also hosts the "Invest in Huntingdonshire", further promoting the benefits of the district.	
	Working alongside other local government organisations, major regeneration projects are being developed the district creating sustainable social, economic and environmental benefits.	External funding receipts

Principles	Council Arrangements	Supporting Examples
Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes	The Corporate plan is prepared in conjunction with the MTFS to ensure delivery plans are affordable and achievable within the funding available.	Plans are published on the Council's website and as part of meeting agendas
	Budget and operational performance monitoring reports are generated on a monthly basis to show achievement against published plans and identify where corrective actions may be needed.	Reports presented at monthly Corporate SLT meetings
	Risk registers are maintained at Service and Corporate levels to identify potential/known threats to the organisation or service, and mitigating actions put in place to reduce these.	Risk registers maintained within the 4Risk system, and Corporate Risk Register reported on the website.
	Programme boards are put in place for major activities, to monitor progress and ensure delivery plans will achieve the intended outcome.	Agendas and meeting notes from board meetings
	Significant projects are monitored through the Major Change board, with actions raised to mitigate risks of non-performance.	Agendas and meeting notes from board meetings
	The Overview and Scrutiny panels review progress on Council deliverables and are able to challenge decisions if they are not content with what is being achieved.	Agendas and meeting notes from committee meetings
	Internal Audit review of services and reporting developed through a risk based strategy, with remedial action plans recommended.	Internal Audit plan

Principles	Council Arrangements	Supporting Examples
Principle E: Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it	Review of the Council's assets and resources on a regular basis to ensure these remain fit for purpose and are being utilised effectively.	Asset inspections, proactive maintenance records
	Clear rules for delegation of authorities enabling decisions to be taken at the appropriate level and by individuals with the necessary knowledge.	The Constitution
	Definition of roles and responsibilities for Councillors and Offices	The Constitution
	Self assessment of skills for Committee members, with training plans for covering any deficits.	Skills self assessment records
	Use of operational and budget monitoring reports including, where effective, bench marking data so that performance trends can be noted and acted upon.	Reports generated and presented to Corporate SLT/committee.
	Developing shared services with neighbouring District Councils, allowing sharing of best practices and driving financial efficiencies.	Shared services for ICT, Legal and Building Control.
	Developing the capability of staff and improving their skills through training and online coaching tools.	Learning and Development team
	Encourage transformation work to improve service delivery or the effectiveness of the Council through the "New Ideas" process and the availability of funding.	New Ideas process and achievements
	Availability of Project Management skills and decision making to lead on work to improve the Council's capacity	Output of the Major Change Board

Principles	Council Arrangements	Supporting Examples
Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management	Development of a Risk Management strategy, including indications of acceptable risk appetites.	Risk Management strategy
	The Council is a member of the Cambridge & Peterborough Resilience Forum, sharing knowledge and resources on Emergency Planning.	Regular reviews of Emergency Response plans and actions, testing of these and communication of updates.
	Business Continuity plans in case of disruption to services	Review and update of Business Continuity plans.
	Regular review and update of risk registers, including risk scoring and mitigating actions.	Risk registers maintained on 4Risk system
	Quarterly review and update of the Corporate risk register and mitigating actions	Risk register reviewed at Corporate SLT and reported on intranet
	Annual external audit of the Council's financials, including a review of value for money achieved.	Annual audit report to Council
	MTFS produced on an annual basis and presented to Council	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/Meetings/Council
	Quarterly Financial reporting against the approved budget presented to Council	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/Meetings/Council
	Reporting of Treasury Prudential measures to Council	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/Meetings/Council
	Use of operational and budget monitoring reports including, where effective, bench marking data so that performance trends can be noted and acted upon.	Reports generated and presented to Corporate SLT/committee.
	CIPFA Code of Financial Management implemented and maintained	Annual update of code
	Code of Procurement published	Constitution
	Internal Audit review of services and reporting developed through a risk based strategy with remedial action plans recommended	Internal Audit plan

Principles	Council Arrangements	Supporting Examples
Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to delivery effective accountability	Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate.	Report templates and guidance
	Data required by the Local Government Transparency code is published on the Council's website, and the Council has adoption a Publication Scheme setting out which information is published without requiring a Freedom of Information request.	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/Council Open Data and Information/Freedom of Information
	Internal Audit review of services and reporting developed through a risk based strategy with remedial action plans recommended	Internal Audit plan
	All meeting agendas, content and key decision requirements are published in advance.	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/Meetings
	The calendar of upcoming meetings is publicly available.	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/Meetings
	All committee meetings are streamed and can be viewed by the public (except for limited exceptions)	Streaming links available on the website
	Formal External Engagement and Communications Strategy	Reporting of Engagement and Communication activities and outcomes
	All meeting agendas, content and key decision requirements are published in advance.	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/Meetings
	The calendar of upcoming meetings is publicly available.	See HDC website - Council & Democracy/Meetings