

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

2018/19

Annual Governance Statement



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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, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, the council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, which includes ensuring a sound system of internal control and effective arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3 The council has 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 our code is available from our website <http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/>.
- 1.4 This Statement explains how North Somerset Council has complied with our Local Code of Corporate Governance and also meets the requirements of:
 - The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, specifically Regulation 6 (1) in respect of the annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and preparation and publication of an Annual Governance Statement.
- 1.5 The governance framework described in this Statement has been in place at the council for the year ended 31 March 2019, and up to the date of the approval of the statement of accounts.

2. The Purpose of the Governance Framework and Local Code

- 2.1 Good governance enables North Somerset Council to effectively achieve its intended outcomes, whilst acting in the public interest at all times and the following diagram illustrates how good governance is integral to supporting the delivery of the organisations priorities.



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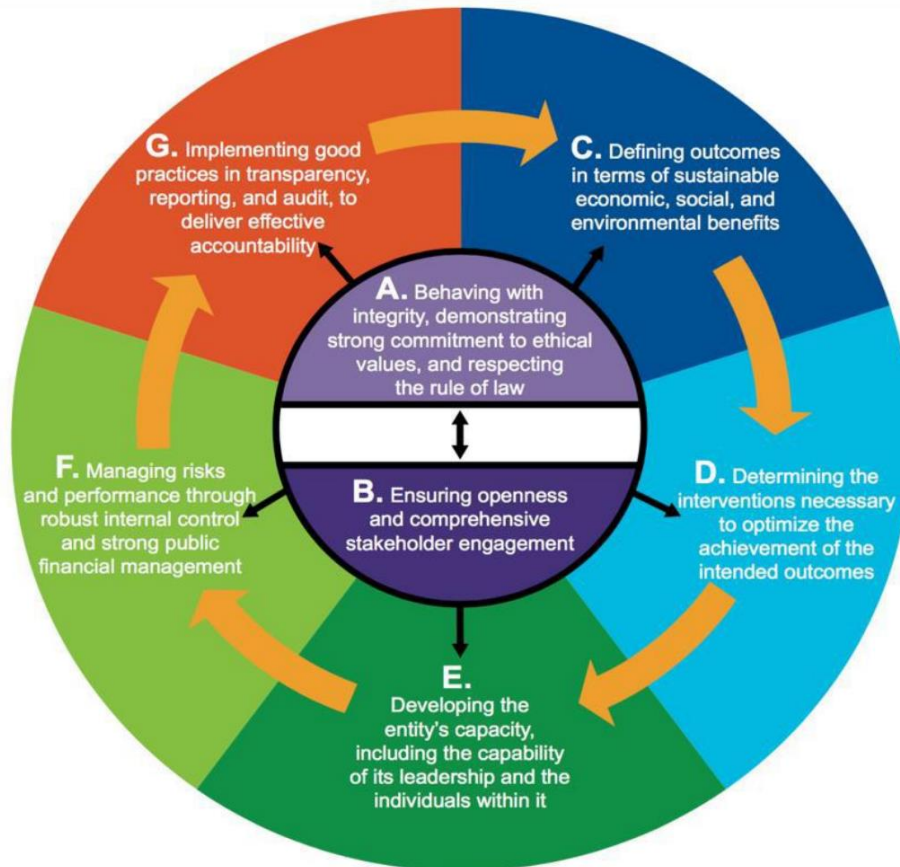
The Council's local code of corporate governance aims to ensure that in conducting its business the Council:

- operates in a lawful, open, inclusive and honest manner
- makes sure public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and spent wisely
- has effective arrangements in place to manage and control risk
- secures continuous improvements in the way it operates.

The Code comprises the systems and processes, culture and values and structures by which the Council is directed and controlled. The Code is the sum total of all of these things, and it includes those activities required to enable the Council to engage with, account to and lead the communities it serves. The Code enables the Council to set its strategic objectives and to manage the achievement of the objectives whilst ensuring delivery of appropriate, cost effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that Code and is designed to manage risk to 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. 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 CIPFA/SOLACE framework envisages that the Code will be organised to ensure a continuous process of good governance based on seven principles.



Source: CIPFA/SOLACE

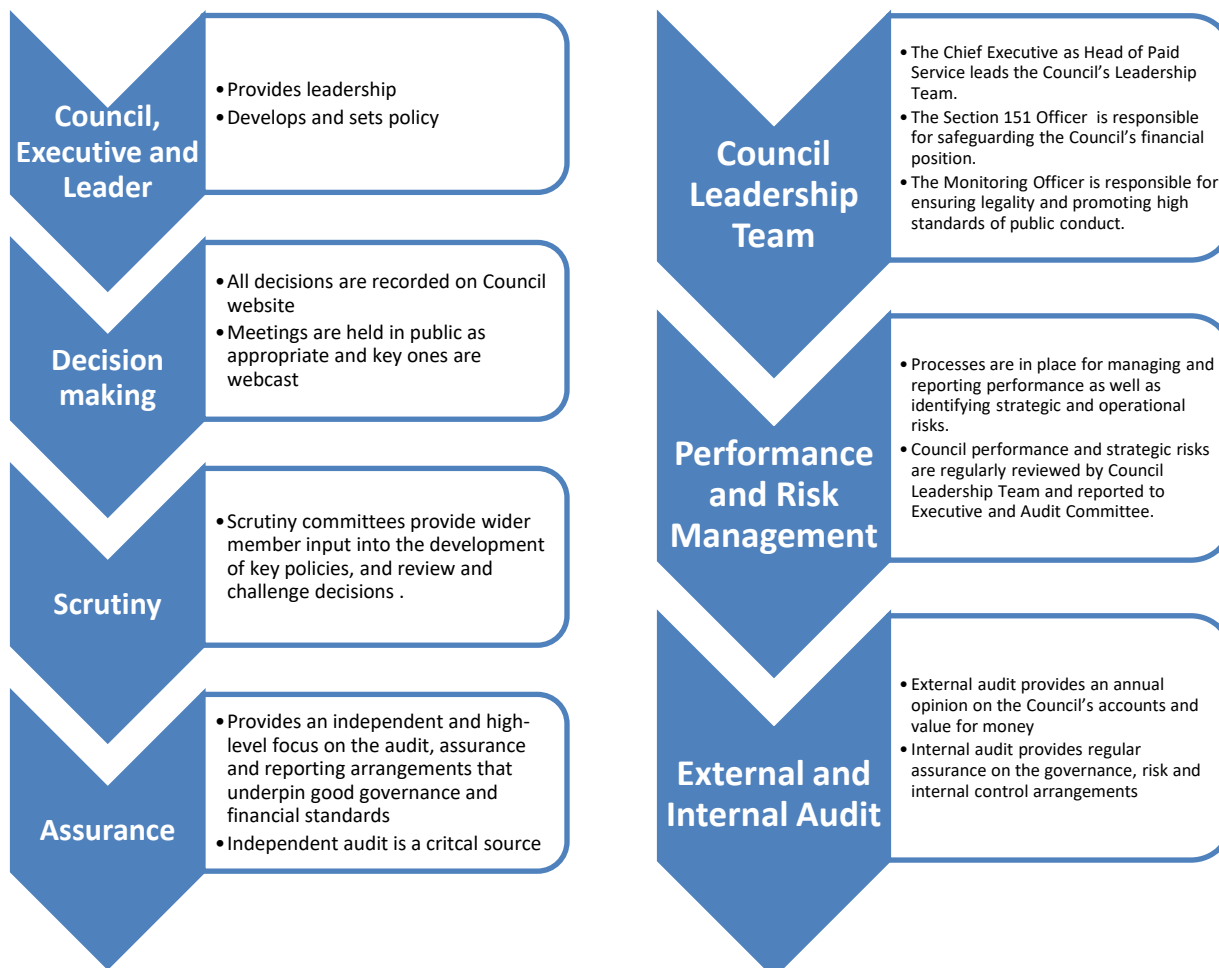
The governance framework and an attendant Code has continued to be in place at North Somerset Council for the year ended 31 March 2019 and up to the date of approval of the statement of accounts.

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3. Key Elements of our Code of Corporate Governance

The Council's Constitution is kept under constant review and updated as necessary through the year and sets out how the Council operates. North Somerset Council has a history of strong democracy, and robust member involvement in decision-making.

The key elements of the governance arrangements at the Council during 2018/19 were:



How we have fulfilled the principles of good governance

Review of the Council's Code of Governance

As above, the Council's Code of Corporate Governance is made up of the arrangements that the Council has in place to deliver the requirements of each principle of the Framework. The Code is not a document, it is the sum total of all these systems and processes, culture and values and structures by which the Council is directed and controlled.

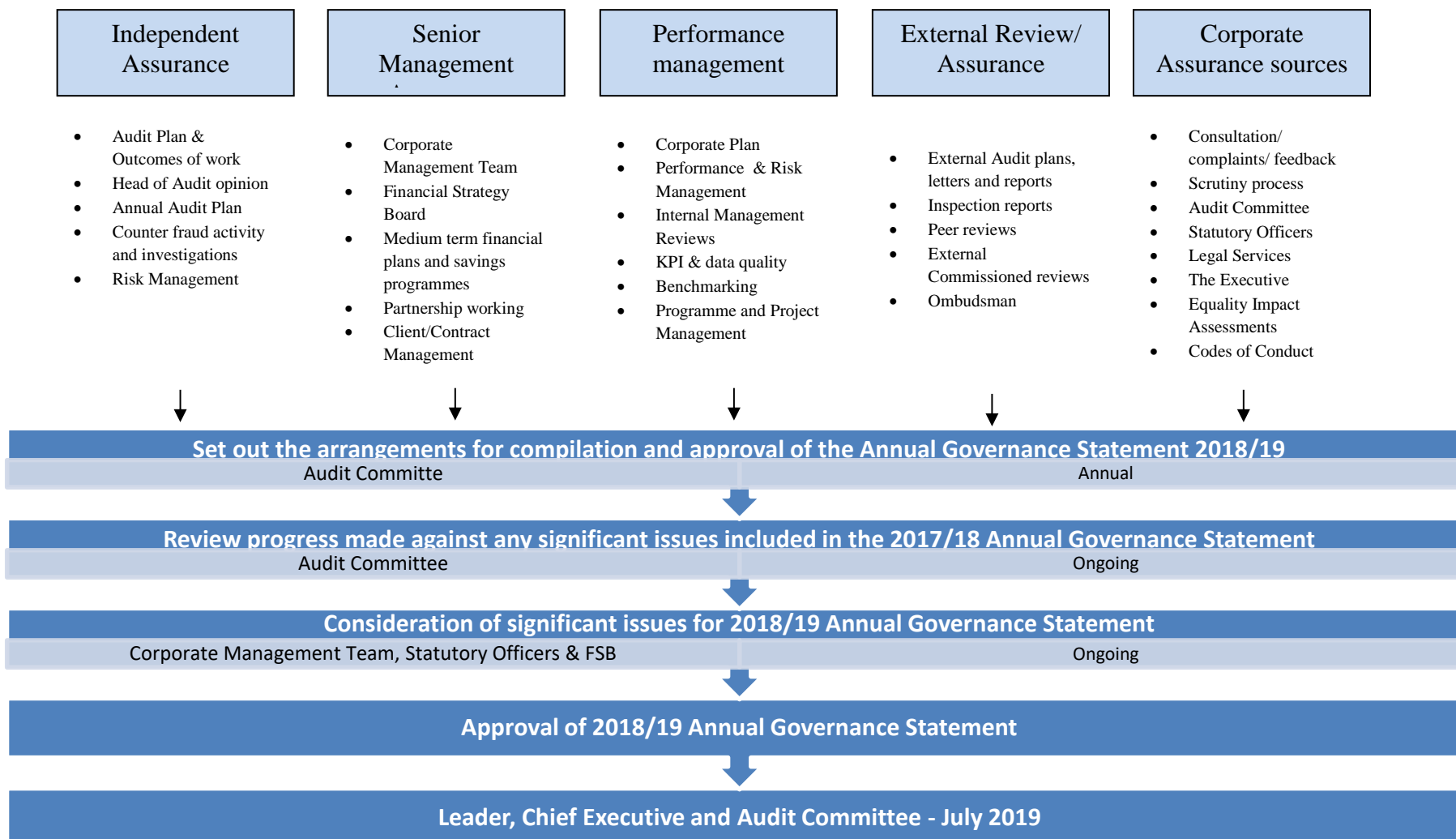
In preparing this Annual Governance Statement the Council has:

- reviewed the Council's existing governance arrangements against the revised CIPFA / SOLACE 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government framework - 2016 Edition' good practice guidance;
- thereby assessed the effectiveness of the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance.

The remainder of this document sets out some key aspects of how the Council's has complied with the principles set out in the Framework during 2018/19 however it is not intended to be exhaustive.

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4. Methodology for Preparing the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19



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5. The Governance Framework

The council is committed to meeting best practice standards for good governance. The council has expressed commitment to CIPFA/SOLACE's core principles of Corporate Governance, as outlined in the guidance document '*Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework*'. The principles and a brief outline of our organisational context regarding these are described below.

The key elements of the council's governance framework are described below and the documents are available on the council's website <http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/>

5.1 Principle(s)

DEFINING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS &

DETERMINING THE INTERVENTIONS NECESSARY TO OPTIMIZE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE INTENDED OUTCOMES

The key elements of the council's governance framework are described below and the documents are available on the council's website <http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/>

5.1.1 IDENTIFYING AND COMMUNICATING THE COUNCIL'S VISION OF ITS PURPOSE AND INTENDED OUTCOMES FOR THE PUBLIC AND SERVICE USERS.

Public, private, voluntary and community organisations and local communities worked together to produce the Sustainable Community Strategy. It describes the shared vision for North Somerset and priorities to improve economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

The Corporate Plan has been approved by Council setting out the council's aims and priorities with three key outcomes for the Community – Prosperity & Opportunity, Health and Wellbeing and Quality Places. Progress in delivering for local people is reported on the council's website and in North Somerset Life.

5.1.2 REVIEWING THE COUNCIL'S VISION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS.

The council's vision as detailed in the Corporate Plan is for '*A great place to live where people, businesses and communities flourish and modern, efficient services and a strong voice for North Somerset*'. The Corporate Plan underpins the work of the council and the priorities set out within the document play an important role in directing the resources including staff and money and thereby the governance arrangements.

5.1.3 MEASURING THE QUALITY OF SERVICES FOR USERS, ENSURING THEY ARE DELIVERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S OBJECTIVES AND THAT THEY REPRESENT BEST USE OF RESOURCES.

A performance management framework describes how the council monitors and manages its performance to ensure the council delivers against its priorities for local people. The council has set clear targets and reports performance against targets. For high level corporate performance indicators, performance is reported quarterly to the Executive. Directorates, services, teams, projects and individuals similarly work to and report performance against their own targets. These are designed to ensure quality, value for money services.

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5.2 Principle(s)

BEHAVING WITH INTEGRITY, DEMONSTRATING STRONG COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL VALUES, AND RESPECTING THE RULE OF LAW

5.2.1 DEFINING AND DOCUMENTING THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE, NON-EXECUTIVE, SCRUTINY AND OFFICER FUNCTIONS, WITH CLEAR DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS AND PROTOCOLS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.

The Constitution explains how the council operates, how it makes decisions and the procedures followed to ensure the council is efficient, transparent and accountable.

The Constitution includes descriptions of how the Council, Executive, Scrutiny and other groups operate and how they work with officers. It describes the rules for how meetings work and how decisions are made. The Constitution is reviewed annually and its outcomes reported back to Council.

5.2.2 INCORPORATING GOOD GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS IN RESPECT OF PARTNERSHIPS AND OTHER GROUP WORKING AND REFLECTING THESE IN THE COUNCIL'S OVERALL GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS.

The council works in partnership with a wide range of organisations and groups. A list of these is shown on the council's website. The main partners are as follows:

- North Somerset Community Partnership is an overarching partnership for the area bringing together public, private and voluntary and community sector organisations. The Partnership continues to work hard on new plans to drive further integration and joint working across the different agencies to deliver sustainable benefits for the whole community. Governance arrangements are well established and now include the Infrastructure and Local Economy Board and People and Communities Board. The Partnership is chaired by the Leader of North Somerset Council.
- North Somerset Safeguarding Children's Board and North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board work to reduce the risk of abuse and neglect for local people. Both the Children's and Adults Boards are governed by statute.
- Schools are important partners and at high level the council works with local schools including Academy Schools and other providers through the Strategic Schools Forum (SSF) to support children to achieve their full potential.
- The council works with its three local Unitary Authorities and business partners in the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership. The partnership supports economic growth and works to attract new jobs and investment to the area. The partnership has long established local governance arrangements which were enhanced in response to agreeing the City Region Deal.
- In addition, whilst full Council decided not to join the new West of England Mayoral Combined Authority extensive co-operation and engagement has already been established to ensure North Somerset can maximise where possible opportunities to work across the sub-region on infrastructure, skills, employment and housing.
- The council has a Strategic Partnership with Agilisys in 2010 (Agilisys and Liberata) and this partnership delivers much of the council's support services such as ICT and the revenue and benefits service. Through the partnership the council has increasingly used private sector expertise and innovation in its day to day business to drive up value for money and deliver better services. Governance is through a Strategic Partnership Board which has Member representation and an Operations Board.

5.2.3 DEVELOPING, COMMUNICATING AND EMBEDDING CODES OF CONDUCT, DEFINING THE STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS.

The council's values are defined in the Corporate Plan. They influence the way the council goes about its business through its strategies, plans and behaviours. The values form the council's leadership standards. These are promoted to all officers and form part of the induction process. All managers are assessed against the leadership standards within the annual appraisal process.

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The council has previously adopted a Code of Conduct in response to the Localism Act and also established a Standards Sub Committee whose remit is to consider any allegations of breaches of the Code. Members are required to disclose any interests and these are posted on the council's website. Officers are also required to comply with a Code of Conduct and Customer Care Charter and Standards. On an annual basis officers are required to register any interests.

The Constitution includes a member-officer protocol which defines how officers & members work together.

5.3 Principle(s):

MANAGING RISKS AND PERFORMANCE THROUGH ROBUST INTERNAL CONTROL AND STRONG PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT &

IMPLEMENTING GOOD PRACTICES IN TRANSPARENCY, REPORTING AND AUDIT TO DELIVER ACCOUNTABILITY:

5.3.1 REVIEWING AND UPDATING STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, A SCHEME OF DELEGATION AND SUPPORTING PROCEDURE NOTES / MANUALS, WHICH CLEARLY DEFINE HOW DECISIONS ARE TAKEN AND THE PROCESSES AND CONTROLS TO MANAGE RISKS.

The council periodically updates its Constitution, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. These incorporate the scheme of delegation and describe how decisions are taken.

The Medium Term Financial Plan details how the council intends to spend its financial resources over the short and medium term. Our Procurement Strategy, rules and procedures was refreshed during the year and Contract Management arrangements reviewed. All contract opportunities are advertised on the website and through the recognised government recommended portals.

The council's Risk Management Strategy describes the council's approach to the management of risk and it was revised and updated during the year. The effectiveness of the arrangements is effectively overseen by the Corporate Management Team through the decision making process supported by the Audit Committee overseeing the framework. The council recognises and accepts that the environment means it must tolerate a higher level of risk than in the past. All formal decisions are accompanied by an assessment of the risks involved and the assessments are documented in reports and decision papers.

5.3.2 ENSURING THE AUTHORITY'S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS CONFORM WITH THE GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CIPFA STATEMENT ON THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Head of Finance and Property is the council's Section 151 Officer. He attends the Corporate Management Team meetings. He ensures all decisions are in accordance with the medium term financial strategy and that public money is properly safeguarded. He is also required to ensure that the council's finance function is adequately resourced and officers have the necessary experience and qualifications to provide an effective financial management service.

The Financial Strategy Board supports the Head of Finance & Property and is a key forum for challenge and formulation of financial strategy and decisions. The group considers short and long term budget plans, and the prioritisation of revenue and capital expenditure as well as the use of reserves.

5.3.3 CARRYING OUT THE CORE FUNCTIONS OF AN AUDIT COMMITTEE, AS IDENTIFIED IN CIPFA'S AUDIT COMMITTEE – PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

The Audit Committee comprises five elected Members and independent (non-elected) Members. The Committee's responsibilities are described in its terms of reference which form part of the council's constitution. The Committee meets formally and informally during the year and in addition received briefings around specific topics relevant to its terms of reference. The Committee reports annually to Council to detail the work undertaken and demonstrate that it is discharging its responsibilities effectively.

5.3.4 ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH RELEVANT LAWS AND REGULATIONS, INTERNAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, AND THAT EXPENDITURE IS LAWFUL.

The Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance and Property and Head of Audit meet periodically to consider any significant statutory or legislative issues impacting upon delivery of the council's priorities.

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The Monitoring Officer and Head of Finance and Property approve any reports prior to their consideration by the Executive and Council. In this way the council ensures it complies with the relevant legislation and guidance and decisions do not place the council at unacceptable risk.

5.3.5 WHISTLE BLOWING AND RECEIVING AND INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS FROM THE PUBLIC.

The council's policies and procedures promote a culture of integrity and high standards. The Constitution includes Codes of Conduct for staff and members, and the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy Statement. The council also maintains a Counter Fraud Strategy and an active programme of work aims to prevent and detect any fraud which might affect the council which were refreshed during the year including a revised Anti-Bribery Policy.

The Internal Audit Service and Human Resources receive and consider anonymous referrals from officers or the public of suspected wrong doing. They work with other council's services or partner organisations to investigate any allegations of improper behaviour and take action as necessary.

The council's complaints process is advertised on its website and the public is able to make compliments, suggestions or complaints on line, in person or by phone. The process describes what a member of the public can do if they are unhappy with the way their complaint has been handled.

5.4 Principle(s):

DEVELOPING THE ENTITY'S CAPACITY INCLUDING THE CAPABILITY OF ITS LEADERSHIP AND THE INDIVIDUALS WITHIN IT

5.4.1 IDENTIFYING THE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF MEMBERS AND SENIOR OFFICERS IN RELATION TO THEIR STRATEGIC ROLES, SUPPORTED BY APPROPRIATE TRAINING.

Every officer is entitled to an annual appraisal where their performance is reviewed and development needs identified. For managers the appraisal process includes an evaluation against the council's leadership standards.

The appraisal is accompanied by a training and development plan. Mandatory training for managers includes Managing and Leading in North Somerset. A range of mechanisms are in place to meet officer's individual training and development needs including a suite of e-learning activities.

5.4.2 The council puts on a programme of extensive training and development for Members which is accessible at any time whilst newly elected Members receive more intensive support.

This includes a full induction process following local elections every four years as well as service and committee specific briefings on individual topics and policy initiatives.

5.5 Principle(s)

ENSURING OPENNESS AND COMPREHENSIVE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

5.5.1 ESTABLISHING CLEAR CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITH ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENCOURAGING OPEN CONSULTATION.

The council takes its responsibilities for listening to what local people want very seriously. All consultations are usually advertised on the website through eConsult. The council accesses groups with particular needs or interests through established forums such as the Citizens' panel and minority group networks.

Results from consultation exercises and resident's survey have been used to inform the council's future direction and priorities and North Somerset Life has been an important mechanism for communication.

5.5.2 It is the vital role of ward Members however in listening to the views of the community which provides invaluable levels of feedback and engagement to help assist the Council shape its services appropriately.

The Council has a set of rules that all council departments and services work to rather than a specific policy on consultation as indicated in the Local Code of Governance.

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6. Review of Effectiveness

6.1 PROCESSES FOR MAINTENANCE AND REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The process for the Annual Governance Statement is a continuous process and Senior officers and Members consider emerging issues during the course of the year. This means that controls issues and risks can be addressed more quickly.

Publication of this Annual Governance Statement is the culmination of this work. The council's chief officer signs the Statement as a summary of the effectiveness of the council's governance framework.

6.2 OTHER CONTRIBUTORY REVIEW / ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

In evaluating the effectiveness of the council's governance, information is available from a wide range of sources. These include the Internal Audit Service, the Information Governance Group, the External Auditors, inspectorates such as the Care Quality Commission and directorates themselves.

The Head of Audit & Assurance (Audit West) in conjunction with Statutory Officers reviews the effectiveness of the governance framework during the year and the draft Annual Governance Statement. The Statement is signed by the Chief Executive and Leader of Council and formally reviewed by the Audit Committee as part of the Financial Statements.

Key risks have been kept under review during the year and will continue to form an ongoing focus for successful delivery of the Council's plans. Work to manage risk in 2018/19 has included –

- Meeting the Financial Challenge
- Reshaping the Council through its Transformation activity in each of its Directorates
- Supporting and stimulating Economic Growth and Regeneration through its economic plan
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults
- Delivering joined up commissioning of social care through the (Improved) Better Care Fund
- Supporting Council Services through an increase in its digital approach and effective use of IT
- Working across the West of England region to stimulate housing needs, skills and employment
- Managing and Investing in the key infrastructure and assets of the area and wider sub-region

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7. Head of Audit & Assurance Opinion

The Head of Audit and Assurance is satisfied that the risk, governance and control environment of the council is adequate to ensure delivery of the council's priorities. Through the work of the Internal Audit Service and delivery of the Annual Audit Assurance Plan, some control issues have been identified, especially around contract management, however none are deemed significant when assessed against the key criteria. The Head of Audit and Assurance is content that management have accepted responsibility to address the control weaknesses.

The Audit & Assurance Plan for 2018/19 was developed to give an independent opinion to the Council on reasonable assurance through a systematic detailed risk assessment of the totality of systems, processes, plans and resources which make up the council.

The Plan focused on core financial and other systems and areas presenting the greatest risk to the council and was designed to ensure sufficient depth and breadth of audit coverage to meet the requirements of those charged with governance. In forming an opinion on the governance, risk and control environment, in addition to the Audit & Assurance Plan, the Head of Audit also considered other sources of assurance including reports from external regulators, external audit and commissioned reviews.

Signed: **Jeff Wring (Audit West)**

Date: 31/03/19

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8. Update on Significant Issues raised in the 2017/18 Annual Governance Statement		
Issue in 17/18	Mitigating actions for 17/18	Update Position 17/18
<p><u>Financial Challenge</u></p> <p>As detailed for the last two years the significant issue identified around the financial challenge continues to be severe, with public sector austerity and a range of economic challenges likely to last well beyond 2020.</p> <p>The Council has responded positively with over £90M of savings already delivered, however at least £8.8M of additional savings still need to be identified over the remaining period. Therefore the Council has been actively planning to meet this challenge with new savings initiatives already being worked on for the current and future years.</p> <p>Despite this the Council's financial sustainability is being challenged and its outturn position for 2017/18 in two of its largest service areas resulted in overspends of £1.57M in Adult Services and £2.97M in Children's Services.</p> <p>Whilst again no significant governance failures have occurred, the Council acknowledge that the level of grant reductions from central government are a significant issue and represent the most significant set of challenges it has faced in being able to continue to deliver excellent services to the whole community at all times.</p> <p>We therefore need robust governance and sensible plans to enable services to deliver against all of these challenges.</p>	<p>As with last year the Council has already set out many of its plans to deliver services into the future against the backdrop of significant financial reductions. Actions included –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing growth of £13M to meet existing and new demands, particularly in relation to social care and children's services - Utilisation of the Improved Better Care Fund along with a co-ordinated change programme for Adult Social Care and Children's Services; - Continued use of the Social Impact Bond; - Reviewing care package assessments and the single point of access (SPA) to help reduce demand; - Reviewing service provision for high cost learning disability placements, opportunities within Direct Payment provision and in-house Fostering.; - Reviewing Nursery Provision, Children's Centres and preventive services; - Continuing the stringent cost control mechanisms on staff costs, goods, works and services at an operational level whilst using the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan to help focus services at a strategic level on doing the right things for the North Somerset Community 	<p>As previously advised, the council's financial performance is reviewed, assessed and challenged by the corporate management team on a monthly basis, together with the key risks and assumptions that were included within the medium term financial plan.</p> <p>Clearly this increased scrutiny, which has seen the development of a range of proposals that are being implemented by the directorate management teams, has given greater attention and focus upon priority areas and also delivered an improvement in the council's overall financial monitoring position.</p> <p>The projected net expenditure position has improved significantly across many areas of the council's budget forecasts, meaning that the net position by the council at the end of the year was broadly break even ignoring some exceptional one-off sums. This is now the second year in a row that the Council has managed this significant issue successfully.</p> <p>Whilst this position should be seen as a significant achievement in the current climate, it should also be recognised that some of this has been accomplished through the one-off curtailment of spending; this is not sustainable and will not be without consequence. Deferring work in highways maintenance, for example, will increase the backlog of outstanding defects.</p> <p>Importantly the in-year mitigations will not change the council's strategic approach set out in the corporate plan, they will seek to progress the council onto more medium-term and sustainable solutions which are aligned with our aims and ambitions.</p>

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9. Significant Issues for 2018/19	
Issue in 18/19	Commentary & Mitigating actions for 18/19
<p><u>Capacity Challenge</u></p> <p>As detailed for the last three years the significant issue identified around the financial challenge continues to be severe, with public sector austerity and a range of economic challenges likely to continue into the next decade.</p> <p>The Council has responded positively with almost £100M of savings already delivered and a positive financial outturn position in 2017/18 and 2018/19 reflecting the significant work achieved by Members and Officers. However the success of this delivery requires substantial input and overview by Senior Management and during 2018/19 a number of the most senior roles at the Council were vacant or filled by interims for a long period. This included the roles of Chief Executive, Director of Development & Environment, Assistant Director (Operations), Director of Public Health and S151 Officer (Head of Finance and Property).</p> <p>Continued delivery of the Council's savings programme, maintaining business-as-usual and driving improvements in our community does not come without risks and senior management oversight and leadership is critical to mitigating the risks we face.</p> <p>During the year the Council's financial challenges remained ever present along with a number of challenges around contract management which have become apparent leading to a need for increased management support and attention.</p> <p>Whilst again no significant governance failures have occurred, the Council acknowledges that the level of challenges in the delivery of its core business requires sufficient capacity to enable not just the priorities of the Council to be delivered but core internal controls to be managed successfully.</p> <p>The Council has recognised the issues and the actions and positions including the Chief Executive have now been filled and a new Director of Development & Environment will start during 2019/20. The actions column details a high level summary of progress being made to address these challenges.</p>	<p>Senior Management</p> <p>The Council has considered a range of options and following a thorough appointment process has recruited Jo Walker to the post of Chief Executive and she commenced the role in January 2019. Additionally Lucy Shomali has been appointed Director of Development & Environment and will start her new role in June 2019.</p> <p>The roles of Assistant Director Neighbourhood Management, Director of Public Health and Director of Finance have all been advertised with the aim of making permanent appointments. It has proved challenging to recruit into the Director of Public Health and Director of Finance posts however interim arrangements have continued to support the organisation positively whilst permanent replacements are sought.</p> <p>Financial Management</p> <p>As with previous years the Council has already set out many of its plans to deliver services into the future against the backdrop of significant financial reductions. One of the key principles of the 2019/20 budget was to provide growth to meet existing and new demands, particularly in relation to transport, parking, social care and children's services in order to improve the robustness and sustainability of the budget.</p> <p>The budget also includes over £10M of savings that will need to be delivered in order to achieve a balanced outturn. Overseeing delivery against this agenda is a key role for the Executive and Senior Management and they will continue to be pro-active in working to ensure that significant risks to the organisation are appropriately mitigated & controlled</p> <p>Contract Management</p> <p>Ongoing challenges to control costs and secure efficiencies remain, along with a need to upgrade the level of skills and capacity to manage contracts. Senior management have recently reviewed planned improvements for delivery in 2019/20, which include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New comprehensive training programme - Review of governance, including reporting and assurance - Introduction of Contract Management plans

Chief Executive and Leader of the Council's Declaration

We have been advised on the results of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework and certify the Annual Governance statement on behalf of the organisation.

Signed: **Don Davies**
 Leader of the Council

Signed: **Jo Walker**
 Chief Executive Officer

Date: