

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Draft Annual Governance Statement 2018

Covers the 2017/18 financial year

1. Scope of responsibility

- 1.1 The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a statutory 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 the above.
- 1.2 The Council has a Code of Corporate Governance in place which sets out how the Council intend to apply the principles of corporate governance, in accordance with 'Delivering Good Governance' within the Local Government CIPFA/ SOLACE Framework. A copy of the code is on our website at www.west-norfolk.gov.uk. The code was reviewed during 2014/15 and the update was approved by Council in March 2015.
- 1.3 This Annual Governance Statement explains how the Council has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, regulation 6(1) which requires all relevant bodies to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare a statement.

2. The purpose of the governance framework

- 2.1 The governance framework comprises the systems, policies, procedures and operations by which the authority is directed and controlled, and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and, where appropriate, leads its communities. It enables the authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and outcomes and to consider whether those objectives have led to delivery of appropriate services and value for money.
- 2.2 The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework 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 on-going process designed to:
 - identify and prioritise the principal risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, agreed priorities and objectives
 - evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risks being realised
 - manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
- 2.3 The governance framework has been in place at the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for the year ended 31 March 2018 and remains in place to date.

3. The governance framework

The Council's governance framework is made up of the many systems, policies, procedures and operations we have in place to do the following:

3.1 Publish our aims for local people and others who use our services

- 3.1.1 The Council publishes a Corporate Business Plan which sets out the broad framework for the Council's aims for the period covered by the plan. The plan currently in place was agreed by Council in January 2016.
- 3.1.2 The plan outlines six priority aims, supported by 18 objectives in areas of key importance to the authority. The six priority aims within the plan are:
1. Provide important local services within our available resources
 2. Drive local economic and housing growth
 3. Work with our communities to ensure they remain clean and safe
 4. Celebrate our local heritage and culture
 5. Stand up for local interests within our region
 6. Work with our partners on important services for the borough
- 3.1.3 The Corporate Business Plan is aligned with the Council's Financial Plan and both documents are available on our website in order to be clear and transparent to local people, service users and stakeholders.
- 3.1.4 During 2017/18, the Council developed elements of its Local Development Scheme which provides information on the documents that make up the Council's Local Plan (in relation to Planning) and also provides a timetable for the Local Plan production and the Local Plan Review. The scheme provides details of documents we intend to prepare over the period 2017-2019.

3.2 Review our aims and the implications on our governance arrangements

- 3.2.1 The Council has a Code of Corporate Governance in place, which sets out how the Council intends to apply the principles of corporate governance, in accordance with CIPFA/SOLACE guidance. The Code includes a chart to demonstrate the different parts of the framework and reflects the Council's current processes and procedures. The Code will be reviewed every three years to reflect any changes in the Council's governance framework and/or any revised guidance. The three statutory officers will meet quarterly to review high risk projects and identified issues.
- 3.2.2 Progress towards achieving the aims outlined in the Council's Corporate Business Plan was monitored through the Corporate Business Plan Monitoring Report which was collated quarterly during 2017/18. Updates at the end of quarters 2 and 4 were taken to the Corporate Performance Panel for review and progress checking. As part of collating and reviewing the monitoring report, the Council's senior management team consider and review the aims, actions underway and progress made. The governance arrangements in place for the year under review were appropriate for delivery of our aims.

3.3 Measure the quality of our services, make sure we provide them in line with our aims and that they provide value for money

- 3.3.1 The Council has a Performance Management Framework which is, in effect, a summary of the key internal processes and components through which the Council sets, delivers, monitors and reports on its priorities and services. The framework encompasses elements of strategy, finance, performance, people, risk management and reporting and accountability. The framework describes how the Council

measures and monitors the performance of its services and is available on the Council's website. A number of updates occurred in 2017/18 including:

- The framework was generally refreshed during the 2017/18 year to ensure it reflects current arrangements.
- Several new Planning related indicators were added at the request of members.
- A Scrutiny Review proposed that overview and scrutiny panels should monitor their own indicators rather than solely report indicators to Corporate Performance Panel.

3.3.2 Through reviews by external auditors, external agencies, Internal Audit, and the Policy/Efficiency Team, the Council seeks ways of ensuring the economical, effective and efficient use of resources, and for securing continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised for example a review of Support Services – Environment and Planning was undertaken in May 2017. A high level options appraisal, supported by Local Partnerships, commenced in Winter 2017 to consider collaboration with South Holland and Breckland district councils.

3.4 Define and document the roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions

3.4.1 The Council's Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures to be followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. This defines, amongst other things the roles of the Council, Cabinet, how scrutiny and overview is undertaken, the Scheme of Delegation, and the roles and responsibilities of officers and members. The different elements of the Constitution are subject to periodic change either through national legislation or local decision. In the 2017/18 year, the Council's Scheme of Delegation was updated in July 2017.

3.4.2 Within the Constitution, full Council sets the overall budget and policy framework of the Council, while Cabinet makes decisions within this framework, and is held to account by the overview and scrutiny arrangements. Meetings are open to the public except where exempt or confidential matters are being disclosed. In addition, senior officers of the Council can make decisions under delegated authority. The Council publishes a Forward Decision List which contains details of key decisions to be made by the Council, its bodies and Executive Directors under their delegated powers.

3.4.3 Following work undertaken during the preceding two years, in April 2016 Council agreed changes to the scrutiny arrangements of the authority. Then changes were made to seek to make the roles and functions of the Council's policy development and scrutiny panels more effective, thereby enhancing the good governance of the Council. All changes have been operating during the 2017/18 year. The Scrutiny Structures Task Group commenced in August 2017, reviewed the changes, consulted upon proposals with final recommendations taken to Cabinet in January 2018. All changes made were fully defined and documented within the constitution documents.

3.5 Develop, communicate and embed codes of conduct which define the standards of behaviour for members and staff

3.5.1 The Council has in place key documents which communicate the standards of behaviour required of members and all council staff (officers). These include the:

- Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Strategy
- Employee Handbook (includes employee code of conduct)
- Members Code of Conduct
- Members Code of Good Practice for Planning
- Protocol for Member/Officer Relations
- Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Quality Policy & Strategy
- Disciplinary / Grievance procedures
- Fraud Response Plan
- Health, Safety & Welfare General Policy
- ICT Asset Management Policy
- ICT Computer Usage Policy
- ICT Corporate Email Policy
- ICT Corporate Internet Policy
- ICT Security Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

3.5.2 The Code of Practice for Planning was updated in September 2017 setting out standards regarding social media.

3.5.3 The five ICT related policies are reviewed annually and refreshed when appropriate to ensure they are in line with the latest ICT technology advancements and information security guidelines. Keeping information securely is vital for public confidence and the efficient conduct of business.

3.5.4 The Baseline Personnel Security Standard (a new requirement in 2014/15) continues as standard practice within the Council's recruitment and appointment processes, to ensure that employees who access information held on the Public Services Network (PSN) meet a minimum baseline standard of security checks. It is a pre-appointment check which aims to ensure the Council employs people who are entitled to work in the UK and who have the honesty, integrity and values needed. The BPSS will be reviewed will in 2018/19.

3.5.5 The Performance Management Framework also describes how staff performance, including conduct, is managed; this document has been refreshed during the 2017/18 year. The staff performance related pay scheme was reviewed later in the year and trialled new grades. All employees have detailed job descriptions and person specifications.

3.5.6 The Council also has a Harassment Procedure in place for staff, which demonstrates the belief that all employees have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and that the Council will take steps to ensure this right is protected. All policies are available to all staff and Councillors via the Council's Intranet.

3.5.7 The revised Equalities Policy approved by Cabinet in January 2018 sets out the roles and responsibilities of the local authority including those for employees, members and third party organisations and contractors. It also includes new equality objectives. Implementation will be supported by a training programme to be rolled out during 2018.

- 3.5.8 Training was rolled out in January 2018 for Management Team, Extended Management Team and wider staff to inform and support the Council's response to the General Data Protection Act Regulations. This includes a short briefing session and a bespoke e-learning package. Eastlaw worked with service managers to review the implications for their areas of responsibility to inform planning for any changes that may be required, helped identify data and records management issues and with completion of statutory registers. The Data Protection Policy was reviewed to ensure conformity with the GDPR, working practices and emerging UK legislation and an Information Risk Framework has been introduced.
- 3.5.9 In Spring 2016, Cabinet agreed to update the Council's Child Protection Policy and introduce an overarching Safeguarding Policy to ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties with respect to child and adult safeguarding. Cabinet agreed the Safeguarding Policy in April 2017 and this was subsequently approved by Council in July 2017. The new policy clarifies roles and responsibilities and referral mechanisms and a "risk assessment" process for contracts/service level agreements and grants.

3.6 *Review the effectiveness of the decision-making framework, including delegation arrangements, decision making in partnerships and robustness of data quality*

- 3.6.1 Effective management is based on a framework of regular management information, financial regulations, standing orders and a structure of varying levels of responsibility, including arrangements for delegating decision making. The Council has all these elements in place, including those which meet 'The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014', and we regularly review these to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose. The Constitution was revised during 2017/18. There is a protocol for recording and broadcasting of meetings. Decisions are made in open, public meetings, or via the various delegation arrangements in place and all adhere to the policy position in place – for example, Planning decisions are taken with regard to the adopted Local Plan and all other relevant guidance.
- 3.6.2 The Council works in partnership at many different levels. Continued participation is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective. Decision making in partnerships is governed by the structure outlined within the appropriate constitution. As in one example, the Norfolk Coast Partnership (a formal partnership with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council, DEFRA and Norfolk County Council) there is a 'Memorandum of Agreement' which was renewed in April 2015 and runs for 3 years. This outlines how decisions will be made within the partnership.
- 3.6.3 A Memorandum of Association for the Wash & North Norfolk Marine Partnership, which brings together the interests, skills and resources of 21 local authorities, environmental interest groups and national agencies to address matters of mutual interest in and around the Wash is under development.
- 3.6.4 During the 2017/18 year, the Council worked in partnership with other public sector organisations in Norfolk in the 'One Public Estate' programme running across the county following a successful 2016 bid for funding towards feasibility work. Formal governance for the partnership is outlined within the 'Norfolk Partnership Services & Assets Delivery Plan' document.

3.6.5 The Council has a Data Quality Policy and Strategy in place and available on its website. Having this in place indicates that the Council understands the importance of data quality and is committed to being consistent in its management of data quality within the organisation and in partnership with others. It also means that the Council ensures that the data produced adheres to the 7 principles of data quality. The Policy was reviewed, and the Strategy was refreshed during the 2016/17 year¹. Training was delivered during the 2017/18 year for officers who collect data used for corporate performance measures to support the application of the strategy.

3.6.6 Following a review of the Council's scrutiny function by the Centre for Public Scrutiny in 2015, the cross party Scrutiny Structures and Policy Development Task Group made recommendations to Panels, Cabinet and Council on the Scrutiny and Policy Development Structure. Those recommendations were implemented and have been in operation for two years. The Task Group reconvened in August 2017 to review the revised operation and structures. The Task Group's proposals were considered by the policy and review panels and were approved by Cabinet in January 2018. Implementation of the changes will take place during the remainder of 2017/18 and into the new municipal year. These changes include:

- the attendance of Audit Members for Audit training becoming obligatory as it is for Planning and Licensing initial training.
- Panels being encouraged to use the powers available to them and therefore making clear recommendations on items coming before them so they can be incorporated into reports in the progress of being prepared, or taken into account at Cabinet.
- Panels considering their own performance indicators and being encouraged to monitor the progress in line with the Corporate Objectives through that route.
- the number of post implementation reviews undertaken being monitored by the Joint Chairs meetings.
- when working on policy development and reviews and project programme work, Panels being encouraged to have discussions with portfolio holders :
 - For example – Cabinet Members could attend a Panel meeting at the beginning of the year to discuss their plans for the year in order to incorporate potential items into work plans in accordance with the Business Plan.
- the Leader nominating the Panel/Committee Chairs for agreement at Council with the Vice-Chairs to be appointed by the Panels/Committee.
- terms of reference being approved for Chairs of Scrutiny bodies.
- the appraisal of Chairs being investigated.
- the review of the amended arrangements after a further 12 months of operation.

3.7 *Ensure the framework for identifying and managing risks, and for developing counter-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are effective and well-maintained*

3.7.1 The Council has a Risk Management Policy and Strategy in place. The Council's risk appetite is formally recognised within the Policy, and the Strategy provides a means

¹ Presented to Cabinet in February 2017

of escalating risks from service and project level to the Corporate Risk register if necessary. The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed regularly by the Council's Executive Directors and the Audit Committee receives reports on a half-yearly basis on the position of the register. In April 2017, the responsibility for collation of the Risk Register on behalf of the Senior Management Team was moved to the Policy, Performance and Personnel team. This change has strengthened the arrangements in place and provides additional resilience. In line with good practice, risk management continues to be closely linked to the achievement of the Council's objectives.

- 3.7.2 During 2016/17 the Council's Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Strategy, which details the approach to its arrangements, has been reviewed and updated². The Strategy covers the roles of elected Members, employees and managers (including contractors and agents), the Internal Audit and Fraud team and External Audit.
- 3.7.3 The Council investigates fraud relating to Council Tax and Business Rates payments, and also deals with National Fraud Initiative work. Responsibility for investigating benefit fraud transferred to the Department for Work and Pensions in 2015 and a referral system is in place between the Council and the DWP if fraud is suspected in respect of housing benefit and / or council tax support.

3.8 *Ensure effective management of change and transformation*

- 3.8.1 Over recent years, the Council has adopted a policy of seeking efficiencies and different ways of delivering services producing significant levels of savings. The savings achieved have been the result of considerable change and transformation. In October 2016 the Council published an 'Efficiency plan'³ in order to fix a four-year financial settlement from the Government and work continues within all Directorates to produce the changes required to deliver the savings identified, before 2020/21. Executive Directors and all Service Managers and are directly involved in monitoring the work being completed and savings achieved are reported in the monthly budget monitoring reports. Where savings are achieved in advance of 2020/21 these will be transferred to reserves to fund investment in major capital projects which will provide future revenue income.
- 3.8.2 One of the corporate priorities is to deliver our 'channel-shift' programme. The key document for delivery is the 'Switched On' Transformation Plan which was refreshed during the 2016/17 year to keep account of elements that were delivered. The plan sets out how the authority is approaching service transformation, and introducing improved digital services across the organisation and is underpinned by communications and training plans to support employees through the changes required, equipping them with the skills they will need to implement new ways of working.
- 3.8.3 The Council's shift towards digital services progressed well during 2017/18 with improved take up of My Account, use of online integrated forms and the online help function. These are key parts of the channel shift programme and provide the foundation for much of the work planned in this area over the remaining life of the Corporate Business Plan. The new website is fully responsive and works well across

² Presented to Cabinet in February 2017

³ https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20160/budgets_and_spending/511/efficiency_plan_2016-2020

a wide range of devices such as tablets and mobile phones. Feedback received on the change and how the change was managed was positive from both external customers and internal staff. During 2017/18, new/revised online forms were introduced for:

- Garden waste bin application forms with integrated online payments
- Landlord e-Registration
- Make an arrangement to pay your council tax arrears
- Apply for a Temporary Event Notice
- Housing Needs Enquiry Form
- Landlord and Agent – Tell us about a change of tenant
- Taxi licensing
- Street collection permit

There are also several new forms in development for Licensing which are awaiting functionality to process multiple payments which will be available during Spring 2018.

- 3.8.4 Take up of the new forms has been high with over 20,000 forms completed by customers since they went live. High levels of take up demonstrate the ease of use and benefit that being able to complete forms at a time convenient to the customer has enabled. Benefit forms integrate directly with our back office system and further work in 2017/18 will be completed to integrate revenues and environmental health forms into the respective back office systems.
- 3.8.5 During 2017/18, the Council 'Web Chat' function enabled customers browsing its website to chat directly to a customer services advisor. An average of 15 chats a day are now taking place and the data collected from the chats is being used to improve the information on the Council's website.
- 3.8.6 Throughout 2017/18, the Council promoted its 'My Account' service. Customers are able to create accounts from which they can register for personalised data such as council tax and benefit information, find information via a variety of frequently asked questions and submit and track requests for service. The system also enables them to upload documents to support their service request. To date, 13,500 accounts have been opened by customers.
- 3.8.7 The Council continues to encourage take up of digital services by providing assisted self-service facilities supported by Online Support Officers at the King's Court offices. It is hoped that this will help and encourage customers to self-serve themselves when they next need a Council service.
- 3.8.8 The Council's Performance Management Framework outlines how the corporate priorities, including channel shift and the associated transformations, translate into targets for staff.
- 3.9 *Ensure the authority's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA statement on the 'Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government'. Where they do not, explain why and how they deliver the same impact***

- 3.9.1 The CIPFA statement describes the roles and responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer, who is bound by both professional standards and also legislative responsibilities, with a fiduciary duty to the local taxpayer.
- 3.9.2 The Council's arrangements fully comply with the principles described: the Chief Financial Officer reports directly to the Chief Executive, and is a member of the senior management team (called the Leadership Team in the CIPFA statement). Additionally during the 2016/17 year, the postholder's role title was re-designated as Executive Director, Finance Services and to strengthen our arrangements, a senior member of the Financial Services team was appointed as Deputy Section 151 Officer.
- 3.10 *Ensure the authority's arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA statement on the 'Role of the Head of Internal Audit'. Where they do not, explain why and how they deliver the same impact***
- 3.10.1 The role referred to by CIPFA as the Head of Internal Audit has a critical role in delivering the organisation's strategic aims by championing best practice in governance, objectively assessing the adequacy of governance and management of existing risks, commenting on responses to emerging risks and proposed developments; and giving an objective and evidence based opinion on all aspects of governance, risk management and internal control.
- 3.10.2 The arrangements in place for 2017/18 conformed to the requirements outlined in the above statement.
- 3.10.3 During 2017/18, the shared arrangement with Fenland District Council to manage the Internal Audit team was embedded⁴. The handover period began in November 2016 and a Section 113 agreement is in place to underpin the arrangement.⁵ These arrangements have been entered into in order to provide a cost saving to the Borough Council, whilst at the same time continuing to provide an effective internal audit function through a different model of delivery. Care was taken when devising the new arrangements to ensure that the shared Internal Audit Manager will be able to provide the assurance required by management and Members, and issue an Audit Opinion for the Annual Governance Statement.
- 3.10.4 During the 2017/18 year, the Council tendered for new External Auditors as the transitional arrangements put in place following the close of the Audit Commission ended on 31 March 2018.
- 3.10.5 The Council's external auditor during 2017/18 was Ernst & Young, and the Council needed to have a new auditor in place before the end of the 2017/18 year. At its meeting on 5 September 2016, the Audit Committee recommended that the Council "opt-in" to the procurement process being run by the national sector led body Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA). Full Council approved this approach at the Council meeting on 17 November 2016.
- 3.10.6 The PSAA is completing the major procurement process to identify the firms which will carry out audits under contract to PSAA and the successful suppliers were announced in June 2017.

⁴ Cabinet report August 2016

⁵ Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972

3.11 *Ensure effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the Monitoring Officer and Head of Paid Service functions*

Effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of both roles.

3.11.1 The Council employs a Monitoring Officer who is responsible for ensuring compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations. After consulting with the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer will report to full Council if it is considered that any proposal, decision or omission would give rise to unlawfulness or maladministration. The Monitoring Officer's Annual Report summarises the more important matters arising from the Monitoring Officer's work for the Council from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 and comments on other current issues. This was considered by Standards Committee on 12 April 2018. No contraventions have been identified or reported.

3.11.2 The Chief Executive is the Council's Head of Paid Service and has overall responsibility for the management and co-ordination of the employees appointed by the Council. The Chief Executive is required to report to the Council as appropriate with regard to the way in which the different functions of the Council are co-ordinated, the number and grades of staff required for the discharge of these functions, the way in which these people are organised and managed and the way in which they are appointed.

3.12 *Carry out the main functions of an Audit Committee, as identified in CIPFA's 'Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities'*

3.12.1 From April 2016, the Council has had a standalone Audit Committee in place providing increased opportunity for effective assurance about the adequacy of financial and operational management and reporting.

3.12.2 The Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee were reviewed in September 2017 and amended in the 2017/18 year. Changes were made which included:

- Development of a Quality Assurance Improvement Programme (QAIP).
- Deletion of the Deputy Chief Executive role and transfer of responsibilities to Executive Director – Financial Services (S151 Officer).
- Change in title from 'Audit and Risk Committee' to 'Audit Committee'.
- Updates in relation to the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2016.

3.12.3 Training has been provided during 2017/18 to the members of the Audit Committee in key areas. Examples include training on undertaking audits, the Budget and a briefing on ICT back-up systems in the context of business continuity.

3.12.4 Each year, a review is undertaken of the effectiveness of the Audit Committee. For the year covered by this statement, the review was presented to the Audit Committee in May 2017. The review concluded that the Committee is continuing to perform effectively and the Council is meeting its requirements under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

3.13 *Ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is legal*

- 3.13.1 The Council's Constitution provides a comprehensive framework for the management of the authority's business and ensures compliance with relevant laws, regulations, internal policies, codes of practice and procedures. The Council is the statutory body for many laws and the range of policies and codes of practice we have in place help to ensure compliance. Policy Review and Development Panels assist Cabinet and Council to ensure that compliance is considered where appropriate; report templates for those panels and for Cabinet ensure all elements are given consideration at the time the report is presented. Statutory Officers – Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer – are in post to monitor and ensure adherence.
- 3.13.2 All initiatives undertaken, including those with financial elements, are either progressed due to being a statutory requirement or because it will contribute to a key aim of the Council. All initiatives are reviewed by regular meetings of the Management Team and senior managers in order to ensure compliance and that spend is legal.
- 3.13.3 Other arrangements are in place to ensure compliance with relevant policies and to ensure that expenditure is legal. One example is the ICT Development Group; a small group which for the 2017/18 year consisted of the Portfolio Holder, a second Cabinet Member, the Executive Director and the ICT Manager. The group manages the ICT capital budgets, reviews all new proposed ICT developments and keeps up to date with pertinent legislation. Officers write a report to the group outlining their business case and decisions are taken on spend to ensure that it complies with the Council's priorities. The group monitors project delivery and items are recorded via agendas and minutes and met twice in 2017/18.
- 3.13.4 The Council remained 'Payment Card Industry (PCI) Compliant' in 2017/18; this is an increasingly important regulation in light of the Council's move towards more digital services and the public's reduced use of cheques. Compliance is judged in two ways – via an on-site audit, and through quarterly scans on behalf of the banks to try to find any vulnerability.
- 3.13.5 A Budget Monitoring Report is produced and provided to all Councillors on a monthly basis to ensure timely information is available on the Council's financial position. These changes are formally approved by Cabinet in order to form the base on which the new Financial Plan is then formulated. The report for the 2017/18 year was taken on February 2018.
- 3.13.6 Additionally, to ensure that senior members are kept abreast of relevant matters in a timely manner, the Chief Executive (or another representative from Management Team) meet weekly with the Leader of the Council.
- 3.13.7 The Council's insurance arrangements are sufficient and there are clear procedures and responsibilities established for reviewing insurance needs. Procedures are in place regarding new assets acquired during the year, how these are insured, logged in the authority's asset register and notified to the nominated insurance officer.

3.13.8 The Council:

- has adequate security arrangements, which are clearly understood and applied by all officers and members, to ensure that buildings, valuable equipment and other key assets are safeguarded.
- maintains inventories of all equipment and assets and that these are checked on a periodic basis.
- has in place procedures and processes for the movement, transfer and disposal of all key assets which ensure that they are authorised and recorded as appropriate.

3.13.9 The Council holds significant levels of personal and confidential data requiring robust data protection, information governance and security systems and processes to effectively protect and manage it. The Council also shares personal and confidential data with partners and providers. The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) impose additional obligations on the Council in its discharge of effective information governance. An authority wide training programme was deployed in early 2018 and is supported with online materials.

3.14 *Ensure arrangements are in place for whistleblowing and receiving and investigating complaints from the public*

3.14.1 The Council has a Whistleblowing Policy in place, produced in accordance with the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. This policy is available to all staff and members on the Council's Intranet and was updated during the 2016/17 year.

3.14.2 The Council has a Corporate Complaints procedure in place, available on the Council website. The Council also deals with any incidents of racial complaints, or complaints relating to a disability, in a similar but separate process. The complaints received are analysed and results presented to the Corporate Performance Panel on an annual basis.

3.15 *Identify development needs of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by effective training*

3.15.1 The Council provides a comprehensive programme of learning and development to officers and members. Learning and development needs for staff are identified through the performance management process and in response to organisation/service level needs and these are translated into an annual training programme. The Council has a commitment to management training and delivers a range of development activities to support managers at all levels, including specific training to support the development of service managers. A group of service managers completed a Level 7 management programme in 2017 and a second cohort managers are undertaking the same programme. A number of one-off 'Extended Management Team Development Sessions' have been arranged to ensure Service Managers are kept up-to-date on current issues. Senior Officers also participate in relevant sessions relating to changing technical requirements to ensure the up to date position is known and to feed in to relevant central government departments at appropriate times; examples are attendance at Efficiency Plan

preparation sessions, Cabinet Office briefing, Electoral Commission meetings and 100% Business Rates Retention sessions.

- 3.15.2 Member's development needs are identified through use of a questionnaire following their election, and are also identified during the year as matters arise at meetings and questions of training needs arise. Particular emphasis has been given to ICT training for Councillors during the 2016/17 year to continue to support the ongoing change to paperless agendas for the majority of meetings and other changes such as electronic expenses claims, which went live in April 2016. Feedback forms following any training undertaken continue to be used to develop training in areas where further needs have been identified. Plans are in place for an additional training needs analysis to take place during the 2017/18 year to ensure members training needs are being met. The Disability Awareness e-learning package currently available for staff is to be extended to Elected Members, funded from the Member Development budget. As part of awareness raising for the Council's updated policy, Members have received training on Safeguarding in January 2018.
- 3.15.3 The Policy Review and Development Panels regularly receive updates on relevant topics as part of their agenda, particularly around any new or current initiatives, and training is run throughout the year as identified. Topics for updates or training are identified either by officers or members and helps to ensure members are better informed and have input at an early stage. The Audit Committee have received specific briefings / training throughout the year due to the Committee's updated remit.
- 3.15.4 Briefings are offered to members prior to virtually every Full Council meeting on a wide range of topics; topics covered in the year under review have included Devolution and the work of the Boundary Commission for England. Members have also had the opportunity to tour the Town Hall following completed development work.

3.16 *Establish clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation*

- 3.16.1 The Council welcomes views from the public and community as part of the constitutional process. These views are considered through formal and informal consultation processes. Examples of consultations undertaken with the public in 2017/18 are: 2018/19 Council Tax Support Scheme, [closure of public toilets](#), [public space protection order relating to Mintlyn Wood Road to prevent flytipping](#) and the [Hunstanton Coastal Management Plan](#).
- 3.16.2 For the annual consultation on the local Council Tax Scheme during the year under review, we tried a new approach, utilising Borough Councillors and Parish Councils, asking them to engage with their constituents to provide opinions. Members of the public are also able to ask questions on a topic or service within the Council's control at Full Council meetings.
- 3.16.3 A King's Lynn Area Consultative Committee is in place, which is made up of the Councillors for the unparished area of King's Lynn and West Lynn. The Committee's Terms of Reference state that the Committee is to act as a consultative forum and to encourage community engagement. The Committee meets 5-6 times a year to

discuss and make recommendations on issues relating to the unparished area of King's Lynn and West Lynn.

- 3.16.4 There is an expectation from the majority of Parish Councils in the Borough for the relevant Borough Councillor(s) to attend most, if not all, of their meetings; this assists with maintaining effective communication with Parish Councils and therefore the communities that they serve.
- 3.16.5 The Council uses a variety of corporate communication tools including a website, intranet site, a newsroom, newsletters, media releases and social media to communicate and engage with the community and staff. [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) are used effectively to update on service provision. Social media is used for specific events, such as the [Hanse Festival](#), and the Town Hall has its own [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts to help engage with potential customers and promote the venue. Results of all methods of communication are fed back into service delivery, ensuring accountability. The Council also monitors feedback from residents and service users through compliments and complaints received.
- 3.16.6 A West Norfolk Partnership initiative called "[Love West Norfolk](#)" was launched in January 2018. 'Love West Norfolk' aims to create pride and aspiration within the local area and give people a voice on what they believe makes the area so special. The campaign is being headed up by key community leaders, including the Chief Executive and Leader of the borough council, and the Chief Executives of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the College of West Anglia, Freebridge Community Housing, Community Action Norfolk, and the Clinical Commissioning Group. It is also supported by Norfolk County Council. People will be able to share their views on what they love about the area via social media and events. Companies will also be getting involved and will be running consultation and engagement activities for employees and customers to share what they think sets west Norfolk apart.
- 3.16.7 During 2017/18, the Council was an active partner in the Wash East Coastal Management Strategy Stakeholder Forum and was leading plans to manage risk to Hunstanton's coastline. The forum includes a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations and consulted upon plans for managing a beach and addressing flood and coastal erosion risks. The Council has contributed officer and financial resources to this activity.
- 3.16.8 During 2017/18 the Council has complied with the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2014. The Code makes it a legal requirement for local authorities to publish specified data by prescribed deadlines and thereafter annually. The Council publishes all specified data on its website, in the prescribed format, by the required deadline. This makes a direct line to the requirement to establish clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation.
- 3.16.9 [The Statement of Community Involvement](#) was approved by Council in June 2017 and outlines how the Council will consult with the public as part of the Local Plan process, on Planning Applications, and also on Neighbourhood Plans.
- 3.16.10 Cabinet approved a protocol and Terms of Reference for four Member Champions who act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business. The main responsibility of each member champion is to encourage communication and positive action over the issue they represent. The

Council member champions are for Disability, Armed Forces, Heritage and Coastal issues.

3.17 Incorporate good governance arrangements in respect of partnerships and other joint working and reflect these in the authority's overall governance arrangements

- 3.17.1 The Council participates in a range of joint working arrangements with other bodies, some of which are more significant than others in terms of the potential for a detrimental impact on the Council should the partnership fail. Some arrangements are formal, and are a way to deliver the Council's duties and obligations, such as CNC Building Control and the shared audit management with Fenland District Council. These arrangements are subject to formal governance arrangements and include processes for reviewing the delivery of benefits, and, where performance is unsatisfactory, arrangements for termination.
- 3.17.2 The Council, as a responsible authority⁶, is a member of Norfolk Community Safety Partnership with a district based multi-agency Operational Partnership Team and Norfolk Community Safety Scrutiny Sub Panel.
- 3.17.3 District councils not only affect public health through their direct roles and functions but also through their power to influence other bodies such as county councils, the local NHS, and health and wellbeing boards. The Council is a member of Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Board and the related Norfolk Health Overview Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.17.4 There are a range of countywide collaborative partnerships that the Council engages with. Examples include Norfolk Business Rates Pool, Norfolk Arts Forum Executive, Norfolk Coast Partnership Management Group, Norfolk Joint Museums and Archaeology Committee, Norfolk Local Authority Tourism Group, Norfolk Parking Partnership Joint Committee, Norfolk Police and Crime Panel, Norfolk Rail Policy Group, Norfolk Records Committee and Norfolk Waste Partnership.
- 3.17.5 Focusing on the Norfolk Waste Partnership, discussions have been held with neighbouring councils in Norfolk to consider the most cost effective and economically advantageous approach to the procurement of the waste and recycling functions. The review had identified that the most cost effective service would best be achieved through a joint procurement of the service. The potential for savings in the procurement of a collection contract for waste and recycling are more likely to be achieved by joint procurement and savings could also be made through the sharing of the costs of procurement exercise. The Executive Director for Commercial Services was authorised to commence a joint procurement for the Borough council's refuse and recycling contract undertaken with North Norfolk District Council and other potential partners.
- 3.17.6 Turning to spatial matters, the Council contributed to the development of the [Norfolk Strategic Framework](#) which documents areas of agreement that the Norfolk local planning authorities had reached and which they would follow when they prepared their individual local plans. It had been prepared by an officer team drawn from all of the Norfolk Authorities supported by others from organisations such as the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the New Anglia LEP (the Greater

⁶ Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership had also endorsed it). The Framework will help ensure that the Council discharges its legal duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities in relation to strategically important land use issues which cross administrative boundaries. The result of such co-operation is expected to be better planning outcomes.

- 3.17.7 There are also a number of partnerships and outside bodies at or within borough level which are independent from the Council, but have an impact on its service areas. In order that the Council can maintain effective partnerships with a number of these organisations, representatives of the Council, usually elected councillors, sit on the various committees and forums that are responsible for them. Examples include West Norfolk and King's Lynn Girls School Trust, West Norfolk Chamber of Commerce Council, West Norfolk Community Transport Project, West Norfolk Sports Council Management Committee, West Norfolk Tourism Forum Executive Forum. Oversight of these is a responsibility of the appropriate scrutiny panel.
- 3.17.8 Other partnerships are of a contractual nature, such as the delivery of leisure services via Alive Leisure, procurement support to Boston Borough Council, delivery of the Council's payroll processing or the Housing Strategy and Enabling Service that the Council will deliver for neighbouring Breckland District Council. In February 2018, Cabinet agreed to deliver the Notice Processing for on and off street parking for Great Yarmouth and South Norfolk councils in addition to North Norfolk, Breckland and Broadland. These partnerships are also subject to formal governance arrangements, are reviewed regularly, deliver benefits to the Council such as additional income, provide good value for money for the receiving organisation as the Council maximises its own existing infrastructure, but are not delivering our own statutory obligations.
- 3.17.9 The Council also continues to participate in an informal, collaborative partnership with local partners via the West Norfolk Partnership Strategy Group. The strategy group agrees priority issues which will benefit from a combined and coordinated response from partners. New terms of reference were implemented in April 2017 and have been adhered to during 2017/18.
- 3.17.10 The Council is mindful of the financial and reputational risks that can arise through entering into joint working and collaborative arrangements. It therefore actively supports open and transparent arrangements in all its partnership working.

3.18 Appendix A

The table at Appendix A demonstrates how the core and supporting principles of corporate governance, as detailed in the Council's adopted Code of Corporate Governance have been upheld during the 2017/18 year.

4. Review of effectiveness

- 4.1 The Council has a responsibility to review the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of Internal Audit and the senior managers within the authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Audit Manager's annual report, the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates, where undertaken.

4.2 The process of maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control includes the following measures and actions:

- The Audit Committee has oversight of the activities of the Council's internal and external audit functions. Members of the Audit Committee are provided with copies of all reports produced by Internal Audit and the external auditors, and also receive regular reports on matters relating to finance, fraud investigation and risk management. The Committee approves the annual plans for Internal and External Audit, and receives regular progress reports throughout the year. The Audit Manager submits to the Committee an Annual Report and Opinion, and the external auditors submit an Annual Audit letter. The Audit Manager has included an audit opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's systems of internal control in the Annual Report and Opinion on work completed during 2017/18 which went before the Audit Committee on 30 May 2018. The report states that in the Audit Manager's opinion, the Council's control arrangements were adequate and effective in 2017-18, with sound controls in all key areas.
- The Audit Manager has also completed a review of the effectiveness of the Audit Committee itself. **The result was reported to Cabinet on [25 June 2018]** and concluded that the Committee is continuing to perform effectively and the Council is meeting its requirements under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
- During 2017/18 Internal Audit has issued 3 reports with a 'Limited Assurance' rating. There were no instances of 'No Assurance' reports being issued.
- The Council's external auditors review the activities of the Council, approve the annual accounts and certify grant claims (where required). Conclusions and significant issues arising are detailed in various reports from the auditors. Their 'Audit Results Report – ISA (UK and Ireland) 260' went before the Audit Committee on 31 July 2017 and the Annual Audit Letter went before the Audit Committee on 27 November 2017. These reports from the external auditors refer to the 2016/17 financial year (the latest available) and they confirmed that the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources, and that the financial statements gave a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2017.
- A Member / Officer protocol is in place and forms part of the Council's constitution.
- The Monitoring Officer issued an Annual Report covering the 2017/18 year which went before the Audit Committee on x and provides an overall opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Governance framework. The report stated that the systems of internal control administered by the Monitoring Officer were adequate and effective during the year between April 2017 and March 2018 for the purposes of the latest regulations.
- Additionally, it is the responsibility of the statutory officers to report to Council on any issues concerning the review of the effectiveness of internal control arrangements. There have been no issues arising during 2017/18 which have required the full Council to exercise its role.

4.3 To summarise this section: a review of the Council's overall governance arrangements for the 2017/18 year has been undertaken; the review has not highlighted any issues

of significant weaknesses in governance or internal control during the year. All arrangements outlined in section 4 are in place and operating as planned.

5. Areas of special interest in terms of governance

Leisure arrangements

5.1 The Council's leisure and arts facilities have been operated and managed through an independent Trust and wholly owned Local Authority Company since 1 September 2014. Full details of the arrangements in place are contained within the Council's 2016 and 2017 Annual Governance Statements (covering the 2015/16 and 2016/17 years) and are therefore not repeated here as there have been no material changes to the arrangements.

Legal arrangements

5.2 The Council's legal service continues to be delivered via a delegated agreement on an annual, rolling basis, with Eastlaw (the in-house legal team at North Norfolk District Council). The agreement is designed to provide resilient and quality legal services to the Borough Council and includes provision of a Monitoring Officer; one of the Council's designated statutory posts. Eastlaw provide the client role for commissioned legal services, as well as providing general advice and support for processing Freedom of Information requests and the General Data Protection Regulation.

Local Authority Housing Company

5.3 In August 2016, Cabinet resolved⁷ to set up a wholly owned Local Authority Company the main purpose of which is to help meet the Council's statutory housing duties, by holding property that will be purchased and / or leased from the Council in order to create and provide affordable housing. The company is called the West Norfolk Housing Company Ltd and is a company limited by shares. Governance elements were set out in the 2017 Annual Governance Statement and are therefore not repeated here. At its meeting on 31 October 2017, the Board adopted new articles of association, appointed a Chief Operating Officer, considered new terms of reference, appointed a vice-chairman, aligned its financial reporting with that of the Council and endorsed role descriptions of Board Members and the Chair.

West Norfolk Property

5.4.1 The 2017 Annual Governance Statement set out governance arrangements for this vehicle to hold new private rented sector stock in the Borough.

5.4.2 Cabinet in January 2018 agreed:

That the Housing Company be called "West Norfolk Property"

That the Membership of the new West Norfolk Property Housing Board be made up of the following:

- 3 Councillors: Portfolio Holders for Corporate Projects and Assets, Housing and Community and the Leader
- 2 Officers: Strategic Housing Manager and Chief Executive

⁷ 2 August 2016

- the Executive Director – Financial Services appointed as Company Secretary.

West Norfolk Wins (local lottery)

5.5 The introduction of a local lottery requires two licences approved by the Gambling Commission. These are held by the Executive Director – Finance Services (Section 151 Officer) and the Executive Director – Environment and Planning. In addition Norfolk Community Foundation to provide an independent due diligence review of these arrangements.

6. Known changes in the 2018/19 year

6.1 Timetable for Accounts

It is a statutory requirement for the closedown of the 2017/18 accounts (which will be completed in the 2018/19 year) and each year thereafter, to be adopted by 31 July rather than 30 September. In preparation for this, the Council's accounts for the 2017/18 year (being completed within the 2018/19 year) are being prepared for adoption early, at the Audit Committee on 30 July 2018. All processes have been brought forward, including those undertaken by the external auditors in order to ensure that the revised statutory timescales can be met.

6.2 Boundary Commission for England review

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is progressing with its ward boundary review for the Council. The preliminary stage of the review, which considered the number of Councillors required commenced in February 2017 and concluded in May 2017. A Cross-Party Boundary Review Task Group was established in April 2017 to move forward the second part of the review concerned with identifying the ward boundaries and is currently underway. The review is scheduled for completion in April 2018.

6.3 Equalities Policy

Cabinet in January 2018 approved a revised Equalities Policy incorporating changes to legislation with regards to equalities issues, which have been reflected in the Council's procedures and practices but which were not reflected in the previous policy. An implementation plan will be developed, with a particular focus on ensuring the Council meets its equality objectives. A review of existing equalities training is also planned and will include consideration of training for Elected Members, in consultation with the Leader, Portfolio Holder and Democratic Services.

6.4 New policy review and implementation of policy guidance

Following the Internal Audit and review of policies, guidance has been approved by Management Team. The policy register will be updated through 2018/19 and policies brought forward during the year will be developed using the guidance. The intranet will also be updated.

6.5 New cultural prospectus

The prospectus will be used to assist with engagement with key partners and potential co-investors and assist with an application to become a National Portfolio

Organisation (NPO) through the Arts Council. The Council will seek to integrate its current approach to areas such as bid development, partnership delivery, infrastructure development, creative employment, heritage and the public realm and master planning. This will ensure that our efforts are more joined-up, and that our key partners better understand our plans and how they can best support us to accelerate growth.

6.6 Implementation of Tree and Woodland Strategy 2017 to 2027

The Council's strategy has been developed in consultation with the Environment and Community Panel and the draft strategy proposes a 10 year plan for managing the valuable stock of trees and woodland. The strategy is anticipated to be approved in 2018/19.

6.7 Testing business continuity arrangements and refreshing the business continuity plan

The Council's business continuity arrangements were tested in January 2018 (Metis 17) with a desktop exercise that involved senior officers and the Leader of the Council. An evaluation report was presented to Management Team in February 2018. A further test is planned to take place later in 2018. The business continuity plan will be refreshed during 2018/19.

6.8 Review of retention and disposal policy and schedule

The Council's retention and disposal policy and schedule will be refreshed during 2018/19 reflecting changes in legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation, ICT systems and operational practices.

6.9 Updating Contract Standing Orders

A refresh of Contract Standing Orders will take place during 2018/19 amending it to accommodate electronic tendering, rolling out updated digital content and training for officers.

6.10 Health, Safety and Welfare General Policy

The Council's Health, Safety and Welfare General Policy will be reviewed and considered by the Joint Safety and Welfare Committee prior to seeking Full Council approval in May 2018. The revisions will relate to legislative and procedural changes.

7. Action Plan

7.1 In the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17 an action plan for 2017/18 was set out to deal with governance issues identified during the review for that year and is attached at Appendix B.

7.2 A draft action plan for 2018/19 is attached at Appendix C.

8. Assurance summary

8.1 From the review undertaken, the assessment and ongoing monitoring work completed⁸ and supported by the verification work undertaken by Internal Audit, we

⁸ By the Audit Committee during 2017/18

have reached the opinion that key systems are operating soundly and that there are no fundamental weaknesses.

- 8.2 No system of internal control could provide absolute assurances against material misstatement or loss; this statement is intended to provide reasonable assurance. We are satisfied that an on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing key risks exists. These risks are reflected in the audit plan, the Corporate Risk Register and are the subject of separate reports during the course of the year.
- 8.3 We propose over the coming year to take steps to address matters identified to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that the steps outlined at Appendix C will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Signed:

Cllr Brian Long
Leader of the Council
Date:

Ray Harding
Chief Executive
Date:

Cllr Graham Middleton
Chair of the Audit Committee
Date:

APPENDIX A: EVIDENCE LIST – HOW THE PRINCIPLES OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE HAVE BEEN ADHERED TO DURING THE 2017/18 YEAR

Policies, Rules & Codes	Strategies, Processes and Frameworks	Key documents	Functions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-fraud and Anti-corruption Strategy • Capital Strategy • Code of Conduct • Computer usage policy • Constitution • Data Protection and FOI policies • Data Quality Strategy • Employment rules • Equality policy • Financial procedure rules and standing orders (within Constitution) • Financial regulations • Health and Safety Policy • ICT strategy and action plan • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Member/Officer protocol • Members' allowances scheme (Constitution) • Members' code of conduct (Constitution) • Officers' code of conduct (Constitution) • Pay policy statement • Procedure rules (contracts, employment, meetings) (Constitution) • Procurement regulations • Procurement strategy • Protocol on member / officer relations (Constitution) • Prudential code • Record Retention Policy and Schedule • Risk Management Strategy • Safeguarding Policy • Scheme of Delegation (within Constitution) • Training abroad with Council devices policy • Treasury Management Policy statement • Whistleblowing policy • Workforce learning and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmarking • Budget consultation • Budget process • Business continuity framework • Car Park Management • Civil Parking Enforcement • Competency frameworks • Complaints process • Corporate Business Plan • Customer Care Standards • Customer feedback process • Environment policy • Environmental Statement • EQIA policies • Equality Monitoring • Extended Managers Meetings • Health and Safety policy • Induction process (member and officer) • Internal Audit Strategic Plan • Job evaluation process • Legal Services • Managing performance (people) framework (including appraisal process) • Meeting timetable • Member allowances publication • Member training • MRF Partnership Care & Repair • MT/Union meetings • Officer membership of professional bodies • Performance Management (business) framework • PRP targets • Risk management process • Scrutiny framework (Constitution) • Senior Staff Salary publication • Staff Briefing • Training for Chairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas & Minutes • Alive Trust/Management Suite • Annual audit letters • Annual Directorate Plans • Annual Governance Statement • Assurance Statements • CCTV Operating Manual • CNC Building Control • Committee reports, agendas and minutes • Complaints reports • Consultation register • Corporate Risk Register • Council tax booklet • Council website • Delegation Agreement & SLA • Employee Handbook • Enforcement Policy • External inspection / review reports • Harassment Procedure • Internal Affairs • Intranet • JNC terms & conditions • Job descriptions/specs • Key decisions (within Constitution) • Law & governance • Local Plan • Members Bulletin • Neighbourhood Development Plans • Publication Scheme (FOI) • Quarterly Performance Reports • Record of decisions • Registers of interest • Report templates • Salary scales • Senior management remuneration report • Service level agreements • Service plans • Standard timetable for circulation of agendas • Statement of Accounts • Statement of Internal Control (part of AGS) • Timetable of council meetings • Training programmes • Transparency publications • West Norfolk Partnership • Workforce development and plans • Working Protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit Committee • Community Information Points • Democratic Services • External audit (and other reviews) • Finance service • Functions and responsibilities of senior officers and councillors (within Constitution) • Head of Paid Service • Health and Safety Officer • Human Resources • ICT Development Group • Independent remuneration panel • Internal Audit • Local Government Ombudsman (report) • Management Team • Monitoring Officer • Monitoring Officer report • Policy Development and Review Panels • PR/Communication • S151 officer • Social media • Standards Committee • Statutory reports • Terms of reference for committees (Constitution) • Website • Weekly CEO/Leader meetings

APPENDIX B: ACTION PLAN FOR THE 2017/18 YEAR

	Item	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Status (Complete or add notes)
1	Financial Sustainability (Underpinned by Financial Plan 2016-2021)	Ensure robust processes are in place for identifying, delivering and monitoring cost reduction efficiencies and income generation	Executive Director, Finance Services	March 2018	Progress is reported in the monthly monitoring report, reviewed bi-monthly by Management Team and was reviewed with EMT on 10 October 2017. Monitoring arrangements for corporate projects being developed now that the Performance and Information Officer in Property Services is now in post. Monthly updates to Management Team on corporate projects.
2	Internal Audit	Embed and monitor new Internal Audit arrangements	Executive Director, Finance Services	March 2018	A shared internal audit manager with Breckland District Council took over from 1 April 2017. Progress meetings are held weekly with Exec Director Finance Services. Section 113 agreement in place, signed copy held by HR
3	External Audit	Ensure a robust tender process takes place to put in place new external audit arrangements	Executive Director, Finance Services	March 2018	PSAA undertook tender process. Ernst and Young are the proposed external auditor for the Council the appointment to be confirmed at the meeting of the PSAA on 14 December 2017.
4	Accounts Payable Audit	An audit of the Accounts Payable for the past 6 financial years by an external organisation to take place	Executive Director, Finance Services	March 2018	Liaison have undertaken the audit review and have identified less than £10k of payments over the 6 year period which are potential duplicate payments. This is against creditor payments of around £200m over the period. Liaison are now contacting suppliers to obtain refunds and will take their fee from monies returned.
5	Business Rates Audit	Further review of transitional relief processes / arrangements	Executive Director, Finance Services	March 2018	Audit will be undertaken before 31 March 2018.
6	Public Services Network (PSN) compliance	Ensure PSN compliance during 2017/18 including progressing any actions identified as a result of the 2016 audit	Executive Director, Central and Community Services	March 2018	ICT are rectifying health check recommendations as outlined in August 2017 by NTA monitoring our external penetration testers and will submit a compliance document to the Cabinet Office during November.
7	Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance	Respond to issues identified during the 2015 PCI audit	Executive Director, Central and Community	March 2018	Issues outlined in the 2015 audit have been resolved. ICT are in the process of preparing for the 2017/18 audit, which is to take

	Item	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Status (Complete or add notes)
			Services		place at the end of October / early November 2017.
8	Risk Management	Embed revised arrangements for production of the Corporate Risk Register	Executive Director, Central and Community Services	March 2018	Responsibility for supporting production of the Corporate Risk Register transferred to the Policy, Performance and Personnel team from 1st April 2017. Prior to this work was undertaken with the officer who formerly held this responsibility to ensure a smooth transition and clear understanding of the work that needed to be undertaken was obtained. The first update to the register under the new arrangements was successfully reported to Audit Committee in May. The second update was reported to Audit Committee in November 2017.
9	Review of Ward Boundaries (Review by Local Government Boundary Commission for England)	Ensure active participation in the review in order to ensure the best possible evidence based outcome for West Norfolk	Executive Director, Central and Community Services	March 2018	The review was completed by Members and officers and agreed by Council at a special meeting on 31 August 2017 and submitted to the LGBC within their deadline of 4 September 2017. We will now await the considerations of the LGBC.
10	Corporate policies	Introduce arrangements to co-ordinate and monitor the publication and updating of agreed policies	Executive Director, Central and Community Services	March 2018	Work to compile a register of all current policies and a template, with associated guidance, to support policy development going forward is well underway. The new Safeguarding Policy, and forthcoming new Equality Policy, have been developed using this guidance as a trial run of our recommendations. Management Team agreed guidance at the end of the financial year 2017/18.

APPENDIX C: PROPOSED ACTION PLAN FOR THE 2018/19 YEAR

	Item	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date
1	Code of Corporate Governance	Review Code of Corporate Governance and gain Council approval to demonstrate good governance.		December 2018
2	Scrutiny changes	Implementation of recommendations from Scrutiny review 2017/18.		March 2019
3	Baseline Personnel Security Standard	Completion of review.		March 2019
4	Business Continuity	Testing arrangements and refresh of the business continuity plan.		March 2019
5	Corporate policies	Implement new arrangements including update to intranet, refresh of policy register and application of template to policies developed during 2018/19.		March 2019
6	Cultural prospectus	Consideration of governance issues regarding new arrangements to access funding.		March 2019
7	General Data Protection Regulations	Roll out of training programme and completion of e-learning package.		March 2019
8	Service manager development programme	Completion of programme by Cohort 2		Summer 2018
9	Review of Ward Boundaries (Review by Local Government Boundary Commission for England)	Ensure active participation in the final stage of the review in order to ensure the best possible evidence based outcome for West Norfolk		December 2019
10	Equalities Policy	Delivery of implementation plan including training for officers and members.		March 2019
11	Retention and Disposal Policy and Schedule	Update the Retention and Disposal Policy and Schedule.		March 2019
12	Data Quality Policy Statement and Strategy	Review of policy and strategy to ensure conformity with the GDPR and emerging UK legislation.		March 2019
13	Review Of Contract Standing Orders	Undertake a review Of Contract Standing Orders and roll out updated digital content and training for officers.		March 2019
14	Health, Safety and General Welfare Policy	Review the policy to consider legislative and procedural changes.		May 2018
15	West Norfolk Housing Company Limited	Review the governance arrangements for West Norfolk Housing Company Limited with an objective of being a not for profit organisation.		June 2018