

Workstream:	Risk Maturity
Directions	<p>November 2024: A review of the Authority’s progress to risk maturity and how well its functions and processes enable risk-aware decisions that support the achievement of strategic objectives. Earlier</p> <p>direction: An action plan to achieve improvements in relation to the proper functioning of internal audit, which addresses outstanding management actions and includes the commissioning of an independent review of the internal audit contract and a fully costed plan for establishing an internal audit function that reflects best practice.</p>
Peer Reviews	
Annual Governance Statement 2023/14	<p>Consider internal audit of officer decision-making, update risk management strategg, external review of corporate anti-fraud policies, procedures and practices conduct a review against the LGA’s Improvement and Assurance framework to map current processes of assurance and put in place a more comprehensive management assurance process.</p> <p>Internal audit - stabilise internal audit team, ensure annual audit plan informed by risk, ensure effective escalation procedures, commission independent external quality assurance review</p> <p>Ensure commitment to risk at corporate governance committee</p>
External Reviews	Interim Auditor's Annual Report September 2024: Track internal audit actions

Workstream:	Culture and Workforce	
Directions	November 2024: A high-performance culture programme to rebuild trust between staff and the Authority, to include the development of a comprehensive workforce strategy focused on development, retention, and permanent recruitment.	
Peer Reviews	<p>September 2024 Equality Peer Review:</p> <p>permanence of the leadership team to provide stability for the organisation. proposed operating model some clear commitments on inclusive recruitment approach to staff progression including work shadowing, coaching, and mentoring approach to staff progression including work shadowing, coaching mentoring that will enable more staff from diverse backgrounds to progress. Consider the feasibility of reverse mentoring for senior staff. Provide accessibility passports to help disabled staff move more easily between roles and directorates.</p>	<p>Confirm the Build into the Set out an Set out an</p>
Annual Governance	Strategic workforce plan at corporate and directorate level, focused on skills and knowledge gaps, performance management, including appraisal	
External Reviews	<p>Interim Auditor's Annual Report September 2024:</p> <p>permanence of the senior leadership team.</p>	maintain the

Workstream:	Governance
Directions	<p>Earlier direction: An action plan to achieve improvements in relation to the proper functioning of democratic services</p> <p>Earlier direction: An action plan to achieve improvements in relation to the proper functioning of the scrutiny function Implement a programme of cultural change to rebuild trust between officers and members</p>
Peer Reviews	<p>The committee must be disciplined about its work programme and apply strict prioritisation to select what it will scrutinise and leave out. This requires clear rationale and self-discipline to avoid being overwhelmed by issues that claim to be essential to recovery. To be more effective in budget scrutiny, this requires early engagement, planning and resources to be meaningful and effective. The relevant Cabinet member should attend every CISC meeting and be the focal point of scrutiny questioning and accountability. Clarity around the Cabinet member and officer role would be useful to ensure the meeting focus is clear. Members need to ensure they build their own understanding of the issues in front of them, do some independent research and spend time preparing for the meeting itself. The committee need to be wary of being swayed by issues which are arising as areas of concern amongst councillors, even if they are affecting multiple wards. In the short term, the focus must be on recovery and transformation even if this is to be exclusion of other issues. Allocation of 40% financial recovery, 40% transformation and 20% wider issues is suggested. Appointments and performance are a matter for Group leaders, however it is suggested that appointments are made after careful consideration of suitability and capacity. The newly formed corporate officer team needs to ask how scrutiny will play a full and active part in the development of the corporate and financial recovery plan and the next phase of transformation. The scrutiny function should be more integral and given higher corporate priority. Reports and information should not be overburdening or too technical. To be effective scrutiny members need the appropriate tools. The committee needs to strengthen its recommendations and feedback to Cabinet and its tracker system needs to be more closely monitored to ensure that there is follow-through and accountability for the recommendations. There is a need for clarity around the statutory duties regarding health, crime and disorder and education scrutiny.</p>
Annual Governance Statement 2023/14	<p>Develop democratic governance:</p> <p>Build cross council ownership</p> <p>Improve report clearance</p> <p>Make better use of Lead Members and Directors meetings possible internal audit of officer decision making Develop Use</p> <p>scrutiny and audit and corporate governance committee</p> <p>LGA tools to support member development</p>
External Reviews	

Workstream:	Digital, data and technology
Directions	<p>November 2024: An appropriately resourced digital strategy that supports effective business operations and links to the Authority's future operating model.</p> <p>direction: An action plan to achieve improvements in relation to the proper functioning of the Authority's IT.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Earlier</p>
Peer Reviews	<p>March 2024- Digital 360</p> <p>The Council has made some progress in improving its core infrastructure and technology, leading to it being more resilient and some progress in developing core IT processes.</p> <p>Members see ICT as a key element of the transformation journey and are keen to align business and ICT transformation. With only a fraction of the ICT modernisation budget left, there needs to be serious consideration as to how improvements are funded beyond 2024/25. The focus on foundational ICT projects have been necessary to create stability, however there is limited evidence of truly transformative digital activity that changes outward-facing outcomes.</p> <p>The Recovery and Transformation Board provides some centralised governance function, but individual services are responsible for their own transformation journeys which has led to a disjointed approach.</p> <p>There is an absence of a corporate focus on customer experience and data or a realisation of the wider digitalisation outcomes such as participation, data, connectivity, partnerships, or digital inclusion. Volatile reorganisations have led to a loss of knowledge and skills. For success, there needs to be a greater clarity of purpose, demonstrable commitment from senior leaders, learning and development support to build knowledge and skills to change ways of working and technology must not be considered in isolation of people skills and process changes</p>
Annual Governance Statement 2023/24	<p>Adopt a Data Strategy, approved at a member level, and ensure that data is used appropriately, consistently and effectively and retained in accordance with legal requirements.</p> <p>Ensure digital technology is embedded into future operating model.</p> <p>Ensure appropriate governance structure to ensure ICT is embedded into transformation programme and service improvements and that there is an effective prioritisation process to ensure prioritisation on those projects with the biggest impact on staff, residents and to support financial recovery.</p> <p>FOI - devise timescale for conducting self-assessment utilising ICO FOI toolkit and report findings to A&CG Committee.</p> <p>FOI self-assessment toolkit ICO</p> <p>Review of use of any Artificial Intelligence software, ensuring appropriate policies and systems in place to manage legal and ethical considerations.</p> <p>Conduct a review of information published against the Government's Transparency Code.</p>
External Reviews	

Workstream:	Evidence based decision making
Directions	<p>November 2024: Improving the systems and processes to enable better and evidence-based decision making, including enhancing the data and insight functions, undertaking benchmarking.</p> <p>Earlier direction: take steps to enable better and evidence-based decision making, including enhancing the data and insight functions to enable better evidence-based decision making</p>
Peer reviews	
Annual Governance Statement 2023/24	The Council needs to keep its performance indicators under review and ensure that it is benchmarking performance against national indicators and statistical neighbours. It also needs to ensure that performance is focused on outcomes and there is effective analysis of performance and that this is feeding into risk management and used as an assurance tool
External reviews	Interim Auditor's Annual Report September 2024: Track and report KPIs aligned to Council Plan. Develop approach to benchmarking.
Workstream	Crosscutting
Directions	<p>Prepare, agree and implement an Improvement and Recovery Plan to the satisfaction of the Commissioners, with resource allocated accordingly.</p> <p>This may include or draw upon improvement or action plans prepared before the date of these Directions.</p> <p>The plan is to set out measures to be undertaken, together with milestones and delivery targets against which to measure performance, in order to deliver rapid and sustainable improvements in governance, finance and commercial functions, thereby securing compliance with the best value duty. There must be a focus on deliverable milestones within six months. Earlier direction: To report to the Commissioners on the delivery of the Improvement Plan at six monthly intervals, or at such intervals as the Commissioners may direct, and adopt any recommendations of the Commissioners with respect to the Improvement Plan and its implementation.</p>
Peer Reviews	September 2024 Equality Peer Review: Establish a corporate equalities board chaired by either the Chief Executive or the Leader to oversee
Annual Governance Statement	
External reviews	Interim Auditor's Annual Report September 2024: devise a transformation programme to set out how the Council will exit intervention and become a best value council.

Workstream	Crosscutting
Workstream:	Community and resident engagement
Directions	November 2024 direction: Improve resident and public engagement.
Peer Reviews	<p>April 2024 LGA Peer Review Communications Develop the communications strategy to ensure that it supports the organisation’s key priorities. The communications strategy needs to be updated once the corporate plan has been updated with a clear set of priorities. Going forward, communications should be driven by organisational priorities rather than those of individual departments.</p> <p>The communications team should identify a set of interim communications priorities for the next six months. These should be agreed with the Chief Executive and should enable the communications team to focus their work on priority areas and to manage demand on the service.</p> <p>Produce a weekly forward planning news Grid. This should be included as a standing agenda item for CLT each week and should be shared with the Leader and lead members.</p> <p>Continue to improve internal communications. Agree a set of strategic priorities for internal communications content and review the format for the programme of staff roadshows.</p> <p>Update the corporate narrative - once the corporate plan has been updated with a clear set of priorities. The council’s approach to communications is being hindered by the lack of a single story for the organisation.</p> <p>Work with partners to co-create a Slough place narrative. There is a desire from partners for the council to do more in the place leadership space.</p> <p>Set a timetable to undertake a follow-up residents’ survey. Data from the initial residents’ survey should be used as a baseline to measure future improvements in resident perceptions.</p> <p>Pause the decision to delete the Senior Digital Content Officer post from the communications team. Deleting this post would have a detrimental impact on the team’s ability to produce digital content in the future.</p> <p>Carry out a formal communications skills audit and implement a training and development plan to support new ways of working in the communications team.</p> <p>Introduce a digital communications platform. The council should introduce a digital approach to communicating with its residents. This can include segmented newsletters, consultations, and further development of social media. This will provide innovative ways to grow audiences along with the constant measurement of data to see which content and channels are most effective for different audiences. This should be funded by reprioritising existing communications budgets.</p> <p>2024 Equality Peer Review:</p> <p>Ensure all communications are in plain English (and then add appropriate translation tools)</p> <p>Ensure that there are varied engagement platforms for different communities.</p> <p>Establish a clear vision for community engagement through the target operating model where members have a clear leadership role as</p>

<p>Annual Governance Statement 2023/14</p>	<p>Resident engagement – Lead Officer – Will Tuckley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adopt Resident Engagement Strategy, setting out expectations on participation, resident experience and digital inclusion. ➤ Build programme to rebuilt trust with communities, including transparent, public reporting to members on resident survey results with action plan on improving satisfaction levels. ➤ Ensure prompt responses to recommendations by LGSCO, including any learning in annual report to Audit and Corporate Governance Committee. ➤ Conduct self-assessment of complaints processes against LGSCO new Complaints Code and include findings in annual report to A&CG Committee in Autumn 2024 <p style="text-align: right;">September 2024: Equality Peer Review: Establish a strategic partnership/compact with the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) and other partners to enable more honest conversations to happen.</p>
<p>External Reviews</p>	

Workstream:	Community and resident engagement: Partnerships
Directions	
Peer Reviews	
Annual Governance Statement 2023/14	<p>Ensure that each statutory partnership has clear terms of reference, approved strategies and appropriate action plans in place to meet strategic aims, represent best practice and meet its statutory requirements.</p> <p>Ensure there is public reporting to members on effectiveness of partnerships.</p> <p>Review approach to transparency for partnerships, with an expectation as a minimum that each partnership produces a public annual report and considers whether to publish reports and minutes for meetings.</p> <p>Consider commissioning external reviews of statutory partnership on a rolling programme as an appropriate way to provide further assurance</p>
External Reviews	Interim Auditor's Annual Report September 2024:Develop its role within significant partnerships

Workstream:	Evidence based decision making
Directions	November 2024: Improving the systems and processes to enable better and evidence-based decision making, including enhancing the data
Peer Reviews	
Annual Governance Statement 2023/14	The Council also needs a comprehensive Data Strategy to ensure that data is driving decision-making and the organisation has effective resources in place to collect, store and manage its data.
External Reviews	
Workstream:	Target Operating Model
Directions	A new Target Operating Model November 2024 Direction:(TOM) that enables both financial stability and the delivery of core services and priorities. Earlier directions: undertake an assessment of the functional capability of all service areas identifying the gaps in capacity and capability,
Annual Governance Statement 2023/14	Conduct self-assessment of complaints processes against LGSCO new Complaints Code and include findings in annual report to A&CG Committee in Autumn 2024
External Reviews	July 2024 LGSCO letter: Recommends closer oversight of the remedy process

Workstream	Financial improvement
Directions	A refreshed rolling Medium-Term Financial Strategy, Capital Strategy, and Treasury Management Strategy, aligned with the new TOM and transformation plan and demonstrating the Authority's financial sustainability and resilience, over the period of the strategies.
Peer Reviews	
Annual Governance Statement 2023/14	<p>Demonstrable and collective compliance with CIPFA's Financial Management Code.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Workforce plan to response to recruitment gaps within finance directorate and ensure specialist capability within directorate. ➤ Review of systems within Council for recording financial transactions, picking up from Grant Thornton's findings from previous audits and work of Ernst Young in reviewing balance sheet. ➤ Ensure financial management and governance are included in onboarding and manager development programmes. ➤ Costed programme for closing off historic statements of accounts, agreed with DLUHC commissioners and external auditors. ➤ Review process for budget setting and medium-term financial strategy increase opportunities for resident engagement and scrutiny involvement in reviewing financial savings and priorities in accordance with CfGS guidance on financial scrutiny. ➤ Ensure effective systems in place for holding and managing finances for separate companies and partnership <p>Asset disposal and use of physical resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Approve an estates strategy for use of the Council's operational assets, ensuring this is aligned with the Council's new operating model and MTFS. ➤ Increase public reporting on assets disposed of, including those where decisions made under officer delegation. ➤ Review systems in place for record keeping, ensuring compliance with Government Transparency Code and safe retention of property records to inform future decision-making.
External reviews	Interim Auditor's Annual Report September 2024: Review asset disposal programme.

Workstream	Financial improvement: Companies
Direction	<p>November 2024: Re-examining the review by the Authority of their companies that considered the roles and case for continuing with each subsidiary company of the Authority (except Slough Children First), to make proposals in relation to financial viability and improving company governance. Earlier direction: Following the review by the Authority of their companies within six months consider the roles and case for continuing with each subsidiary company of the Authority (except Slough Children First)</p>
<p>Annual Governance Statement 2023/14</p>	<p>Company governance – Lead Officer – Sarah Wilson (SCF), Pat Hayes (other companies), Sukdave Ghuman (trusts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For SCF, closer working between Board, including NEDs, and CLT / Cabinet to ensure better coordination and increased understanding of distinct roles. ➤ For SCF, updates on progress against governance review to be agenda'ed at quarterly strategic commissioning group meetings and any retrograde steps in progress to be reported to A&CG Committee. ➤ For other Council companies, review and report to Asset Disposal Cabinet Committee on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o contractual and governance documentation, o decision-making, o risk and performance reporting arrangements, including financial performance, statutory compliance, including filings of annual reports and accounts and board director performance, o annual business plans for each company. ➤ For trusts where the Council is corporate trustee, review and action plan to ensure effective management and compliance with legal duties, including statutory filings with Charity Commission and management of conflicts of interest.