

Strategy and Improvement

Improvement and Recovery Board

Progress Report
23-Mar-23

Report Owner: Sarah Hayward, ED Strategy and Improvement
Report Author: Strategy and Improvement Team

CONFIDENTIAL

Contents

Section One - Administration.

- Welcome, Introductions & Declaration of Interests. Lead Commissioner.
- Open and Closing Actions. Lead Commissioner / Secretariat.

Section Two - Headiness.

- Headline Commentary. Leader.
- Recovery Combined 'Plan on a Page'. Leader / CEX.
- Directions Progress Summary. Leader / CEX.

Section Three - Directions Summary.





- Avoidance of Poor Governance or Financial Mismanagement & Financial Update (2 & 3a). S151 Officer.
- Asset Disposal Summary (3a). S151 Officer / AD Property & Housing.
- Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Action Plans (3b & 3c). Monitoring Officer.
- Internal Audit Action Plan (3d). S151 Officer.
- Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan (3e). S151 Officer.
- Information Technology Action Plans (3f). ED Strategy & Improvement.
- Culture Change (5). ED Strategy & Improvement.
- Subsidiary Company Review (6). S151 Officer.
- Better Data and Insight for Evidence Based Decision Making (7). CEX.
- Senior Recruitment Update (3g). ED Strategy & Improvement.
- Organisational Structure - Senior Recruitment Update. CEX.

Section Four - Close.

- Future Meetings, incl. Forward Plan. ED Strategy & Improvement.
- Any other Business. Leader / CEX.
- Appendices - Supporting Evidence / Detail.



Open and Closing Actions

Ref	Status	Description of Action	Date Raised	Raised By	Owner	Progress	Date Last Updated	Target Date	RAG
AC-002	Open	Commissioners to set up a working session with a cross-party group to discuss how to implement recovery plans at the same time as running council services.	28-Jul-22	IRB	Max Caller	<p>26/01/23 - Discussion at IRB on whether to do it after the election. This was agreed by those present. Max will put it the calendar for all. Carry over for update after the election.</p> <p>28/11/22 - Pending the availability of approved Recovery Plans against all Directions.</p> <p>29/09/22 - TBC: Original date no longer available.</p>	09-Feb-23	31-May-23	
AC-007	Open	Stephen Brown agreed to take forward work to look into lessons learned from the capability assessments done as part of the 'Our Futures' restructure, including how the organisation who did 'gate one' assessments were commissioned and if scrutiny/audit should be involved in this processes.	29-Sep-22	IRB	Stephen Brown Sarah Wilson	<p>23/02/23 - Expect to be incorporated into Directions Workstream - carry over</p> <p>26/01/23 - This is expected to be incorporated into Directions Workstream</p> <p>20/12/22 - Task and Finish group evidence gathering sessions have been completed and report is being drafted in consultation with the chair.</p> <p>20/12/22 - Findings of Task and Finish Group will be reported to the O&S Committee in January 2023 with recommendations to be made to cabinet and other member forums in January/February 2023.</p> <p>24/11/22 - The O&S Committee has set up a task and finish group to look at the commissioning and contract management processes and this includes looking at how Gate One was commissioned and delivery measured. This follows a lead Member and Directors meeting on a learning lessons report where it was decided not to take this to a formal cabinet meeting, as the learning had been captured and not much to be gained from having a public ...</p>	23-Feb-23	TBC	
AC-014	Open	Pat Hayes to provide Commissioners with trend information	23-Feb-23	IRB	Pat Hayes		23-Feb-23	Before 23-Mar-23	
AC-015	Open	Max wanted to see the transformation and culture change accelerated and asked Stephen Brown and Sarah Hayward to prioritise this and to provide a full report to Cabinet as a matter of urgency.	23-Feb-23	IRB	Stephen Brown Sarah Hayward		23-Feb-23	Soonest, priority	

Open and Closing Actions

Ref	Status	Description of Action	Date Raised	Raised By	Owner	Progress	Date Last Updated	Target Date	RAG
AC-016	Open	Sarah would report on progress at the March Board.	23-Feb-23	IRB	Sarah Hayward		23-Feb-23	23-Mar-23	
AC-017	Open	Claire to expedite getting the invitations done for Paul Moffat, Cllr Ajaib and Max Caller and IRB.	23-Feb-23	IRB	Claire Willerton		23-Feb-23	Soonest	
AC-018	Open	Chair of the audit committee to provide a report to Commissioners	23-Feb-23	IRB	Chair of Audit Committee Cllr Kelly		23-Feb-23	23-Mar-23	

Strategy and Improvement

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Section Two - Headlines

1. Accounts, budget and CTS agreed at Council on 9th March 2023.
2. Progress against the Headline Recovery “Plan on a Page” has been positive over the last period.
3. Getting the basics right in some areas continues to be a challenge, for example the timely production of reports for Commissioners and Members. This will be a key focus of the Culture Programme and supporting streams.

Recovery Combined "Plan on a Page"

Note, RAG status against individual milestones does not represent overall service status

Feb-23 Mar-23 Apr-23 May-23 Jun-23 Jul-23 Aug-23 Sep-23 Oct-23 Nov-23 Dec-23 Jan-24 > Jan-24

Oversight

◆ IRB (Feb-23, Mar-23, Apr-23, May-23, Jun-23, Jul-23, Aug-23, Sep-23, Oct-23, Nov-23)
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (incl. Grant Thornton audit) (Mar-23)
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (Jun-23, Sep-23, Dec-23)

Financial Sustainability

Future Years Budget Exploration & Savings Ideation (Mar-23 to Jun-23)
 2024/25 Draft Budget Preparation (Jun-23 to Sep-23)
 2024/25 Budget Finalisation (Sep-23 to Jan-24)
 S151 Arrives (Feb-23)
 2023/24 Budget Update & Approval (Mar-23)
 2024/25 Budget Update Available (May-23)
 2024/25 Draft Budget (Sep-23)
 Financial Settlement (Dec-23)
 2018/19 Accounts Audit Complete (Feb-23)
 2019/20 Accounts Audit Complete (Aug-23)
 2020/21 Accounts Audit Complete (Nov-23)

Asset Disposal

On-going Asset Disposal Programme (Feb-23 to Jan-24)
 ***Quarterly receipts forecasts to be revised.

Procurement & Contract Mgmt.

Contracts Register Reviews (focussed to ensure up to date and robust, then six-monthly thereafter) (Feb-23 to Jun-23)
 Six-Monthly Register Reviews Start (Jan-24) ◆
 ◆ Mgmt. Framework (Feb-23)
 ◆ Contracts Register on Finance System (Mar-23)
 ◆ KPI's Monitoring (Feb-23)
 ◆ Procurement process mapping (Mar-23)

Subsidiary Companies

Increase Member Oversight (Feb-23 to Mar-23)
 Present and Implement Annual Business Plans for JEH, GRE5, SCF (Mar-23 to Sep-23)
 ◆ JEH, GRE5, SUR Business Plans to Cabinet (Mar-23)
 DISH Review (Jun-23)
 ◆ Undertake and Implement Recommendations for Governance Reviews (Jul-23 to Dec-23)
 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Sep-23)
 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Nov-23)
 Exit from GRE5 & SUR 2024/25 (Dec-23) ◆

Democratic Governance & Scrutiny

P2a – Short Term (incl. CfGS review response) (Feb-23 to Mar-23)
 P2b – Short to Medium Term (incl. improving Member and Officer decision making processes, introductory training) (Mar-23 to Jan-24)
 P3 – Medium to Long Term (incl. improved partnership governance, longer-term planning & decision making) (Mar-23 to Jan-24)
 ◆ Governance & Culture Workshop (Mar-23)
 ◆ Whole Council Elections (Apr-23)
 Agree Member Dev Programme (Mar-23)
 Deliver Member Development Programme (Apr-23 to Jun-23)
 ◆ Post-Election Member Survey (Oct-23)
 ◆ Present Reports on T&F Groups linked to Recovery (Mar-23)
 ◆ Implement new Scrutiny Structure, delivery training and finalise annual work programme (Jun-23 to Jan-24)

Internal Audit

◆ First Tranche of IA Recruitment Complete (Feb-23)
 Transition RSM to In-House Team (Mar-23)
 ◆ 2023/24 Audit Plan available (Mar-23)
 ◆ Finance Board Update on IA way forward (Mar-23)
 Review against PSIAS Standards (Jan-24) ◆

ICT & Digital

Corporate Telephony (Feb-23)
 Updated ICT Strategy (Mar-23)
 Data-Centre Relocation Completes (Apr-23)
 Security and Resilience, incl. DR Improvements (Apr-23)
 Service Management Customer Portal Go-Live (Mar-23)
 Mobile Telephony (Sep-23)
 Service Management – Ph 2 Go -Live (Sep-23)





Mgmt. Structure & Recruitment

Recruitment Process Optimisation (Feb-23 to Mar-23)
 ◆ ED & AD Levels Complete (Mar-23)


Workforce & Culture

P1 - Defining Future & Quick Wins (Feb-23 to Mar-23)
 P2 - Reshaping for Performance (Mar-23 to Sep-23)
 P3 – Optimised Delivery (Sep-23 to Jan-24)
 ◆ Leadership Roadshow (Mar-23, Sep-23)
 ◆ Improved PM (Mar-23)
 ◆ Staff Survey (Apr-23, Jun-23, Jan-24)
 ◆ CLT & Governance Restructure (Apr-23)
 ◆ Q'ly Perf Rep (Jun-23, Sep-23)





Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
1	Functional Capability Assessment	Sarah Hayward	Dean Tyler		01-Dec-22		=	14/10 - Service plans have been completed, which will address gaps in capability. These are continuing to be iterated to ensure coherence across services and alignment with the corporate plan. SLT will act as the governance body for the service planning. Next steps are to develop reporting arrangements for monitoring progress in delivery, and ensure lessons for next year are captured.
2	Avoid Poor Governance or Financial Mismanagement	Steve Mair	Steve Muldoon / Liton Rahman	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	Continuous		=	28/10 - Extensive finance business plan completed March 2022. Developed a medium and long term financial planning framework. Implemented changes to obtain best value for money. Ensuring financial implications of decisions are understood. Improving capacity, capability and culture to enable future success and monitoring of progress through the Finance Action plan. Embedding strong Financial Governance and risk management. Further improvements in Governance and Culture across the council will also contribute towards the delivery of this direction.
3a	Financial Sustainability Action Plan	Steven Mair	Steve Muldoon / Liton Rahman	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-29		=	13/10 - The Finance action plan covers 10 years in detail from 2015/16 to 2024/25 and is supplemented by a 14 year active financial model (to 2028/29). Key elements are: Accounts, Assets sales, Capitalisation direction, Revenue budgets, Borrowings, MRP, DSG, Internal audit, Risks and mitigations Finance structure and Directions/recommendations from DLUHC, GT, CIPFA, Directions. The plan is regularly updated.
3b	Democratic Governance Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Leader	01-Dec-23		=	<p>09/03 – Updates to a number of workstreams this month as preparation for the election, May AGM, new member cohort, updated constitution, new scrutiny arrangements, induction etc move into their final stages. This workstream’s relationship with the culture change programme is becoming clearer as the project environment continues to mature, making it easier to spot and make use of interdependencies.</p> <p>17/02 - The action plan is progressing, with two key governance culture workshops held with the extended CLT in January and February, facilitated by Bethan Evans. Actions from these sessions are being reviewed for addition to the plan. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p>10/02 - Project Support Officer recruitment is underway to assist with planning / tracking.</p> <p>20/01 - The action plan is progressing. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p>17/11 - Democratic governance action plan updated and reported to Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 17th November as part of wider update.</p>







Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
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3c	Scrutiny Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee	01-Dec-23		=	<p>09/03 – The council’s most robust ever Budget Scrutiny process concluded in this period and the member Survey and a Scrutiny Annual Review workshop have provided opportunities for members to reflect on the year as it draws to a close. Annual Report and Commissioners’ one-year report will be received at the last O&S meeting of the year on 22 March.</p> <p>17/02 - Excellent feedback from all quarters at the conclusion of the T&F groups pilot, providing an excellent evidence base and lessons learned for next year’s new ways of working. The action plan is progressing, with the second meeting of the member working group on scrutiny taking place on 22 February to continue defining the detail of next year’s arrangements. There were no applicants to the advertised Scrutiny Officer post despite a full programme of advertising in appropriate trade media. The post is to be re-graded and re-issued. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p>10/02 - Project Support Officer recruitment is underway to assist with planning / tracking.</p> <p>20/11 - 20/01 - The action plan is progressing. A Project Support Officer has been requested, and will be provided in the near future to help consolidate and deliver plans.</p> <p>17/11 - Scrutiny action plan update and reported to Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 17th November, as well as separate report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on</p>



Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
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3d	Internal Audit Action Plan	Steven Mair	Mike Thomas	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-23			<p>05/12 - Pre 21/22 internal audits - there are now 269 actions or 97 per cent completed from a total of 276 actions. There is a concerted management effort to complete the remaining recommendations which are rated low. For the 21/22 internal audits - there are now 105 actions or 36% completed from a total of 288 actions. A further 51 or 20% are not yet due for completion. As per the direction, the existing service has been reviewed and a fully costed option appraisal for an in-house internal audit function has been completed. Recruitment advertising completed on 25/11/22 and 25 applications have been received for the 5 posts. Interviews are being scheduled before Christmas 2022 with appointments expected before March 2023. 16/02 The new Head of Fin Gov, Internal Audit, Counter Fraud, Risk and Insurance began work with the Council on 3 Feb, Audit Manager starts on 13 /3 and Senior Auditor on 14/4. Two internal auditors need to be recruited or sourced via an agency or consortium. The new team will transition from the current suppliers RSM in the next three or four months. The Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 is being drafted between RSM and the new in-house team. Concerted efforts are being made to respond to and complete all 22/23 internal audit reports. There are 135 internal audit recommendations from 2021/22 that need to be actioned of which 15 are rated high priority. These have been shared with Department Leadership teams for action and follow up will continue in the coming months. The new Internal Audit team will</p>
3e	Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan	Steven Mair	Clare Priest	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	12-Jan-23			<p>28/02 - Forward planning for 2023/24 financial year has been completed with all directorates, using the contracts register as a key source of information. Training sessions for staff continue, 95 officers have been trained to date. Process mapping in procurement to externally validate processes and procedures has commenced, excellent level of engagement across all directorates. Working with local partnerships on development of a contract management framework and establishment of a contract management assurance board.</p>





Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
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3f	Information Technology Action Plan	Stephen Brown	Simon SharkeyWoods	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	11-Jan-23			<p>03/03 - Telephony project commenced and the contact centre and IT ServiceDesk have migrated to the new technology. Resourcing pressures increasing due to contract staff resignations and limited progress on permanent recruitment. The Housing Management System project is taking significant effort from the team but changes to the project team are planned to improve governance and transparency.</p> <p>07/02 - Our Technology Operations Manager and Project Support Officer have started with the team and are supporting staff with progressing modernisation works. The ICT & Digital strategy has commenced its passage through governance before being presented to Cabinet in March.</p> <p>28/12 - ICT & Digital update report discussed at Cabinet and warmly received. New strategy for ICT & Digital Services that is capable of supporting the ongoing change taking place in the Council, will be presented back to Cabinet in first quarter of 2023. Technology Operations Manager recruited and will be joining in January 2023.</p>
3g	Suitable Officer Structure and Scheme of Delegation	Stephen Brown	Sarah Wilson (MO)	Leader	01-Oct-22			Please see direction 8.
4	Improvement Plan Monthly Reporting	Sarah Hayward	Tony Wisken	Leader	01-Nov-23			<p>09/02 - Work continues to increase the quality and depth of reporting, particularly to ensure at outcomes focus. The continued rollout of tools and guidance from the Transformation Team is supporting these efforts.</p> <p>20/01 - Reporting and compliance continues to improve. Further work is required to ensure all updates are provided in a timely manner and are of the appropriate depth / quality.</p> <p>24/11 - Feedback from the Nov IRB on the revised reporting approach was positive. Minor points of feedback have been reflected in the Dec materials. Further work will be required to align the various Action Plans to a common approach.</p> <p>14/10 - First new style reporting with improved content and evidence produced for the Oct-22 IRB.</p> <p>22/09 - Initial draft produced for review with Improvement and Recovery Board.</p>

Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
5	Culture Change	Stephen Brown	Sarah Hayward	Leader	31-Dec-23			<p>10/03 - 'Concept on a Page' agreed with Stephen Brown. Approval to be sought at Mar IRB by Commissioners to ensure our thinking is aligned. Plans continue to develop, however progress across all streams is being made, but the reporting needs to be improved.</p> <p>09/01 - Deemle Brain, the new Programme Manager has started as planned. Formal Programme definition and planning is now happening to ensure the work progresses in a coherent manner with all key stakeholders aligned.</p> <p>18/01 - Programme Manager to lead on Cultural Change expected to start w/c 23/01. Workstream level plans continue to develop.</p> <p>01/12 - Briefing by Nick Kemp has taken place with SLT / CLT on 30/11.</p> <p>14/11 - A consultant, Nick Kemp, has been appointed to support the Programme. Scoping of key activities is currently being progressed.</p>
6	Subsidiary Company Review	Steven Mair / Sarah Wilson	Carmel Booth	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	02-Apr-23			<p>20/12 - Agreement from leader to extend terms of reference of cabinet committee to include companies, SCF governance review update presented to December Audit and CG Committee, SCF articles of association reviewed and due for approval January cabinet, JEH, GR5 and SCF annual business plans to be presented to cabinet by end of FY. I would tentatively suggest this could be green, but we have not made progress on DISH, but should have done by April. Maybe we should wait for the business plans to go through and the committee to receive its first report.</p> <p>05/12 - Update given to commissioners and elected members with timescale for formal cabinet reporting on each council as part of annual business planning. Of the eleven companies, six have been shut, four are currently being very actively managed, one, low risk, will follow in 23/24 (DISH). Capital programme reduced by c £65m, capital receipts of circa £50m will be generated</p>

Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
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7	Evidence Based Decision Making	Sarah Hayward	Sarah Wilson	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	02-Apr-23			<p>09/02 - First draft of Data Strategy created. Due at CLT in March.</p> <p>20/12 - Data and insight elements incorporated into democratic governance action plan. Lessons learned incorporated into member level reports, including asset disposals, complaints and procurement reports. Progress updates being taken to formal member meetings to demonstrate progress against strategic priorities, with first progress update taken to Asset Disposal Cabinet Committee in December.</p> <p>16/11 – Following the Commissioner review meeting, the Data Strategy and Governance Board met to scope actions for 2023. The first milestone will be writing and sign-off of a Corporate Data Strategy. The key messages are included in the slide pack. Budget discussions remain on-going and whether additional investment can be identified will determine if the council can pursue a Growth/Transformative path or a Foundations/Incremental path in responding to this Direction in 2023.</p>
8	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment	Commissioners	Stephen Brown		31-Mar-23			<p>03/02 - ED for Strategy and Improvement has been appointed. This was the last remaining vacancy in CLT.</p> <p>20/01 -Recruitment of the S151 has been completed and two deputies is in progress. Director of Children's Services has been appointed and has started 16th January. Two interim AD have been engaged in Property and Housing. ED Strategy and Improvement interviews taking place at the end of January.</p>

Strategy and Improvement

Improvement and Recovery Board

Section Three – Directions Summary

2023/24 Savings Delivery Risk Assessment (figures in £'000s)

As @ 16-Mar-23	Saving Totals		Deliverability RAG Assessment					Saving Mitigations		
	Original (Baseline)	Total so far (excl. Non-Deliverable)	Non-Deliverable	Red (no credible plan)	Amber (at risk)	Green (on track)	Delivered	Agreed Sustainable	Agreed One-off	Proposed
Adults	5,688	5,688	0	0	763	4,925	0	0	0	0
Childrens	805	805	0	0	305	500	0	0	0	0
Strategy & Improvement	1,823	1,823	0	0	0	1,823	0	0	0	0
Finance	7,506	7,506	0	0	0	7,494	12	0	0	0
Place	3,700	3,700	0	0	0	3,680	20	0	0	0
Housing, Property & Planning	750	750	0	0	0	750	0	0	0	0
Cross-Council	2,150	2,150	0	750	200	1,200	0	0	0	0
Total Slough Savings	22,422	22,422	0	750	1,268	20,372	32	0	0	0
			0.0%	3.3%	5.7%	90.9%	0.1%			



Movement from Previous Period	0	0	616	604	12
Previous Period	0	750	1,884	19,768	20

£750k in red relates to the Strategic Commissioning Review for which an external consultancy has just started their review and will report end April. Plan development will follow.

1. Accounts, budget and CTS agreed at Council on 9th March 2023.
2. Contract received from DfE for £27m historic debt. Signed and back with DfE awaiting their signature. Likely to be public 16th March 2023.
3. Key focus now has to be delivery of all savings from 1st April 2023, or other planned date where applicable.

The priorities for the Asset Disposal Programme over the next month include:

- Driving for best bids for the sites that are currently being marketed and secure the approvals necessary to move forward with transactions.
- Issue instructions for a third tranche of sites to be marketed.
- Generate wider investment interest in Slough, including a 'Sitematch' event which is being planned for 19 April.
- Progress the Estate Strategy work to identify further disposal opportunities and to help clarify the size of the retained portfolio, moving forward.

Progress

1. Continued pressure at CLT level to improve timeliness of report writing, now supported by RAG-rated corporate schedule.
2. Review of constitution has commenced and is in progress to inform review at annual council.
3. Member Survey results have been shared with key officer teams and work is underway to identify new actions etc – will be shared with Members at rescheduled 6 April Standards Committee.
4. Proposed Member development and induction plans drafted for rescheduled 6 April Standards Committee.
5. Contributing to revised staff induction programme with key governance / political environment content.
6. Independent remuneration panel appointed and convened for 15 March.
7. Proposed schedule for 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' governance training reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group.
8. Reviewed Significant Officer Decision-making guidance and streamlined publication criteria (for inclusion in review of constitution), re-circulated to Extended CLT.
9. A forward schedule for the management of Asset Disposals is being developed in order to assist with the workflow of those decisions.

Next Steps

1. A report on the independent remuneration panel will be made to February / March Council for endorsement and approval of their Scheme of Allowances recommendations when received.
2. Report Member Survey baseline results to Standards Committee 6 April.
3. Report Member development and induction plans to Standards Committee 6 April.
4. Extended CLT session on member survey, scrutiny annual report and member induction, 22 March.

Progress

1. Annual Review and Work Programming Workshop held 2 March, shaping the Scrutiny Annual Review to be received by committee 22 March.
2. Member Working Group on Scrutiny (set up by Council) has completed its meetings, with decisions made about the shape of scrutiny next year, for final review by email and referral to the Constitution Working Group and Council.
3. Member Working Group on Scrutiny has agreed core Terms of Reference for next year's Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, providing focus to next year's work (to be published for reference in Scrutiny Annual Report at 22 March O&S Committee).

Next actions

1. Extended CLT item to review Scrutiny Annual Report – emphasis on peers feeding back on the benefits of officers involving themselves in T&F activity, with lessons learned.
2. Constitution redrafting is now under way to bring Member Working Group on Scrutiny's recommendations to reality via the Constitution Working Group and Council (AGM).
3. Final O&S meeting of the year – 22 March – to review Commissioners' one-year letter and DLUHC response, as well as scrutiny annual report.

A new Internal Audit team has been recruited and the 'Head of' has been in post since 3rd February 2023.

Pre 21/22 internal audits:

- There are 3 actions (out of 257) rated as medium or low priority outstanding with actions in place to complete these in the near future.

21/22 internal audits:

- Actions completed as at end of February number 152 or 56 per cent of the total due, with a further 41 or 13 per cent not yet due. A concerted effort is being made by CLT to close the remaining 120 actions that are overdue.

22/23 internal audits:

- 12 reports have been finalised and a further 6 reports are in draft and being responded to by management. A further 75 actions have been raised for 2022/23 from these reports. 7 actions are overdue and 15 complete.

23/24 Internal Audit Plan

- A draft plan is going to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 14 March 2023, this will be finalised by the new in-house team in the coming months.
- Reports on progress of implementing recommendations are made to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, Risk & Audit Board, Finance Board and CLT Assurance meetings.

Contracts register is being used as a business as usual tool in forward planning procurement activity, this includes consideration of longer term procurement activity required for high value, high risk contracts. It has been used to develop the forward plan/contracts over £180k report for April Cabinet.

Utilising existing IT systems for the contract register – implementation on Agresso due to be complete by the end of June 2023

The training programme on the council's contract procedure rules continues and reflects the revised rules approved by Council in November, 95 officers have been trained to date.

Moved away from relying on expensive consultancy support, by initiating recruitment to a permanent in-house team, engaged a cheaper consultancy to support specialist procurement where needed and to plug short term gaps in resources.

Note, for detailed Action Tracker, refer to appendix.

Further key development activities

1. Implement the contracts register on the council's finance system – by June 2023 (slight delay due to onboarding of managed service provider).
2. Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management. This is being done with the contract management pioneer programme– from January 2023.
3. Process mapping procurement - focus is on governance to provide the council with external validation on its processes and to make recommendations on improvements – February to March 2023.
4. Establishment of contract management assurance board to drive best practice in contract management . As part of this process, the contract register steering group will be disbanded and the project ended as the project has met its aims and objectives. A lessons learned review will be undertaken in April 2023.
5. Ensure KPI's are meaningful and monitored effectively – from January 2023.
6. Programme of continuous contracts register reviews to ensure the council is getting the best value for money – from September 2023 and six monthly thereafter.
7. Implement the actions in the procurement and contract management strategy that have not yet been undertaken, throughout the 2023/24 financial year.
8. Report went to February Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the Contracts T&F Group recommending improvements to contract management. Recommendations also reported to Cabinet on 27 February.

The ICT & Digital Team Strategy and Plan

1. The new strategy for ICT & Digital has completed the rounds of review before being taken to Cabinet in March. Commissioners have fed back that the paper needs to be stronger on corporate control of ICT & Digital to ensure that there is minimal duplication and increased impact for any investments made. This has now been incorporated into the text.
2. The strategy will help us move to the vision of providing a trusted digital space where our communities can find the help they need from a range of organisations, often enabling them to solve issues for themselves.
3. Most importantly, the strategy is designed to be flexible enough to accept and welcome change. The opportunity provided by new technologies and/or new ways of working should be exploited more quickly and enable Slough to adapt without major disruption.
4. Some difficult decisions will be required around what we prioritise for improvement and the team will continually engage with CLT and members to ensure that the work being undertaken by the team is aligned to areas of greatest need and impact for residents.

Current activity and next steps

1. Seek approval of the ICT & Digital Strategy at Cabinet.
2. Continue to work through the high volume of work in the modernisation programme. The housing management system project has now moved to ICT & Digital and continues to be high risk and will take significant focus and resource. New telephony services will continue to be rolled out (ICT ServiceDesk and Contact centre complete), and the new IT service management system for taking support and service requests will be implemented in March.
3. Continue to focus on three core areas that require tight control. These are; audit actions, risk management, and budgeting. New tools have been established to actively manage these areas and the output from them will be shared via the teams monthly service reporting cycle from now on. This reporting is shared with the ED for Strategy & Improvement and the lead member for ICT&D.
4. Continue work on a new standard build for end-user devices that is based on standard, business-class devices that have long-term support by the manufacturer. (Dell devices have been selected and newly elected members will receive these in May. We are working with current members to agree the way these are configured).
5. Continue to assess options for simplifying support process and resourcing for Adults and Children's Services. AD CDIO met with both EDs this week and will develop a proposal to improve this area during March.

1. A concept on a page has been developed, and is shown on the next slide. **We are looking for endorsement by Commissioners.**
2. The Chief Executive has discussed the proposed new driving purpose for the council – i.e. increasing healthy life expectancy – with staff at recent roadshows.
3. Workstream plans continue to develop, however this is not preventing the delivery of defined milestones.
4. Development of the Corporate Plan is progressing as planned. This will be ratified following the May elections.
5. Member feedback from a recent survey has given us a baseline against which to progress and measure. Communication (written and verbal) and Leadership remain concerns with Members.
6. A draft staff survey, supported from the LGA, has been received and will be refined prior to launch.
7. Improved staff engagement through roadshows, vlogs, ‘getting to know you’ sessions with the Chief Exec are progressing well. Visibility and transparency is increasing, but too early to see the impact.
8. “Change Champions” - role profile being validated and will soon be appointed.

Why do we want to do this and what's included?

Background and Opportunity

Slough's corporate culture was identified by Commissioners as not providing the operating conditions for serious failures in decision making to be identified and addressed. The culture within both Member and Officer groups were cited as being dysfunctional (Jim Taylor Report 2021).

In addition, staff were seen to be demotivated and disempowered, leading to operational risks associated with attrition, performance and recruitment. Both Council and employer brands were cited as opportunities for improvement, where the council had lost purpose and alignment of services aimed for residents.

Objectives and Benefits (Vision)

1. A Council whose culture promotes and supports effective decision making for residents.
2. Promote and improve healthy life expectancy of residents.
3. A Council that is fiscally astute and sustainable for the long-term.
4. A Council that manages its performance effectively.
5. Attracts the best people to work with and within the Council, retaining and growing their contribution.
6. Is sufficiently agile and informed, incl. data, to adapt to changing demands, and the priorities of the administration of the day.
7. Promotes cross agency and cross silo working where this improves Council or community outcomes.

Scope

1. Cabinet Members.
2. All elected membership.
3. Executive Officer group.
4. Operational Leaders and Managers.
5. Staff.
6. Service delivery resources.
7. Contribution from residents, partners and other borough stakeholders.
8. Trade Unions and Equalities group.

What are the outcomes and what impedes progress?

Deliverables / Outcomes

1. A shared vision / intention and behaviours from the Cabinet and Executive teams.
2. Cabinet and executive teams exhibit good and agreed behaviours as part of a culture that is continuously evolving.
3. SBC makes decisions informed around priorities.
4. Induction programme that promotes the culture and purpose of SBC.
5. Budgets that monitored, managed and met.
6. SBC is a good employer, investing in its people, and its reputation as an employer and partner is improving.
7. Changes to services are well managed and deliver measurable results.
8. All colleagues have, and know they have a voice.
9. An environment where Officers and Members can be successful.

Constraints and Risks

1. The prevailing culture prevents positive culture change.
2. There is insufficient priority given to engaging in cultural change.
3. Effective availability of resources (time / human) to deliver the change agenda.
4. There is a lack of agreed and consistent leadership behaviours.
5. Some existing Officers and Members may be unable / unwilling to make the necessary adjustments.
6. The ongoing presence of Commissioners and their impact on culture, however unintended. Officers and Members need to be ready to lead the organisation without Commissioner support.
7. Poor systems, processes and contracts.

Assumptions and Dependencies

1. Cabinet, CLT & Senior organisational leadership own the cultural change narrative and journey.
2. The culture will be described within a future narrative that frames behaviour against the Councils contribution for the needs of the residents and community (purpose).
3. Commissioners will need to be engaged throughout, to ensure their expectations / needs are met, and that progress is demonstrated.
4. Resident and partner engagement will be key to ensure their needs are understood and to demonstrate how the organisation is changing for the better.

How, by whom and when will it be delivered?

Governance and Approach

1. Cultural change will be facilitated by the Corporate Leadership Team and will act as the Programme Board.
2. The delivery of the cultural tasks and projects will be managed through programme disciplines.
3. Progress against Plan, incl. 'Transition States' will be reported to Commissioners through the Improvement & Recovery Board.
4. Members will be updated through governance reporting and briefings.
5. Regular Highlight Reports, in email form, will be issued to the primary Programme Stakeholders.
6. Change readiness and culture changes will be reported to CLT.

Key Stakeholders and Participants

Function: Strategy and Improvement
Change Group: Transformation
Exec Director: Sarah Hayward
Cabinet Member: James Swindlehurst
Sponsor: Stephen Brown
Prog. Manager: Deemple Brain

Scheduling, Costs and Savings

Target Start: Dec-22
Target End: Dec-23
Delivery Cost: £TBC
Savings Target: £TBC
Commentary: No direct savings are anticipated from the Culture work, however being fiscally astute and delivering a sustainable Council for the long-term are key benefits.

1. GRE5 reporting going to Cabinet on 20th March 2023.
2. Other, non SCF, company business plans drafted and will be at Cabinet in the new financial year.
3. NWQ sale agreed at Cabinet 7th March 2023, with completion and exchange imminent.

1. Work has continued to develop the Slough Insights Pack, which will be used to support decision making across the council.
2. This was used to inform a workshop on the corporate plan on 28th February, which was an early opportunity for senior leaders to review the plan's strategic priorities.
3. The pack is being finalised. Key highlights will be discussed at the March roadshows and the full pack will be shared on Insight shortly.
4. The outcomes of the LGA residents' survey are being shared with the council from w.c.13/03, which will also be used as part of the evidence base for the corporate plan.

Improvement & Recovery Board Calendar

Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3	1 2 3		1 2 3 4 5	1 2
9 10 11 12 13	6 7 8 9 10	6 7 8 9 10	3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10 11 12	5 6 7 8 9
16 17 18 19 20	13 14 15 16 17	13 14 15 16 17	10 11 12 13 14	15 16 17 18 19	12 13 14 15 16
23 24 25 26 27	20 21 22 23 24	20 21 22 23 24	17 18 19 20 21	22 23 24 25 26	19 20 21 22 23
30 31	27 28	27 28 29 30 31	24 25 26 27 28	29 30 31	26 27 28 29 30

Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
	1 2 3 4			1 2 3	1
3 4 5 6 7	7 8 9 10 11	4 5 6 7 8	2 3 4 5 6	6 7 8 9 10	4 5 6 7 8
10 11 12 13 14	14 15 16 17 18	11 12 13 14 15	9 10 11 12 13	13 14 15 16 17	11 12 13 14 15
17 18 19 20 21	21 22 23 24 25	18 19 20 21 22	16 17 18 19 20	20 21 22 23 24	18 19 20 21 22
24 25 26 27 28	28 29 30 31	25 26 27 28 29	23 24 25 26 27	27 28 29 30	25 26 27 28 29
31			30 31		

Publish final papers for IRB	9:00am to IRB Administration	Improvement & Recovery Board	Monthly, usually the 4th Thursday
IRB Papers due for CLT	12:00pm to CLT Administration	CLT to pre-approve IRB papers	Wednesday preceding IRB
		IRB Updates and Papers due	12:00pm to Strategy & Transformation

Forward Plan

Function	CLT Member	Cabinet Member	Initiative / Description	Apr (27/04)	May (25/05)	Jun (22/06)	Jul (22/07)	Aug (24/08)	Sep (28/09)
Finance	Steven Mair	Cllr Robert Anderson	2023/24 Budget Deliverability					Deep Dive	
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Streamlined Recruitment Process			Update			
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Operating Model						
Finance	Steven Mair	Cllr Robert Anderson	Revenue and Benefits						
Strategy & Innovation	Sarah Hayward	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Culture Change Programme	Deep Dive			Deep Dive		
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	Cllr Harjinder S. Gahir	Scrutiny	Deep Dive					
Finance	Steven Mair	Cllr Robert Anderson	Internal Audit		Deep Dive				
Finance / Democratic Services	Steven Mair / Sarah Wilson	Cllr Robert Anderson	Subsidiary Company Oversight		Deep Dive				
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Democratic Governance			Deep Dive			
Strategy & Improvement	Sarah Hayward	Cllr Zaffar Ajaib	Information Technology				Deep Dive		
Finance	Steven Mair	Cllr Zaffar Ajaib	Procurement and Contract Management	Update					
Chief Exec	Stephen Brown	Cllr James Swindlehurst	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment						
Children's	Sue Butcher	Cllr Christine Hulme	SCF Business Plan SCF Improvement Plan DfE / SEND Response		Deep Dive				

Strategy and Improvement

Improvement and Recovery Board Appendices

Contents

- Recent Governance Decisions Taken in Support of Improvement and Recovery
- Previous IRB Decisions Taken
- Subsidiary Company Review - Additional Information
- Evidence Based Decision Making - Examples
- Corporate Risk Register - Extract
- Key Service Updates

Recent Governance Decisions Taken in Support of Improvement and Recovery

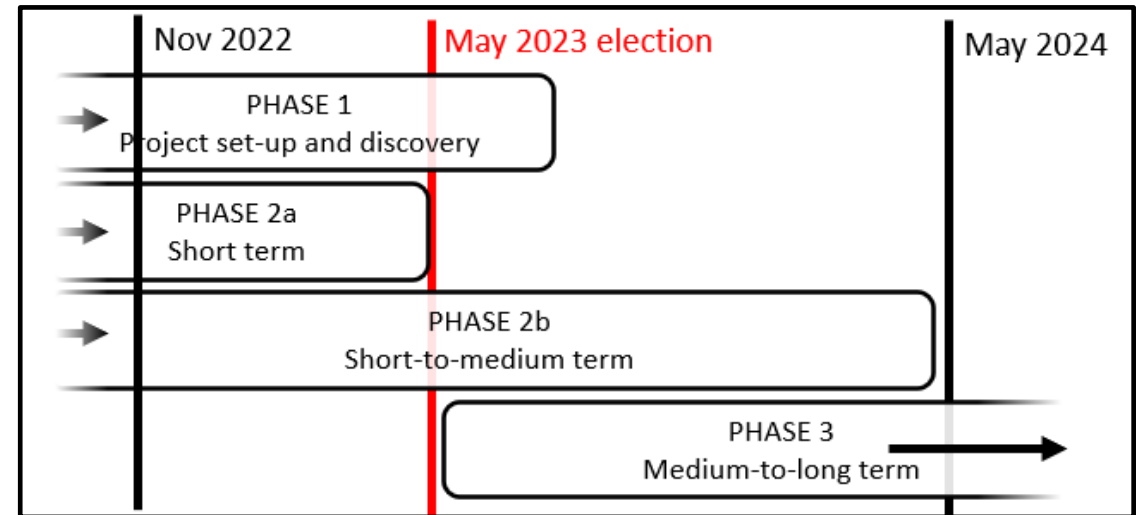
Ref	Report & Subject	Date	Chief & Contact Officers	Portfolio	Key Decision	Summary of Decision	Related Direction and Contribution to Recovery	Link to Document
GD-030	Cabinet Fees and Charges Review	16-Jan-23	Steven Mair ----- Steve Muldoon	All	No	<p>(a) That the proposed fees and charges for council services (Appendix 1) be agreed, except those marked 'for noting only – non-Cabinet approval', for implementation from 1 April 2023.</p> <p>(b) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial, following consultation with the relevant Executive Director and relevant Cabinet member, to implement any increases prior to 1 April 2023 on an exception basis.</p> <p>(c) That delegated authority be given to the relevant Executive Director(s) to amend the</p> <p>....</p>	3a Financial Sustainability Action Plan: Increase Council income, supporting overall sustainable finances.	https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74353/Report.pdf

Recent Governance Decisions Taken in Support of Improvement and Recovery

Ref	Report & Subject	Date	Chief & Contact Officers	Portfolio	Key Decision	Summary of Decision	Related Direction and Contribution to Recovery	Link to Document
GD-031	Cabinet Asset Disposals	16-Jan-23	Steven Mair ----- Fin Garvey	Financial Oversight and Council Assets	Yes	(a) Agreed to the Council sale of the Adelphi, Slough with the bidder named in Appendix 2 to the report; and (b) Delegated authority to the Executive Director of Property and Housing, in consultation with the Lead Member for Financial Oversight and Council Assets and the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial, to negotiate the terms of and enter into the contract and any associated documentation in connection with the disposal consistent with the disposal report and Heads of Terms appended at Confidential Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.	3a Financial Sustainability Action Plan: Support the continued disposal of assets, reducing the overall debt servicing costs of the Council and in turn supporting financial sustainability.	https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74517/Ad%20Cabinet%20Paper%20on%20Adelphi%20Disposal%20Final.pdf
GD-028	Cabinet CT & Digital Update – Progress and next steps for the proper functioning of IT at SBC	19-Dec-22	Sarah Hayward ----- Simon SharkeyWoods	Customer Services, Procurement and Performance	No	Noted the update to the modernisation and remediation activities being undertaken by the ICT & Digital Team and understand the ongoing risks, issues and challenges as the work continues.	3f Information Technology Action Plan: Plan for the improvement of Information Technology services	https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74083/Report%20and%20Appendices.pdf
GD-029	Cabinet Remodelling of Children Centres	19-Dec-22	Sue Butcher ----- Richard Tedd	Children's Services, Lifelong Learning & Skills	Yes	Authorised a 6 week consultation on options for change to the Council's Children's Centres, including proposals to reduce the number of buildings and reduce the amount of childcare provision being directly provided by the Council.	3a Financial Sustainability Action Plan: Reduction in the costs associated with the provision of childcare	https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s74170/Report.pdf

Timescales

- Further project and resource planning will be part of phase 1.
- While this is underway, the timescales given are fairly broad. All phases are expected to overlap.
- This action plan incorporates the plan for addressing direction 7 on evidence based decision making, as well as aspects of direction 3.g.
- The phases below will also be used within the Scrutiny Action Plan.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
1. Set up formal project management and reporting arrangements	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

Actions to date:

- Set up Corporate Governance Working Group – now meeting monthly to review action plans and governance issues arising
- CG Working Group formally requested Project Support Officer from PMO – recruitment underway

Next steps:

- Align plan, materials and reporting with whole-council approach to recovery action planning and reporting
- Confirm programme/project management resource – recruitment underway

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
2. Continuous ongoing development of this plan including fostering a culture of looking to best practice across the sector, amongst members and officers.	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

Actions to date:

- Two workshops with all Democratic Services staff to check and develop the plan
- Plan discussed monthly at Corporate Governance Working Group
- Launched Member Survey to enable benchmarking
- Ongoing work to align this plan with (or within) the culture change workstream
- Member survey completed, setting baseline and helping to inform development of this plan (to be reported to Standards in March)
- Actions identified from extended CLT governance culture workshops

Next steps:

- Formulate overall philosophy of governance in the authority, expressed through corporate documentation
- Assess baseline and benchmark via survey of staff and members
- Schedule a LM&Ds discussion on the existing 'policy statement on corporate governance', with a view to collecting feedback for an update, to be agreed by appropriate Member forum and full council.
- Review: governance framework (CIPFA/SOLACE guidance), outstanding internal audit actions, Business Continuity and emergency planning arrangements, and major corporate systems and their business impact / risks etc.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
3. Continue to improve forward planning of decision-making, including early engagement with members and other stakeholders	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

Actions to date:

- Internal corporate schedule produced and reviewed weekly at CLT and regularly at Lead Members and Directors – now RAG-rated by Monitoring Officer, Legal and Democratic Services to indicate progress against expected clearance timescales.
- Visits by Head of Governance and Scrutiny at all DLTs to conduct horizon scanning and further embed use of corporate schedule as business planning tool
- MO has met all ADs and EDs to understand the causes of governance issues and set clear expectations.
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team about governance expectations and timescales, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of ‘Bitesize Leadership Learning’ on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group

Next steps:

- Create and deliver further Slough-specific training on working in a political environment, for senior leaders and frequent report authors
- Report Member Survey findings to Standards Cttee in April along with Member Development Strategy and Plan informed by the results

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
4. Improve effectiveness of, and compliance with, formal decision-making processes	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

Actions to date:

- Senior officer training programme to improve report writing
- Clear timescales and clearance processes published and promoted throughout council
- Cabinet reports reviewed at CLT and LM&Ds
- *Guide* to cabinet and committee lead-in dates published and publicised internally
- Lead members briefed and presenting reports at Cabinet meetings
- Commenced RAG-rating of cabinet report compliance with corporate timescales for SLT/CLT monitoring
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team about governance expectations and timescales, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group
- Reviewed Significant Officer Decision-making guidance and streamlined publication criteria (for inclusion in review of constitution), re-circulated to Extended CLT

Next steps:

- Improve quality of Cabinet and Committee reports.
- Implement data recording in Democratic Services to understand frequency of late reports by directorate.
- Review whether single member decision-making should be introduced.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
5. Further improve quality of formal reports	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

Actions to date:

- Officer training to top three tiers on report writing
- Improved clarity and timeliness of clearance processes and discussion at CLT re: cabinet reports
- Improved early briefing of lead members
- Discussions underway with IT about options for bringing formal report workflow into a document management system such as the one currently being procured.
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team about governance expectations and timescales, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group

Next steps:

- Deliver further bite-size sessions about report-writing for lead officers
- Explore options for using a document management system to improve document handling, version control, sign-offs etc
- NB further improvements in process, timeliness and engagement (elsewhere in plan) will further improve quality

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
6. Establish agreed and documented expectations and consistent processes for commissioner decisions	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

Actions to date:

- Bespoke training session on essentials of local government decision-making for top three tiers
- Feedback captured from above event and actions discussed and agreed at CLT
- MO and governance officers routinely meeting with new senior staff, to conduct bespoke governance induction.

Next steps:

- Review induction processes and introduce session on 'governance in a political environment' for new starters
- Review management and senior officer development programme to incorporate support for officers who have been promoted within the organisation
- Devise a framework for commissioner decision-making and advice and guidance.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
6. Establish agreed and documented expectations and consistent processes for commissioner decisions	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

Actions to date:

- Meeting between chief of staff, former MO and COO
- Discussion with other local authorities under statutory intervention for example frameworks

Next steps:

- Working with the commissioners and their chief of staff, devise a framework for consistent, robust and transparent commissioner decision-making, advice and guidance.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
7. Ensure effective introduction to local government decision-making and processes as part of induction are in place for all new starters and those promoted including senior officers.	Monitoring Officer	Phases 2a & 2b

Actions to date:

- Bespoke training session on essentials of local government decision-making for top three tiers, feedback captured and actions discussed and agreed at CLT.
- Updated all-staff induction programme in development with new content on governance and political environment

Next steps:

- Review induction processes and introduce session on ‘governance in a political environment’ for new starters.
- Review management and senior officer development programme to incorporate support for officers who have been promoted within the organisation.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
8. Ensure effective and respectful member officer relations	Monitoring Officer	Phases 1, 2a & 2b

Actions to date:

- Training session for top three tiers on member officer relations protocol
- Externally facilitated workshop between CLT and lead members
- Review of member casework system
- Report to Standards Committee on various matters on ethical framework, including member complaints
- Meetings between statutory governance officers and leaders of groups
- Governance culture workshop for top two tiers with external facilitator using CfGS toolkit – sessions on 10 Jan and 7 Feb
- Member survey has closed with 24 responses (over 50%) and the process of sharing this with the organisation and with members has commenced (see elsewhere in the plan)

Next steps:

- Analysis and next steps with outputs from Member survey (extended CLT item 22 March, Standards Cttee 6 April)
- Link to wider culture change action plan

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
9. Assess and improve how the council's real situation compares to its sense of self	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

Actions to date:

- Training and self-assessment for Audit committee members
- Training and annual report for scrutiny members
- Externally facilitated workshop between CLT and lead members and regular lead member briefings and meetings
- Annual report on complaints data taken to Audit and Corporate Governance
- CLT Assurance meetings to review performance data
- Completed first of two workshops with external facilitator on CfGS' seven characteristics of good governance with officers
- Member survey findings to be reported to Standards Cttee in February
- Two governance culture workshops held in January and February facilitated by Bethan Evans, with actions arising for inclusion in various improvement plans.

Next steps:

- Assess and incorporate actions from governance culture workshops into action plans
- Review: how officers and members monitor and act on data about the council's performance; approach to resident / public participation in decision-making; options for gathering residents' views on satisfaction with services and how members self-assess their performance.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
10. Improve organisational awareness of Slough's particular political dynamics	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

Action to date:

- Training on local government decision-making for officers and feedback report to CLT, agreeing next steps.
- Member-Officer relationships and culture development programme underway
- Circulated update/reminder to extended leadership team with key links to resources relating to Slough's political environment, following recruitment of a number of new senior leaders.
- Developed draft programme of 'Bitesize Leadership Learning' on governance issues, reviewed by Corporate Governance Working Group

Next steps:

- Governance and political awareness built into officer induction programme
- Leadership development to include political awareness and skills – potentially with input from ADSO
- Consider programme of encouraging senior officers to observe formal meetings (and feed back?)
- Consider how to use induction, (and perhaps the Lord Mayor's office) to create more opportunities for members and officers to meet and mingle informally.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
11. Revise directorates' internal schemes of delegation in line with recently reviewed Scheme of Delegations	Chief Executive / Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

Action to date:

- Reviewed and amended Scheme of Delegation to Officers, including delivering training to senior officers on delegations
- Introduced internal schemes of delegation per directorate, including consistent sections on financial, HR and procurement delegations
- Amended contract procedure rules to set out thresholds for officer decision making
- Amended financial procedure rules to set out thresholds for officer decision making

Next steps:

- Update internal schemes of delegation to reflect new senior officer structure
- Implement annual review of internal schemes
- Review thresholds and procedures for significant officer decision making

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
12. Improve Member Development	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

Actions to date:

- Bespoke training for scrutiny members
- Bespoke training for Audit and Corporate Governance Committee members
- Welcome induction event and handbook for new members
- Briefings with chairs and vice-chairs of scrutiny
- Briefings in advance of formal member meetings

Next steps:

- Agree 4-year member development strategy, designed with input from councillors – Standards Cttee 6 April
- Agree annual member development plan at Standards Cttee 6 April, aligned to above strategy

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
13. Improve provision of information to Members	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2a

Actions to date:

- Review and communication on member casework, agreed with leaders of groups
- Weekly member bulletin rebranded and relaunched
- Briefings with lead members and scrutiny members
- Confidential budget papers available to scrutiny members in advance of budget scrutiny
- Rebranded member bulletin and incorporated Customer Service data infographic

Next steps:

- Produce a position statement on what information councillors can expect to be provided with and when.
- Include training on availability and functionality of Insite in induction programme
- Consider creating intranet or SharePoint pages dedicated to information for Councillors
- Implement regular programme of 'all member scrutiny briefings'
- Corporate push to improve consistency and completeness of officers' email signatures and phone book entries
- Each Executive Director-Lead Member partnership to have a re-set conversation to define what performance information is shared and reviewed, and at what frequency.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
14. Deliver accurate and efficient all-out election and maximise the intended benefits of the change to four yearly elections	Returning Officer	Phase 2a

Action to date:

- Council decision to move to whole council election
- Boundary review
- Polling station review (underway)
- New Returning Officer and senior leads for election management
- Proposals in development by Strategy team relating to a longer-term strategic planning and delivery cycle linked to the four-year municipal cycle
- Progress towards delivery of election in line with project plan monitored regularly by RO, with additional campaigns relating to voter ID and voter fraud built in as appropriate.

Next steps:

- Identify and maximise the intended benefits of the change to four yearly elections

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
15. 2022/23 Annual review of Policy Statement on Corporate Governance	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

Actions to date:

- New Policy Statement on Corporate Governance based on CIPFA framework approved by full council.

Next steps:

- Conduct desktop analysis of organisational governance, making links to Annual Governance Statement

16. Review and reprioritise use of Democratic Services Team’s limited resources	Monitoring Officer	Phases 1, 2a & 2b

Actions to date:

- Recruitment of senior interim lead for governance and scrutiny, including fulfilling statutory scrutiny officer
- Commencement of recruitment to scrutiny role vacancy
- Advertised Scrutiny Post and other vacancies in the Democratic Services team - appointed two internal posts but no applications for scrutiny role.
- Have made conditional offer to external candidate for Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager.

Next steps:

- Up-grade and re-issue scrutiny officer advert.
- Review: service provision with a view to streamlining offer, support for partnership meetings and review cost-effectiveness of Statutory Appeals service.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
17. Ensure document storage and retention arrangements are robust	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

Actions to date:

- Review of deeds by legal team, including advice on deeds packets
- Review and plan for storage of existing physical deeds

Next steps:

- Review circumstances around deeds and storage of legal documentation by SBC in-house.
- Review arrangements for electronic deeds storage.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
18. 2022/23 Implement annual review of constitution	Monitoring Officer	Phases 2a & 2b

Actions to date:

- Rolling review of the constitution based on needs
- Consulted Extended CLT on whether any further elements of the constitution require to be updated
- Review underway.

Next steps:

- Conduct minor review of constitution for 2023 AGM with a view to more significant rolling review thereafter

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
19. Strengthen community engagement in the council's recovery and improvement	Monitoring Officer	Phase 2b

Actions to date:

- Confirmed re-subscription to Citizen Space as the single online tool used by the council to consult and engage with residents.

Next steps:

- Review community participation and engagement in local democracy / decision-making

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
20. Improve how the council looks to the future to assure its own viability and set its decision-making priorities	Monitoring Officer / ED for Strategy	Phases 2b & 3

Actions to date:

- New five year corporate plan linked to recovery themes
- Proposals in development by Strategy team relating to a longer-term strategic planning and delivery cycle linked to the four-year municipal cycle

Next steps:

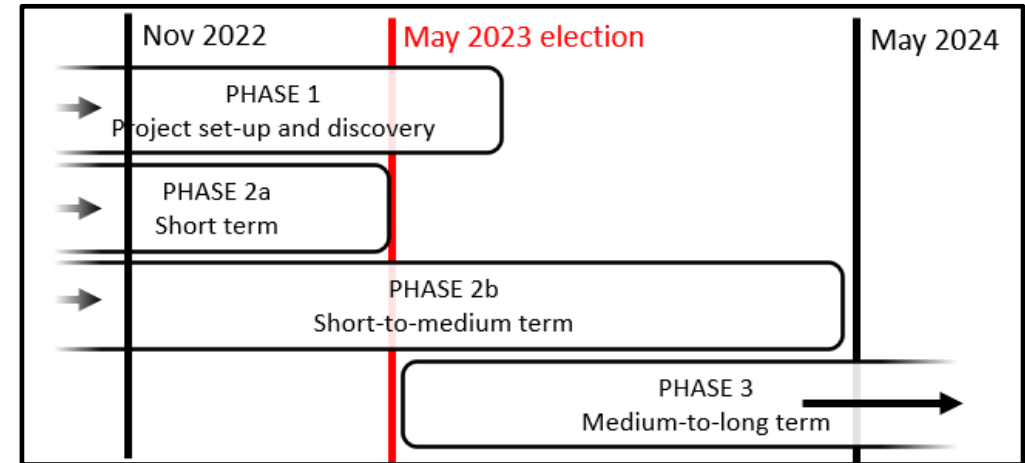
- Build cycle of corporate planning into corporate schedule and communicate the intended pathway to the organisation
- Long-term options for future viable governance of the authority explored and assessed
- Refresh the service planning cycle

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
21. Improve quality of local (external) partnerships	Monitoring Officer	Phase 3

- Review partnerships governance
- Implement changes that improve efficiency and effectiveness of partnership arrangements

Timescales

- Further project and resource planning will be part of phase 1.
- While this is underway, the timescales given are fairly broad. All phases are expected to overlap.
- The same phases are used within the Democratic Governance Action Plans.



Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
1. Set up project management and reporting arrangements	Monitoring Officer	Phase 1

- Align plan, materials and reporting with whole-council approach to recovery action planning and reporting.
- Seek programme/project management resource.
- Created informal 'Democratic Governance Improvement Group' chaired by Monitoring Officer – meeting regularly to review action plans and consider emerging issues.
- Member survey issued to assess baseline satisfaction with, and attitudes to, scrutiny.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
2. Respond to CfGS review in relation to reorganising scrutiny arrangements	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

Actions to date:

- Commissioned Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to undertake a review of scrutiny function. This has been published, endorsed by Council and member training delivered
- Established which member/s will lead on the development of the scrutiny function
- Held two meetings of the Member Working Group on Scrutiny (January and February) and agreed key principles for the new design of scrutiny.

Next steps:

- Final review of detail e.g. role profiles for key members, to be reviewed virtually by Group Leaders
- Constitutional changes recommended by Member Working Group on Scrutiny to be considered by Constitution Member Working Group, for agreement by Council at AGM 2023.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
3. Formulate a cohesive work programme for scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

Action to date:

- Work programming events held in-year with officer and member involvement
- Launch of three T&F Groups to conduct focused work and a work programme for the remaining panels focussing on Budget/savings, improvement and recovery
- Annual Review and work programming workshop held 2 March – attended by 10 members. Output forms the backbone of the Scrutiny Annual Report and may be considered by next year’s scrutiny members.
- Member Working Group on Scrutiny has agreed core Terms of Reference for next year’s Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, providing focus to next year’s work.

Next steps:

- Continue to develop a cohesive work programme for scrutiny, tightly focused on scrutiny of the council’s plans for financial and organisational recovery and progress against those plans, in line with the CfGS recommendations.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
4. Re-instate regular all-member briefings outside of formal committee settings	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

- Proposals to be made for regular programme of ‘all-member scrutiny briefings’ to improve all members’ knowledge and connection to the business of the council, increase scrutiny bandwidth and take ‘for information/learning’ items out of committee setting allowing better prioritisation of impactful items, as part of review of scrutiny.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
5. Elevate and support the role of the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

Action to date:

- Statutory Scrutiny Officer now meeting weekly with Chair of O&S Cttee
- Chair of O&S Cttee now periodically invited to Improvement Board meetings with Commissioners, Cabinet and senior officers, when O&S is under discussion.
- LGA mentorship reinstated for O&S Chair

Next steps:

- Review the Special Responsibility Allowance attracted by the Scrutiny Chair position and other scrutiny lead roles, via an Independent Remuneration Panel

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
6. Improved mechanisms for holding Cabinet Members to account	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

Action to date:

- Cabinet members invited to present and answer questions at budget scrutiny sessions in February 2023, and invited to receive T&F group reports in public committee meetings (also February 2023).

Next Steps:

- Further review strength of cabinet connections with scrutiny - e.g. regularity of attendance, portfolio updates etc as part of proposals for new scrutiny arrangements.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
7. Recruit resource to vacancies in Democratic Services and Scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 1

Actions to date:

- Recruitment of interim head of governance and statutory scrutiny officer
- Scrutiny role and other democratic services posts have been advertised
- Two internal posts appointed and Manager post offered to external candidate.

Next steps:

- Re-grading of scrutiny officer post via JE panel is underway for re-issue

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
8. Improve the ways in which scrutiny members are kept appraised of forthcoming executive decisions and issues	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 2a

Action to date:

- Significant improvements to early engagement with budget setting
- Regular meetings between O&S Chair and Chief Exec have now commenced.

Next steps:

- Embed mechanism to ensure that scrutiny members are availed of the public Forward Plan of cabinet decisions and are using it to inform their work
- Design effective use of corporate performance management information and KPIs by scrutiny councillors
- Support scrutiny members to understand their rights to access information

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
9. Improve year-round scrutiny of the financial cycle	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phase 1

Actions to date:

- Significant improvements to early engagement with budget setting
- Additional round of finance training and detailed pre-meeting for December round of budget/savings scrutiny meetings carried out on 24th November.
- Three budget scrutiny sessions in February, leading up to final budget scrutiny session 23 Feb
- Whole-year focus on financial management in scrutiny embedded in draft Terms of Reference for next year's Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with guidance from CfGS.

Next steps:

Operation of Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee to include focus on financial cycle.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
10. Deliver sustained programme of Scrutiny member and officer training and skills development	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phases 2a & 2b

Actions to date:

- Training delivered to all scrutiny members taking account of early draft findings of CfGS review.
- Have involved service-based officers heavily in the leadership and delivery of T&F group support, encouraging learning-by doing - excellent feedback about weekly meetings for officer leads of T&Fs to discuss progress and process and thereby share good practice – feeding back to extended CLT 22 February

Next steps:

- Commission the member training proposal set out by Centre for Governance & Scrutiny
- Consider options for co-option in order to bring in exemplars of effective scrutiny to the committee setting
- Deliver further training to lead officers at suitable intervals
- Deliver member training and induction, including about scrutiny and chairmanship, post-election.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
11. Review constitution re: scrutiny rules and practice, including call-in		Phase 2a

- Review of constitution underway re: scrutiny rules and practice, including call-in, for recommendation by working groups to Council at AGM 2023.

Headline action	Owner	Indicative Timescale
12. Improve overall support for Scrutiny Members to continuously improve effectiveness of scrutiny	Monitoring Officer / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Phases 2a& 2b

Actions to date:

- See actions 5, 8 & 10.
- Offered intensive officer support of O&S Chair including regular weekly meetings with the statutory scrutiny officer.
- Pre-meetings more routinely in place for all committees.
- Member Survey and Annual Report has provided opportunities for members to reflect on successes and weaknesses of Scrutiny in 2022-23.

Next steps:

- See action 2 & 10.
- With the support of CfGS, empower scrutiny members to self-evaluate their performance in committee and plan steps towards further improvement.
- Implement system of pre-meetings with facilitated identification of key lines of inquiry for key items

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
IA-001	C	Recruit to new IA Team	Mike Thomas	First round of adverts completed and shortlisting taking place	25-Nov-22	30-Nov-22	25-Nov-22	
IA-003	C	Shortlisting	Mike Thomas	Shortlisting to take place 1 December and 14 December 2022	25-Nov-22	01-Dec-22	14-Dec-22	2 phases of shortlisting in case first round is unsuccessful
IA-002	C	Recruitment advert extension approved	Mike Thomas	Advert extended to 9 December to attract additional candidates	09-Dec-22	09-Dec-22	09-Dec-22	Completed
IA-004	C	Interviews and Assessment centres	Mike Thomas	Interviews and Assessment centres to take place weeks commencing 5 and 12 December	16-Dec-22	16-Dec-22	16-Dec-22	Completed 3 Offers made to Head, Internal Audit Manager and Senior Auditor
IA-005	C	Offer Letters	Mike Thomas	Pre Christmas 2022	31-Dec-22	22-Dec-22	22-Dec-22	Completed
IA-007	A	New In House team commence work	Mike Thomas	Depends on recruitment	31-Dec-22	31-Jan-23	31-Jan-23	Head of IA began work on 3 Feb, Audit Manager begins on 13 March and Senior Auditor on 14 April. Recruitment of 2 Internal Auditors being re-advertised and alternative arrangements being considered
IA-13	A	Failure to recruit In House Team	N/A	Plan B is in place for RSM to continue for 23/24 should recruitment not be successful - it is likely other options will be considered	31-Dec-22	31-Jan-23	31-Mar-23	Not an issue as senior recruitment taken place - completed
IA-008	A	Transition from RSM to IN House team	Head of FG, IA	Depends on recruitment – internal auditor posts will need re-advertising or support through alternative means.	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	During March through to July 2023
IA-10	A	Development of IA approach and launch of new service	Head of FG, IA	Review of approach to consider support for departments and managers	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	This will take place during 2023/24 as the new team sets up and beds in.
IA-11	A	Reduction in historical IA recommendations	Mike Thomas	IA Tracker in place and being utilised to reduce number of IA recs	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	Ambition is to reduce the number and risk rating of IA recommendations on an annual basis
IA-006	G	2023-24 IA Plan	Mike Thomas	Work with RSM and new team to develop and transition a plan for 2023/24	01-Apr-23	01-Apr-23	01-Apr-23	First draft of plan being discussed between RSM and new Head of IA.

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
IA-009		Quality Review of IA work	Head of FG, IA	Review against PSIAS standards to be undertaken within two years of new team starting	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24	Subject to quality of work and recruitment and need to undertake at least every 5 years
IA-12		Positive Head of Internal Audit Opinion	Head of FG, IA	This will be work in progress for a number of years	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24	Significant number of variables that can impact including outcome of External Audit findings; recruitment of a IA team and general response from departments to implementing IA recommendations

Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan

Direction 3.e

Ref	Status	Deliverable or Milestone	Owner	Progress	Delivery Dates		Date Delivered	Additional Comments
					Original	Forecast		
M-004		Deliver contracts register	Clare Priest	28/02 - Contracts register in place and reflects new council structure used forward plan for 2023/24	30-Jun-22	30-Jun-22	30-Jun-22	A lessons learned review will be undertaken on the project in April 23
M-006		Update Contract Procedure rules	Clare Priest	28/02 - Updates approved, along with revised financial procedure rules at full council on 22nd November	22-Nov-22	22-Nov-22	22-Nov-22	Major update to CPR's was done in November 2021
M-002		Develop procurement and contract management processes and procedures, and train staff	Clare Priest	28/02 - Processes and procedures updated to reflect changes to contract procedure rules, training sessions in Jan/Feb2023 to raise awareness and improve governance	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-22	31-Jan-23	Changes to procurement legislation in 2023/24 will necessitate a review of the councils contract procedure rules
M-001		Recruit to vacant posts within the Commercial Team	Clare Priest	28/02 -Posts have been advertised, a second round of is needed for all roles	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23		Resource gaps are being filled by using Human Engine
M-003		Implement contract management system (Agresso)	Clare Priest	28/02 - Moved to Amber due to delays in onboarding new managed service provider which has slipped the completion to beyond the target date	31-Mar-23	30-Jun-23		
M-007		Development of meaningful KPIs and performance data	Clare Priest	28/02 - KPI's includes performance relating to exemptions. Procurement review board tracker has been reviewed.	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23		
M-009		Develop forward plan for 2023/24	Clare Priest	28/02 - Contracts register will be used and form the basis of the forward plan, meetings with directorates completed	01-Apr-23	01-Apr-23		Report being reviewed for April Cabinet
M-005		Develop and implement social value policy	Clare Priest	28/02 - Policy written, working with procurement consultants to implement, including use of best practice examples	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-23		Initial desktop research completed and draft policy written.
M-008		Implement procurement and contract management strategy	Clare Priest	28/02 - Strategy in place, LGA procurement strategy maturity assessment to be undertaken. Implement contract management framework when resources in place	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-24		Predicated on fully resourced in house team
M-009		Process mapping procurement	Clare Priest	28/02 - Focus is on governance to provide the council with external validation on its processes and to make recommendations on improvements	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23		Workshops had an excellent level of engagement across the council
M-010		Contract management framework	Clare Priest	28/02 - Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management. This is being done with the contract management pioneer programme. A contract management assurance board will be establish from April 2023 to drive best practice in contract management.	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-23		

Public Health

- Action: Recruiting to the majority of the Public Health Team currently filled by interims
- Update – following interviews, an initial offer has been accepted for the Substantive Deputy Director of Public Health post. A large number of applications were received for the Public Health Lead and Public Health Officer posts. Interviews are w/c 13th and 20th March but the majority of applicants to date were either not eligible to work in the UK or had no relevant experience at the right level.
- Outcome: Increased stability, reduced cost
- Outcome measure: Substantive team in place
- Related issues/concerns: Currently losing interim staff to longer term interim positions.
- Risks: The public health workforce is small and well-connected and there is some informal feedback that the challenges of working within Slough are well-known and that the remuneration would need to be higher to account for this.

Key Service Updates

Place and Community

- The directorate is stabilising, recruitment to vacant posts has, is and will increasingly enable a return to business as usual.
- We have > 5,000 green waste subscribers and anticipate 14,000 by July 2023. Pressure from the grass cutting season and reduction of capacity in the grey bin, once it goes fortnightly in June, will drive take up.
- Alternate fortnightly collections of grey bin and red bin is on track for 26 June start. Rounds are designed, consultation with staff and unions is underway, a Marketing and Comm's specialist company have been procured and our promotional campaign is about to commence.
- A dedicated technical specialist is in place to tender contracts for Highway Maintenance, Street lighting and Road Markings. Tender processes for Green Waste disposal and DSO Fleet are underway.
- PMO and technical support is in place to enable the delivery of the Place Grant Funded Capital Programme including: Farnham Road, A4 Cycleway, Sponge City Catchments and A4 Safer Roads.
- Parking engineers are preparing 4 Controlled Parking Zone consultations which will be carried out in May 2023. Two further CPZ locations will proceed shortly after.
- Energy was procured on 9 March 2023 until 31 March 2024. The Cabinet "permission to buy if prices fall below a floor price" was triggered and brought a 2023/24 budget saving of £300k providing that we continue to control energy usage.
- **Mitigation for 2023/24 savings shortfalls** of £700k (+ £300k energy saving = £1m) have been identified to offset the potential £473k pressure from CCTV. **If not needed then some or all of this will feed through as 2024/25 savings.**

Place and Community

- Procurement for a new E-Scooter provider is underway
- The work stream to enable the closure of the CCTV on or before 31 December 2023 is ahead of target. It is anticipated that alternative arrangements for Careline and for return of internal CCTV to originating SBC teams will be in place by June/July. Indications are that transfer of public facing CCTV to TVP may be achieved by October/November.
- The 2023/24 operating plan for Libraries is designed, has been communicated to staff and will be implemented on 1 April 2023 including a re-write of the Councils website to ensure consistency between what we do and what we say we will do.
- We have written to Everyone Active setting out our expectations for payment of the 2023/24 management fee. This will come into effect on 1 June 2023 so we will have certainty by the end of Q1.
- Adverts for vacancies in the Housing Regulation and Food & Safety teams are live and once appointed to backlogs can be cleared and continuous improvement in performance will be driven.
- Self Assessment in our Community Learning service (Adult learning) reflects that the service is still operating at a OFSTED good level.
- The new skills and employment hub at the Curve is to be launched in Summer 2023.
- Our rekindled partnership with Norden Farm will bring life back to The Venue at the Curve as part of a successful joint bid for £977k Arts Council Funding over the next 3 years.

Complaints

1. Complaints Handling Task and Finish Group report was well received and approved at Customer & Community scrutiny panel in February and Cabinet in March.
2. Q3 complaint figures have been compiled and disseminated with feedback given to CLT Assurance Board and the wider Senior leadership team in February.

Headlines are for Quarter 3:

- Reduced number of complaints than during the same period last year, with a reduction in the percentage of complaints answered that were upheld.
- Bespoke weekly complaints reports detailing all outstanding casework per service issued to AD's requesting action to close outstanding casework. Services continue to use these reports to respond to complaints.
- The largest proportion of complaints upheld during Jan-23 were : Osbourne's (24%; 7), Revenues & Benefits (21%; 6) and Environmental Services (14%; 4).
- The average number of days taken to resolve complaints has improved over the past year.
- Quality check meetings with services focusing on capturing and embedding learnings from complaints are scheduled quarterly and commenced in January. This is to improve the quality of the investigatory process and outcomes – with a clear focus on continuous improvement.

Key Service Updates - Customer Services

Performance

- Performance in December, January and February exceeded the corporate plan target relating to answer rate of (70%) but has fallen short of the average wait time target of 7 minutes for February - which resulted in a 7.39m average call wait time. This shortfall in performance resulted from the implementation of a new telephony platform which has required staff to be off the phones to be trained on the new system.

	Dec-21	
Calls Received	11,222	10,025
Calls Answered	5,471	7682
% answered	48.80%	76.60%
Average wait time	13:41	06:08

	Jan-22	Jan-23
Calls Received	15,712	13,931
Calls Answered	5033	10709
% answered	32.00%	76.87%
Average wait time	17:09	06:53

	Feb-22	Feb-23
Calls Received	15,712	12,856
Calls Answered	5033	9845
% answered	32.00%	76.60%
Average wait time	17:09	07:39

Performance remains substantially improved compared to this time last year. Recruitment to fill the 18 additionally funded resources has continued to be a challenge and a significant drain on management time. The full compliment of additional resources was reached in Jan 2023 for a very short period of time before 2 resignations reduced the resource level to 16 This underlines the volatility of a workforce with an over – reliance on interims. A business case to extend the additionally funded resources is currently progressing through governance processes.

For March it is anticipated that call volumes will increase by 50-100% (as it does every year due to various end of year peaks). Steps are being taken to a) maximise staff capacity to meet predicted demand and b) work collaboratively with the back office service to support the increase in calls. We expect that the Corporate Plan targets for March will not be met given the anticipated call volumes.

Key activities for the reporting period of March:

- Corporate telephony project, which replaces the contact centre call handling system, has been successfully implemented, with no impact on customers.
- Rationalisation of 18 service specific phone queues to 12. Fewer queues are more cost-effective, and we will explore reducing the number of queues further.
- Council Tax team will release 4-6 staff each morning to assist in taking take calls through the Annual Billing period. Training on the new telephony platform will take place in the next two weeks. Collaborating with the service so that demand can be effectively managed, coupled with effective sign posting for support
- Secondary school offer day of March 1st, has seen an expected increase in calls (generally 1000-2000 more in the early weeks of March) and the service is focusing on responding to the additional calls received.
- Collaborating with Housing Allocations to improve the customer experience whilst backlogs resulting from the NEC system are resolved over the coming quarter. The emergency re-procurement of our Concessionary Bus Pass system continues with the new provider needing to be in place by 1/04/23, to ensure no disruption to this statutory service.
- A corporately led “Customer Service Improvement Group’ is in the process of being scoped with colleagues from Comms, IT & D and Insight for CLT Consideration which will focus on developing 3-5 year customer services corporate improvement plan.

Reablement

1. The Reablement recruitment advertisement campaign concluded however there is delays in the onboarding of the staff this is being worked through with HR. Posts which were not successfully recruited to are be re-advertised.
2. Reablement Roadshows for wider teams are planned through 2023.
3. New stair lift offer following the introduction of the cabinet agreed Housing Assistance Policy went live 1st March.
4. Co-produced staffing rota live with improved utilisation of hours.
5. 23/24 saving methodology agreed and tracking mechanisms in place.

