

APPENDIX 4 – FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM MANAGERS’ ASSURANCE STATEMENTS

Subject	Governance or Operational	Number of responses referencing this feedback out of a total of 20	Feedback Received	How these are being addressed/mitigated
Capacity	Operational	17	Lack of resourcing; staff stretched by extra work; performance and behaviour; recruitment and retention; need to build skills and resilience.	Corporate Management Team and Senior Managers Forum continue to monitor the tight labour market and consider ways in which staff can be recruited, retained and developed. Consideration is also given to ways of working to ensure they are as efficient and effective as possible, along with considering ways of collaboration and partnership working to further mitigate these national challenges.
Hybrid working	Operational	8	Working from home when schools are closed; some staff less productive working from home; need for collaboration space in the offices; need for more bookable rooms and storage spaces.	The council has adopted and implemented a Hybrid Working Policy and managers have been given training on managing remote teams. There are desks in offices which can be booked and staff are reminded of this and encouraged to book if there is a need. With the relaxation of Covid rules, consideration is being given, by the Recovery and Stabilisation programme, to providing more collaboration spaces.
Governance	Governance	6	Codes, rules and policies not understood or universally followed; relaxed controls in response to Covid; projects commencing before full governance arrangements in place (due to lack of clear timetables from central government); lack of knowledge/awareness of procurement and contract rules.	The council provides ongoing training and communication to all staff to ensure compliance. There are also checks in place on work carried out. Reports to Cabinet and committees routinely include legal implications which are drafted by a qualified lawyer. Governance arrangements have been put in place to ensure appropriate oversight of projects.

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Remote/hybrid meetings	Operational	5	Holding remote council meetings; using new technology for hybrid meetings; external partners wanting to meet in person; lack of in-person meetings impacting some funding bids.	Virtual meetings and consultations have been held via MS Teams, which have addressed concerns over being unable to meet in person. IT infrastructure put in place to hold remote meetings and also stream those meetings to the public live (via YouTube), in order to be lawful. Technology has also been put in place to allow hybrid meetings, where the participants can attend in-person or join via the internet.
Retention and disposal	Governance	5	It was noted that a project is underway to address issues but that concerns were noted until the project is completed.	The Business Improvement Through Document Management programme has been identifying the location of paper records and arranging for them to be sorted and, where appropriate, disposed of. It is ensured that new IT systems being purchased have in-built retention and disposal processes. For existing IT systems, document management and disposal modules are being purchased.
Effect of Covid on finances	Governance	5	The responses focussed on the negative impact of the response to the Covid pandemic on income and finances in general.	The financial impacts to date have been managed in a timely and appropriate manner. Early engagement with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, regular return of all financial management information, close monitoring of cashflow transactions, cost controls, regular member briefings and engagements. Transformational changes and solutions to financial shortfalls are in place and are expected to be continue.

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Delegated powers	Governance	4	Perceived lack of understanding; scheme of delegation requires review; needs aligning across councils.	Training and 1-2-1's reinforce the importance of the delegated regime. A review of the scheme of delegation is underway as of April 2022. Scheme of delegations and constitutions continue to be reviewed and aligned to improve clarity.
Members	Governance	4	Giving advice to Members; Member demand on officer time; relationships between officers and members; dealing with complaints around Member conduct.	Training and 1-2-1's reinforce the importance of Members relations and ongoing training and communication to all staff/ members to ensure compliance. Complaints dealt with under Members Code of Conduct with refresher training planned.
Safeguarding	Governance	3	Keeping training up to date; ensuring the number of internal contacts is appropriate; ensuring the safeguarding of a vulnerable member of staff.	There are two online courses for Safeguarding, both of these are mandatory and must be undertaken by all staff. In the area where the number of contacts is low a review of safeguarding contacts is underway
Other	Operational	2	Delay in IT integration leading to extra costs	Work continues to deliver full integration as soon as possible.
	Operational	1	Aging fleet of vehicles with added costs of vehicle hire.	Engaging with Fleet Suppliers to support ongoing Fleet Procurement Plan
	Operational	1	Trade waste affected by closure of eating establishments during lockdown.	This was temporary where these establishments were closed. The situation will be monitored.

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Other	Governance	1	Time pressures associated with providing legal implications for reports to Cabinet and committees.	Reports to Cabinet and committees routinely include legal implications which are drafted by a qualified lawyer. Staff are reminded to pass their reports to Legal as soon as possible.
	Operational	1	Engagement with local groups	Virtual meetings and consultations have been held via MS Teams, which have addressed concerns over being unable to meet in person. IT infrastructure put in place to hold remote meetings and also stream those meetings to the public live (via YouTube), in order to be lawful. Technology has also been put in place to allow hybrid meetings, where the participants can attend in-person or join via the internet.
	Governance	1	Risk of bribery in planning application process	Controls are in place to prevent this risk and the council has an Anti-Bribery Policy.
	Governance	1	Decision making	Decision making is kept transparent by reports presented to Cabinet and committees. These reports contain sections on financial appraisal, legal implications and risk management implications
	Operational	1	Communications internally and externally	Working closely with the council’s press/ communication officer/s, Corporate Management team and colleagues. Various consultations are also carried out. Ongoing staff briefings are in place and the use of other more structured forums such as Corporate Management team, Senior Managers’ Forum, etc. on an ongoing basis. These forums and initiatives are kept under review.

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Other	Operational	1	Fuel costs and shortages	Maintain vigilance and relationships, especially with suppliers.