

## Progress on 2017/18 Gloucestershire County Council's Governance Improvement Actions

AGS Review Reference	Governance matters identified / actions taken	Target Date and Lead Officer	Position as at December 2018
Financial Governance	<p><b>Future Financial Sustainability</b></p> <p>The Council identified savings of £29.3m as part of the 2018/2019 budget setting process. Delivery of this level of savings will be challenging for the Council.</p> <p>A contingency has been set aside in case this is not fully delivered in 2018/2019, although the Council recognises this is not a long term solution.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> To continue to review the arrangements for updating, agreeing and monitoring the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Specifically focusing on the robustness of the financial planning assumptions and arrangements for ensuring the financial projections including future savings are realistic and achievable.</p>	<p>31st March 2019</p> <p>Chief Financial Officer</p>	<p>The Council has a robust process for monitoring budgets and the achievement of savings. This is undertaken monthly and the results reported to every Cabinet. The MTFS is updated annually and as part of this annual review all financial planning assumptions are challenged.</p> <p>In order to ensure the achievement of the savings targets within Adults an Adults Single Programme Board has been established. This meets fortnightly to review progress and take action as required.</p> <p>The Finance Monitoring Report presented to Cabinet in December 2018 reported that the council was on track to achieve 98% of the savings planned for 2018/19. By the half way point in the year 55% of the savings had been achieved.</p>

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Safeguarding Inspection	<p><b>Ofsted Inspection of Children’s Services:</b></p> <p>The Council is being monitored by Ofsted as part of an ongoing improvement plan after an inspection during 2017 rated children’s social care as inadequate. The Improvement Plan is overseen by the Improvement Board comprising of the Leader of the Council, Chief Executive, partner agencies and key officers. The Board is chaired by a Department of Education Improvement Adviser. The structure of the Improvement Board is under review and will be reconfigured by July 2018. The Council has appointed a new permanent Director of Children’s Services, who took up this role on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018.</p> <p>Since the Ofsted report was published in May 2017 the Council has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recruited additional experienced social workers to reduce caseloads;</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Children’s Services</p> <p>Ofsted are due to return to Gloucestershire for our fifth monitoring visit on the 15th and 16th of January 2019.</p> <p>This will give a further indication of the improvements made since the last visit.</p>	<p>The Ofsted Improvement Plan has been refreshed in December 2018. The targets within the original plan have been reviewed and where those targets have not been fully achieved they have been incorporated into the refreshed plan.</p> <p>The purpose of the ambitious refreshed plan is to get Gloucestershire to the point where the service is considered a “good” service, rather than just to the point where the service reaches the point of “requires further improvement to be good”.</p> <p>The plan takes the services well beyond emergence from intervention. The most recent Ofsted monitoring visit happened on the 2nd and 3rd October 2018 and follow up letter suggests that while there is still much to do Gloucestershire is a service which knows itself well and we have a good sense of our strengths and weaknesses and where those weaknesses are evident, there are robust plans in place to improve the service further.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Invested in better technology to reduce the time frontline staff spend on paperwork;</li> <li>➤ Improved the way it monitors quality and performance; and</li> <li>➤ Opened a new public reception for social care and a ‘front door’ for professionals contacting the service.</li> </ul> <p>Work on the above is ongoing.</p> <p>Actions: Ofsted visits on the 16th / 17th January 2018 and 15th / 16th May 2018 noted improvements made, however challenges remain. The Council continues to work with the Department for Education and Ofsted to improve children’s social care services in Gloucestershire. Children’s Services is about to enter the Partners in Practice Programme with Essex County Council.</p>		<p>The biggest challenge to our improvement journey remains the stabilisation of our workforce which is still characterised by significant churn in some parts of the service, particularly at the front end of the business.</p> <p>However, the Senior Leadership Team is now entirely constituted of permanent employees with significant experience and the layer of Heads of Service is now stable with permanent and long serving agency managers. First line Team Managers are also approaching a more stable position with approximately 75% of managers employed permanently. The improving situation with regard to management will create a situation where frontline social workers will feel better supported and therefore more likely to remain with us. Once frontline workers are provided with clear and consistent expectations, support and challenge then the consequent improvement in practice will accelerate further and build on those improvements already secured.</p>

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Director's Assurance Statements	<p><b>Contracting / Commissioning Care Services</b></p> <p>The fragility of the provider market continues to be an ongoing concern and risk. By utilising the lead provider roles within the four rural home care frameworks and introducing the urban dynamic purchasing systems (for Cheltenham and Gloucester), the Council has increased both capacity and competition within the independent home care market.</p> <p>Over the last 12 months there has been a number of successful trials of different ways of working with lead providers, such as the Hospital to Home (supported hospital discharge service), guaranteed hours in hard to reach areas, we have seen the number of care packages being sourced, across health and social care, including end of life, reduced from in excess of 230 to 70 at any one point in time. The Hospital to Home service has seen over 300 people supported home over the winter period from hospital, with only 7.5% of those, requiring ongoing social care support.</p>	<p>Director of Adult Services</p> <p>Please see dates within Actions</p>	<p><b>December 18 Position - Overview:</b></p> <p>Whilst the situation with regards to the provision of Health and Social Care sector provision continues to be both fragile and volatile on a national level, within Gloucestershire we have managed to work with our local providers in a proactive and positive manner.</p> <p>Indeed we are a national exemplar with regards to a significant programme of work focused as securing an increase in the workforce available within our system.</p> <p><b>December 18 Position - Emergency Night Cover:</b></p> <p>The emergency night cover linked to rapid response though diverting a number of hospital admissions. This service was slow to start as the frequency and number of referrals was lower than expected.</p>

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	<p>The hard to reach pilot has seen a reduction in people waiting for packages from c50 to less than 5, waiting just 4 days for their care to start, down from over 24 days.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> A number of further initiatives are underway supporting emergency night cover (commenced April 2018), end of life support (to commence July/August 2018) and a bridging service (to commence June/July 2018) (i.e. existing care not being able to recommence for a number of days), reducing the need for the health and social care system to utilise short term bed based capacity.</p> <p>There is a review of the home care framework underway to address both provider and operational concerns, which will re-engage providers who are currently choosing not to work with us, strengthening capacity and resilience still further.</p>		<p>We have therefore utilised additional capacity from this service to support the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) First Responder Service, providing the ability for GFRS to access personal care should the situation warrant this thereby increasing the potential diversions away from hospital admissions.</p> <p><b>December 18 Position - Bridging Service:</b></p> <p>The bridging service was launched slightly later than anticipated but is now being actively used to support those Service User's (SU's) waiting for Home Care or Reablement at Home. The start date for the service was delayed due to provider failure impacting on Cheltenham, the Bridging service and H2H capacity were utilised to manage the impact of a small company going into administration.</p>

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			<p>Demonstrating whether the service has had an impact on the use of short-term bed based capacity will need to be looked at in relation to the increased demand for health and social care services experienced throughout the 2018/19 financial year as the impact of a wold winter and an excessively hot summer greatly increased demand.</p> <p><b>December 18 Position - Review of the Home Care Framework:</b></p> <p>The review of the home care framework has been aligned to the wider review community-based provision and the need to utilise capacity in a less segregated manner. In June the individual commissioning function for Disabilities was moved into integrated Brokerage which triggered a conversation around the need to widen the review of the home care framework. The work programme now includes alignment of the OP and Disabilities contracts as the first stage of the review.</p>

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			<p><b>December 18 Position - Care Home Market:</b></p> <p>The Home Care provider market continues to be resistant to the idea of payment on actuals and capacity in the market continues to be stretched.</p> <p>The increased demands made on Health &amp; Social care provision over the 2018/19 year meant that any additional capacity achieved through the projects listed above was accessed to meet system pressure demands rather than being allocated in a way that achieved a test and learn environment to facilitate planning for market shaping.</p> <p>This wider piece of work has now been scoped and will be included in the Care at Home strategy.</p>

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<p>Revised CIPFA Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (2018 Edition)</p>	<p><b>CIPFA Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (2018 Edition)</b></p> <p>Audit Committees are a key component of corporate governance. They provide a high-level focus on assurance and the Council's arrangements for governance, managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment, and reporting on financial and non-financial performance.</p> <p>This revised edition updates the core functions of the audit committee in relation to governance, risk management, internal control and audit. This includes new legislation affecting audit committees in combined authorities and updates to regulations and statutory guidance. The updates to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework and associated guidance are also considered for their impact on the work of the audit committee.</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2019</p> <p>Chief Internal Auditor (CIA)</p>	<p>The CIPFA guidance was formally published on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018.</p> <p>The evaluation of the Council's Audit and Governance Committee against the revised guidance is currently in progress and recommendations for improvement will be made where necessary.</p> <p>The self assessment will be finalised in full consultation with all key stakeholders.</p> <p>The Audit and Governance Committee will formally present the key outcomes of the evaluation in their Annual Report to Council, initially to the Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019 and to full Council in May 2019.</p>

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	<p>There are significant changes to the core functions of the committee in relation to external audit, reflecting the new arrangements for auditor appointment and new guidance on ethical standards for auditors issued by the Financial Reporting Council. Both developments require greater attention to be given to this important area.</p> <p>The audit committee role in relation to counter-fraud has also been updated to reflect the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption. The guidance continues to include a strong focus on the factors that support improvement. These include the knowledge and skills that audit committee members require and a focus on where the audit committee adds value.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> The CIA will review the guidance and provide support to the Audit and Governance Committee to evaluate the Committee against the guidance, making recommendations for improvement where necessary.</p>		

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Corporate Governance	<p><b>Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS)</b></p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Since the signing of the 2017/18 Annual Governance Statement a whistleblowing allegation covering probity issues in Fire has been received by the council. This has resulted in an investigation by Internal Audit, which is on-going. On completion of this investigation Internal Audit will report to management outlining recommendations, which will form the basis of an action plan.</p> <p>This action plan and progress against it will be overseen by the Audit and Governance Committee, thereby providing the relevant assurances that these recommendations are being addressed in a timely manner.</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> September 2018</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>The Independent Internal Audit Investigation (Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) report and associated action plan was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee (AGC) on 12th October 2018.</p> <p>Progress against each action is presented by each action owner to the AGC to provide the relevant assurances that these recommendations are being addressed in a timely manner.</p> <p>The action owners will continue to report on the actions to the AGC until all actions have been fully completed to the satisfaction of the AGC.</p> <p>The first progress report will be presented to the AGC on 25th January 2019.</p>