



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 18 OCTOBER 2023
Subject	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2023/24
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Email: Robert.Weaver@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Cheryl Sloan, Business Manager, Governance, Risk & Business Continuity Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report provides the Audit and Governance Committee with an update on progress against the Annual Governance Statement action plan for 2023/24
Annexes	Annex A – Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2023/24
Recommendation(s)	That the Committee resolves to: I) Note the action plan and associated progress updates
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver the highest standard of service• Respond to the climate crisis• Provide socially rented homes• Make our local plan green to the core• Support health and wellbeing• Enable a vibrant economy
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	NA



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To provide the Audit and Governance Committee with an update on progress made against the actions detailed in the Council's Annual Governance Action Plan for 2023/2024.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Audit and Governance Committee is the Committee of the Council charged with overseeing governance.
- 2.2 Regulation 4 of The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 require the Council to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS), setting out the Council's governance arrangements.
3. The draft AGS for 2023/24 was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on 25 July 2023 and is included within the approved Annual Statement of Accounts.

4. MAIN POINTS

- 4.1 There are 11 key actions within the 2023/24 action plan, these include:

- Raising awareness of the new contract procedure rules
- Financial Management
- Risk Management
- Emergency Planning
- Portal Content Management
- Business Continuity
- New HR Policies
- LGA Peer Review & Support
- Review of service delivery model
- Internal Audit Recommendations
- Constitution Review

- 4.2 The plan identifies the specific tasks that will be undertaken in the respective areas of focus and sets timescales for their completion, along with any progress up to October 2023. The Action Plan also includes a RAG rating to show whether the actions are on target, off target but action being taken to ensure delivery or off target and no action has yet been agreed to resolve the situation.
- 4.3 All actions are either 'on target' or 'off target but action being taken to ensure delivery'. Of those which are off target, but with action being taken to ensure service delivery, explanations are provided within the action plan which details why these are off target.



5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 If the Council's governance arrangements are weak then Council is at risk of failing to safeguard the use of public funds. In turn this would lead to poor external assessments, damaging the reputation of the Council. The areas of focus for the 2022/23 financial year identified in the AGS provide a clear set of priorities for the continual improvement of governance and mitigation of risk.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

9. An equalities impact assessment is not required for this report.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

11. There are no climate or ecological emergency implications arising directly from this report.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

- Annual Governance Statement 2022/23:
- Statement of Accounts for 2022/23

12.2 These documents will be available for inspection online at www.cotswold.gov.uk or by contacting democratic services democratic@cotswold.gov.uk for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting.