WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Name and date of Committee	**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 19 MARCH 2026.**
Subject	**ANNUAL GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN 2025/26 UPDATE**
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive. Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Report author	Cheryl Sloan, Assistant Director, Workforce Strategy & Transformation Email: cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report presents the Audit & Governance Committee with an update for the Annual Governance Action plan for 2025/26
Annexes	Annex A – Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2025/26
Recommendation(s)	That the Audit and Governance Committee resolves to: 1. Note the progress update for the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2025/26
Corporate priorities	All
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	N/A

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Audit & Governance Committee is the Committee of West Oxfordshire District Council ('the Council') charged with overseeing governance.

1.2 Regulation 4 of The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 requires the Council to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS), setting out the Council's governance arrangements.

1.3 Every year the Council reviews and updates the AGS. From the AGS, an Action Plan is developed which identified areas for improvement to be delivered the following financial year to further improve the Council's governance arrangements.

1.4 This paper presents the Annual Governance Action Plan 2025/26 with progress updates.

2. RISK REGISTER

2.1 There are 8 key actions within the 2025/26 Action Plan, this includes any carry over actions from the 2024/25 action plan. The actions include the following:

- New service delivery models
- Council Constitution
- Business Continuity
- Procurement
- Local Government Reorganisation
- Service Plans
- Financial Management
- WODC specific policies

2.2 The Action Plan identifies the specific tasks that will be undertaken in the respective areas of focus and sets timescales for their completion. The Action Plan also includes a RAG (Red-Amber-Green) 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. A grey rating shows that the action has been completed.

2.3 All actions are now complete with the exception of Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) and WODC specific policies which are to be carried over to next year 2026/27 and the Financial Procedure Rules which are on target to be approved by this Committee and are elsewhere on this agenda.

2.4 Good progress has now been made with the BCPs. A new business impact assessment tool has been introduced, and managers have been trained in its' completion. Once this is completed, this information will be used to inform a new BCP. It is hoped that new BCPs will be completed by early summer, enabling testing to take place during 2026/27. This action will carry over into next financial year's AGS action plan.

2.5 The majority of WODC specific policies are now up to date, with a few that are under development. An action plan is in place to monitor all policies, renewal dates and completion. This action will also carry over into 2026/27.

2.6 An action plan for 2026/27 is under development and will be brought to the Audit and Governance Committee for approval later in the year.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

6. 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 2025/26 financial year identified in the AGS provide a clear set of priorities for the continual improvement of governance and mitigation of risk.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

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

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

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

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 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 2024/25:
- Statement of Accounts for 2024/25

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