



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 25 JUNE 2026.
Subject	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025/26 INCORPORATING THE ACTION PLANS FOR 2025/26 & 2026/27 AND THE LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2026/27
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council Email: <a href="mailto:andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk">andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Andrea McCaskie, Director of Governance & Regulatory Services (Monitoring Officer) Email: <a href="mailto:andrea.mccaskie@westoxon.gov.uk">andrea.mccaskie@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Report author	Cheryl Sloan, Executive Director, Workforce Strategy & Transformation Email: <a href="mailto:cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk">cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	This report provides the Audit and Governance Committee with an updated Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26 incorporating the Annual Action Plan for 2025/26, an Annual Governance Action plan for 2026/27 and the Local Code of Corporate Governance 2026/27.
Annexes	Annex A – Annual Governance Statement 2025/2026 incorporating the Action Plan 2025/26 and Action Plan 2026/27 Annex B - Local Code of Corporate Governance 2026/27
Recommendation(s)	That the Audit and Governance Committee resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Approve the 2025/26 Annual Governance Statement incorporating the Annual Action Plan for 2025/26 and the Action Plan 2026/27 for sign off by the Chief Executive Officer and the Leader of the Council.</li><li>2. Review and adopt the latest version of the Local Code of Corporate Governance 2026/27 for sign off by the Chief Executive Officer and the Leader of the Council.</li><li>3. Agree to receive updates on progress against the key actions in the Action Plan 2026/27 at future meetings.</li></ol>
Corporate priorities	All

Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Senior Leadership Team – the Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Governance and Director of Place and wider Management Team.

## I. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Audit and Governance Committee is the Committee of the Council charged with overseeing governance.

1.2 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.

## **2. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025/26 AND ACTION PLANS 2025/26 AND 2026/27**

2.1 The AGS is backward looking, detailing the governance arrangements which were in place for the previous financial year (2025/26). This also shows the progress which was made against the Annual Governance Action plan for 2025/26.

2.2 The Annual Governance Action plan, is forward looking, setting out the areas of improvement / focus for the current financial year (2026/27).

2.3 There are seven key actions within the 2026/27 Annual Governance Action plan, four of which have been carried over from 2025/26, these include:

- Business Continuity
- Procurement
- Local Government Reorganisation / Devolution
- WODC specific policies

2.4 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 will also include a RAG rating to show whether the actions are on target (green), off target but action being taken to ensure delivery (amber) or off target and no action has yet been agreed to resolve the situation (red) or completed (grey).

2.5 Updates on progress on the Action Plan for 2026/27 will be presented to future Audit and Governance Committee meetings.

## **3. LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2026/27**

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee reviews the revised Local Code of Corporate Governance attached at Annex B showing changes including the date on the covering page and the name of the Chief Executive Officer on page 5 and agrees to adopt the attached Code.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

**6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**6.1** 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 2026/27 financial year identified in the Action Plan 2026/27 provides 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** None