



**WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 26 JUNE 2025
Subject	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25 AND ACTION PLAN 2025/26
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Andrea McCaskie, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services, Monitoring Officer Email: andrea.mccaskie@westoxon.gov.uk
Report author	Cheryl Sloan, Business Manager for Governance, Risk and Business Continuity Email: cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report provides the Audit and Governance Committee with an updated Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25 and an Annual Governance Action plan for 2025/26
Annexes	Annex A – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 and Action Plan 2025/26
Recommendation(s)	That the Annual Governance Committee: 1. Approve the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement and Action Plan 2025/26 for sign off by the Chief Executive Officer and the Leader of the Council, and 2. Agree to receive updates on progress against the key actions at future meetings.
Corporate priorities	All
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No

Consultees/ Consultation	N/A
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1. 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 and Action Plan

- 2.1** The AGS is backward looking, detailing the governance arrangements which were in place for the previous financial year (2024/25). This also shows the progress which was made against the Annual Governance Action plan for 2024/25.
- 2.2** The Annual Governance Action plan, is forward looking, setting out the areas of improvement / focus for the current financial year (2025/26).
- 2.3** There are 8 key actions within the 2025/26 Annual Governance Action plan, three of which have been carried over from 2024/25, these include:
 - New service delivery models
 - Council Constitution
 - Business Continuity
 - Procurement
 - LGR / Devolution
 - Service Plans
 - Financial Management
 - 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, off target but action being taken to ensure delivery or off target and no action has yet been agreed to resolve the situation.
- 2.5** Updates on progress will be presented to future Audit and Governance Committee meetings.

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

- 5.1** 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 2025/26 financial year identified in the AGS provide a clear set of priorities for the continual improvement of governance and mitigation of risk.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1** An equalities impact assessment is not required for this report.

7. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** There are no climate or ecological emergency implications arising directly from this report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1** 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

- 8.2** 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.