

# Improvement Programme journey so far

March 2024

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# Executive summary

March 2024 marks the tenth month since the start of the five-year Intervention. Significant progress has been made however there is still a way to go on the improvement journey.

This first year has been focussed on discovery and establishing the building blocks for the improvement journey. The next phase focusses on consolidation and further improvement.

The Intervention included nine Directions and for each of these Directions the Commissioners have described what achieving each direction looks like – ‘success measures’.

The Improvement and Recovery Plan, adopted in August 2023, describes how we will deliver each of the Directions. The delivery was organised into 4 themes with specific activity described. A fifth theme has since been added to the plan.

This document describes the journey so far – what has been achieved against each direction and what is still to do.

There are two parts to this document:

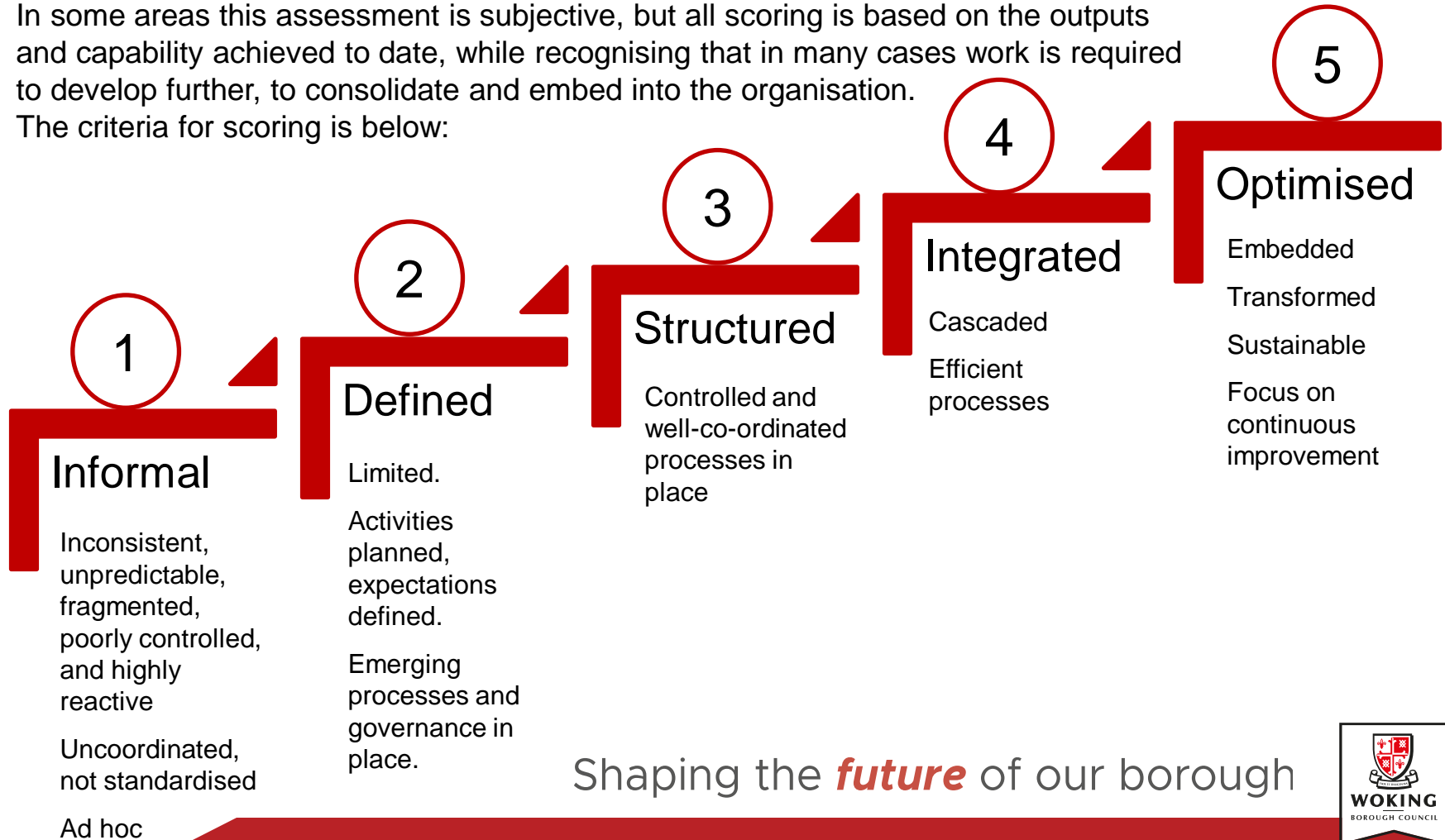
**(1) Summary of the IRP and maturity assessment:**

This shows each of the Directions, the activity underway or planned to deliver the Directions, and the success measures. A maturity assessment has been made for each of the activities, recognising that while there has been a lot of activity and huge improvements made, we are on a five year journey and there is still much to do to achieve sustained improvement and the supporting culture change required. This assessment reflects where we are on that journey.

**(2) Journey so far:** For each of the Directions, what is established and what is still to be done.

# Maturity assessment: Improvement and Recovery Programme

- A maturity assessment has been carried out across all activity within the programme - whether it is completed, underway or planned. This aims to show the context for where we are on the journey of improvement.
- In some areas this assessment is subjective, but all scoring is based on the outputs and capability achieved to date, while recognising that in many cases work is required to develop further, to consolidate and embed into the organisation.
- The criteria for scoring is below:



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# Directions – Activity – Success Measures

- Financial Recovery
- Commercial
- Governance & Assurance
- Organisation & Service Redesign
- Housing Recovery & Improvement

Direction	Activity underway to deliver the direction	Maturity	Success Measure
(a) An action plan to achieve financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Finance workplan and capacity</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Financial assurance and cost control</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Borrowing and cashflow</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Annual accounts and crystallisation of debt</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Debt reduction plan</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> 2024/25 MTFP &amp; revenue savings</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Financial reporting</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Engagement with DLUHC</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> HRA accounts</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> HRA Business Plan</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Asset Rationalisation Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 3</li> <li>• 0</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 5</li> <li>• 3</li> <li>• -</li> <li>• 3</li> </ul>	The Council has a balanced revenue budget and a sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy.
(b) An action plan to ensure the Authority's capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable and affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Treasury management strategy</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> 2024/25 budget</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Commercial protocol</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Capital programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 3</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 3</li> </ul>	The Council's capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable.
(c) A strict debt reduction plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Commercial strategy</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Debt reduction plan</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Valuations</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Asset Rationalisation Plan</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Property profit and loss trading accounts</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Strategic Options for TW and VSWL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 3</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 2</li> </ul>	The Council's debt position has been improved.
(d) Compliance with Financial Management guidelines – updated Minimum Revenue Position policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Updated MRP policy</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> HRA accounts</li> <li><span style="color: blue;">■</span> HRA Business Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 3</li> <li>• -</li> </ul>	The Council's functions are operating in line with the appropriate rules, guidance and good practice. The Council has a compliant Housing Revenue Account.

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# Directions – Activity – Success Measures

- Financial Recovery
- Commercial
- Governance & Assurance
- Organisation & Service Redesign
- Housing Recovery & Improvement

Direction	Activity underway or planned to deliver the Direction	Maturity	Success measure
(e) An action plan to reconfigure services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Service offer change and associated savings</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Resident engagement, public consultations and impact assessments</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Vision for smaller organisation</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Channel shift programme</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Savings implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 1</li> </ul>	The Council has a service offer which is shaped by a focus on its residents and customers and responsiveness to their needs and demands and which is affordable.
(f) Resourcing plan to support recovery – capacity; capability; skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Vision and mission</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Woking for All corporate strategy review</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Staff restructure</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Job evaluation review and implementation</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Channel shift programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 2</li> </ul>	The structure of the Council is proportionate to that service offer and to the wider corporate plan and is designed in such a way as to deliver the objectives of that plan.
(g) An action plan to strengthen financial and commercial functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Scrutiny function review</li> <li><span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Standards and Audit review</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Governance (e.g. Commercial and Finance Governance Board) and reporting</li> <li><span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Committee restructure</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Commercial protocol</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Commercial strategy</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Contracts and procurement review</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Orbis plan</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Finance team restructure</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Commercial team requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 3</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 3</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 0</li> </ul>	The Council has ensured that there are effective governance, risk management and scrutiny arrangements and functions in place for council decisions, that members and officers demonstrate that they understand and respect their roles in council business, and that decisions are taken on the basis of appropriate evidence and analysis.

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# Directions – Activity – Success Measures

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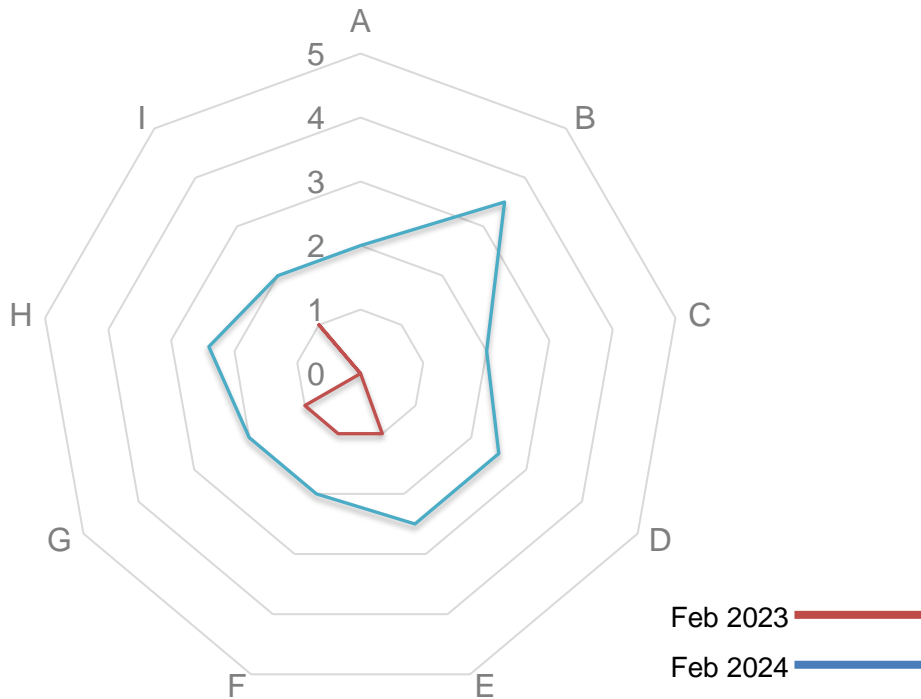
Direction	Activity underway or planned to deliver the Direction	Maturity	Success measure
(h) An action plan to secure value for money in dealing with the financing of and strategies for companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Company assurance review</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Company governance framework</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Companies review – implementation</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Commercial strategy</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Commercial protocol</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Company business plans</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Strategic Asset review and plan</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Profit and loss</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">■</span> Asset management system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 3</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 1</li> </ul>	The Council's remaining assets and commercial interests following a programme of exit are appropriate to the Council's size, in line with the corporate plan.
(i) An action plan to secure continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Service improvement (process, systems, people)</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Performance management – process and governance</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Organisational Development strategy and plan</li> <li><span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Overview and Scrutiny Committee improvements</li> <li><span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Electoral cycle review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 2</li> <li>• 1</li> <li>• 4</li> <li>• 2</li> </ul>	<p>The Council has demonstrated that it is focused on continuously improving in all areas and has robust processes in place to collect and analyse data on its delivery, and to manage its performance effectively, and has developed an organisational culture, at all levels, where staff are enabled and empowered to constructively challenge and improve ways of working. All the recommended actions from the External Assurance review and other actions identified as part of the Improvement and Recovery Plan have been progressed, or a concrete plan is in place to action them.</p> <p>The Council has considered properly and decided as to whether to move to a four yearly electoral cycle.</p>

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# Summary assessment

## Maturity Assessment



- A. An action plan to achieve financial sustainability
- B. An action plan to ensure the authority's capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable and affordable
- C. A strict debt reduction plan
- D. Compliance with Financial Management guidelines – updated MRP policy
- E. An action plan to reconfigure services
- F. Resourcing plan to support recovery – capacity; capability; skills
- G. An action plan to strengthen financial and commercial functions
- H. An action plan to secure value for money in dealing with the financing of and strategies for companies
- I. An action plan to secure continuous improvement

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## (a) An action plan to achieve financial sustainability

The Council has a balanced revenue budget and a sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy.

### Financial workplan & capacity

*Maturity (1) – activity to date has been delivered by temporary resources rather than a permanent team. Work is in hand to resolve this.*

- Interim financial specialist support has been brought in to support the Section 151 and Deputy Section 151 officers to set a legal budget.
- A permanent Section 151 officer has been appointed and will be in place from 1 April.
- A **permanent finance function structure** is drafted, ensuring new capability will be put in place to address the current gaps that are being filled by consultants and contractors.

### Annual accounts and crystallisation of debt

*Maturity (0) – annual accounts not reported as planned in 2023 due to lack of capability; (3) crystallisation of debt however this is subject to audit.*

- **Annual accounts 22/23** due to be reported to the June Audit Committee.
- **Annual accounts 23/24** due to be reported to the July Audit Committee.
- **Debt position** has been established.
- Grant Thornton are currently looking at the Value for Money (VfM) assessments that are part of the 2023/24 accounts and a VfM review report is imminent.

### Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) balanced budget for 2024/25

*Maturity (4) – savings identified, and decisions made however (0) – no long term MTFP which includes forecasts on a longer term basis.*

- Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) report **identified £8.4m General Fund savings** which is over 25% of the business as usual budget. These savings proposals have been approved by full Council and are moving into delivery.
- Significant work undertaken with government on how the council can set a legal budget given the scale of its debt problem.
- Council meeting (4 March) approved the five year MTFS.
- Improved and increased frequency of Overview & Scrutiny Committee in scrutinising proposals.
- Significant increase in member engagement on proposals via All Member briefings and specifically the introduction of a Finance Working Group.

### Assurance and expenditure controls

*Maturity (4) – expenditure in better control, fewer issues identified.*

- **Financial Control Panel** established and led by Service Managers. Meets twice a week to ensure all spend is scrutinised. Terms of Reference are being reviewed to include procurement requirements
- **Quarterly Assurance meetings** now in place to review audit, finance, procurement & contracts with leadership and with members.



## (a) An action plan to achieve financial sustainability

The Council has a balanced revenue budget and a sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy.

### Financial reporting

*Maturity (1) – major improvements needed.*

- The assessment against the Financial Management Code is complete and includes an improvement plan.
- An improved **budget monitoring** process is in place which includes greater ownership by budget holders. However, this needs significant additional development work.
- **Performance Management reporting** has an improved process and report format. Financial information is reported monthly to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and quarterly to members.
- *This remains work in progress. An improved integrated finance and performance monitoring report is now in place but has not been produced every month due to capacity issues within finance. This needs improving and embedding across the organisation.*

### Engagement with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)

*Maturity (5)*

- Ongoing dialogue with DLUHC regarding the financial support package.
- Additional focus on Asset Rationalisation Strategy is now in place to support the debt reduction discussions.

### Borrowing and cashflow

*Maturity (3) – in a better position, however team resilience remains a risk. Need to embed and improve reporting.*

- Tight controls are now in place for all **borrowing activity**. This has been limited to either refinancing, essential and committed capital spend and work on assets agreed in conjunction with government.
- The **interest budget** has been prepared on the forecast net debt position.
- Top level **cashflow work** is complete.
- **Performance indicators** on debt are now in place and will be reported on.

### Next:

- Finance restructure
- Annual accounts finalise
- Revenue outturns
- Financial reporting and budget monitoring
- Training and awareness raising
- Integra system review
- Governance and decision making
- Debt reduction plan
- Debt collection improvements
- Further General Fund savings to be identified

## **(b) An action plan to ensure the authority's capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable and affordable**

The Council's capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable.

### **Treasury Management Strategy**

*Maturity (4) – fundamentally changed approach.*

- The Treasury Management Strategy, as included in the budget report to Council on 4 March, has been comprehensively reviewed and updated to reflect the pivot away from major investment, funded by borrowing to asset rationalisation and debt reduction.
- This will form the basis of quarterly reporting on debt and treasury indicators to members during the year.

### **2024/25 budget**

*Maturity (3) – budget set, however collection fund capability needed.*

- £8.4m revenue savings identified for the 2024/25 budget which were approved by Council on 8th February.
- Extensive member engagement on the savings options and on the component parts of the budget, enabling members to make very difficult, but informed decisions based on evidence and supported by high levels of information.
- The Budget reports for both the Council meetings were prepared jointly by the S151 officer and the Finance Commissioner.

### **Commercial investment assurance**

*Maturity (4) – in place but requires embedding into core processes and raising awareness.*

- **Commercial Protocol** developed to ensure that future commercial activities and use of commercial assets are demonstrably aligned to the Council's prevailing strategic priorities. This will be used for all future commercial decisions within scope.
- **Commercial and Financial Governance Board** established to ensure all commercial decisions are reviewed against robust business cases ahead of Executive Approval.

### **Capital Programme**

*Maturity (3) – a smaller capital programme is in place. Monitoring and embedding discipline still needed.*

- The Capital Programme has been largely suspended with provisions only for items such as urgent health and safety and regulatory works and Housing Asset Management Programmes funded by the Housing Revenue Account.
- Payments are now only made to companies and joint ventures to cover business cases agreed with the Commissioners/DLUHC.
- Only projects complying with the Council's capital principles have been included in the Capital Programme.

## (c) A strict debt reduction plan

The Council's debt position has been improved.

### Commercial Strategy

*Maturity (1) – in early draft. Supporting Asset Rationalisation Plan (3) – developed but needs supporting plans.*

- **Commercial Strategy** is in development.
- The **Asset Rationalisation Plan** sets out the approach to asset rationalisation over the next 36 months, which will support the debt reduction plan.

### Debt reduction plan

*Maturity (2) – as expected at this stage in the improvement journey. Asset Rationalisation Plan needs to mature and there are ongoing discussions with DLUHC.*

- **Business cases** for the future of the ThamesWey (TW) and Victoria Square Woking Ltd. (VS) companies are completed and the financing requirements understood and approved to prevent insolvency of TW and VS.
- The **Asset Rationalisation Plan** is in place and aims to ensure that the Commercial Investment Property portfolios are managed and rationalised over the coming three years so as to extract the best possible returns under the constraints of time and market conditions.
- A **Debt Reduction Plan** is being developed by the Section 151 officer alongside the Asset Rationalisation Plan.
- The first significant asset sale was made in January 2024 and it is agreed that all receipts from asset sales will be used to reduce the Capital Financing Requirement.
- DLUHC conversations are ongoing.

### Next:

- Complete the **Debt Reduction Plan** for approval by the Council and Commissioners
- Delivery of the **Asset Rationalisation Plan**:
  - Commence exercise to analyse revenue and capital/borrowing impact of rationalisation strategy on individual sites
  - Complete disposal of Victoria Gate
  - Commence data cleanse and recording of data information on a single database
  - Produce a prioritised plan which will need to balance the need to reduce the levels of debt with achieving value for money on the assets sold
  - Undertake Civic Estate review
  - Market additional pipeline of identified current disposals
  - Prepare business cases for individual identified additional disposals from all portfolios and bring to market if appropriate.

## **(d) Compliance with Financial Management guidelines – updated Minimum Revenue Provision policy**

- The Council's functions are operating in line with the appropriate rules, guidance and good practice.
- The Council has a compliant Housing Revenue Account.

### **Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)**

*Maturity (4) – rules are now in place, which need embedding and monitoring.*

- Extensive work has been carried out on understanding the council's loan book. Further work on impairments will be carried out as part of the final accounts process and the preparation of the company final accounts for 31 March.
- A new MRP policy is in place which is in line with the guidance that is currently out to consultation.

### **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

*Maturity (3) – further work to be done on recharges.*

- The preparation of the HRA budget monitoring report is up to date. The 2024/25 HRA budget went to 4 February Council meeting for approval – included the capital programme is funded within a sustainable budget for 2024/25.
- HRA general fund recharge adjustments into budgets and into prior year accounts.

### **Next:**

- The capital programme to support the new regulatory requirements is still in development
- The 30 year business plan is now due in the first quarter of 2024/25.

## (e) An action plan to reconfigure services

The Council has a service offer which is shaped by a focus on its residents and customers and responsiveness to their needs and demands and which is affordable.

### Service offer changes and associated savings

*Maturity (3) – still further work to ensure sustainability.*

- **Gateway review:** comprehensive ‘bottom up’ review of all services took place to identify minimum viable position and other options for raising income. Options appraisals developed by senior managers to support the decision making process.
- **Benchmarking:** carried out across statistical neighbours to support the decision making process by providing additional evidence.
- **Revenue savings:** identified £8.4m savings potential.
- **Member engagement:** regular updates at Informal Executive, additional all Member briefings to present proposal and discuss. Overview & Scrutiny sessions on major topics.
- **Community Asset Transfer policy:** developed and adopted by full council to enable some services to transfer to community groups rather than close.
- **Transfer of services to partners:** social prescribing, hoarding, hospital discharge support, family support and family centres all TUPE’d rather than the service closing.

### Resident engagement, public consultation and impact assessments

*Maturity (4) – successfully carried out; lessons learned for future engagement.*

- **Resident engagement:** borough-wide engagement on what residents value the most received 8,154 responses. This supported decision making on options (e.g. fees and charges, stop funding discretionary services and make them self-funding or find partners to deliver these services).
- **Formal public consultation:** on service proposals received 5,792 responses. As well as promotion via media releases, 206 stakeholder groups were directly contacted.
- **Impact analysis:** equality impact assessments, analysis and action plans to mitigate impacts were carried out on 17 proposals.
- **Options appraisals:** carried out on major resident services. Alternatives to closure identified as a result.
- **Partner engagement:** to identify alternatives to WBC providing services, and instead be delivered by partners.

## (f) Resourcing plan to support recovery – capacity; capability; skills

The structure of the Council is proportionate to that service offer and to the wider corporate plan and is designed in such a way as to deliver the objectives of that plan.

### **Vision, mission, strategy**

*Maturity (2) – work needed to now embed and support the culture change.*

- **Vision** for the new council has been developed with the leadership (Executive and CLT). This vision describes the new organisation and will inform the Corporate Strategy refresh.
- **Mission statements** to set out how this will be achieved have been developed with the leadership.

### **Staff restructure**

*Maturity (4) – phase 1 and 2 complete within timescales. Embedding resultant service changes now required.*

- Council-wide restructure undertaken to align the staffing capacity and capability to the proposed service offer. Involved around 300 staff.
- Regular communications and engagement.
- Training and support provided to staff.
- Staff savings of £2.2m.
- Two phases of staff consultation and assessment between July and March 2023.
- TUPE transfer of services:
  - Social Prescribing, hoarding and hospital discharge support to Spelthorne Borough Council.
  - Family Support to Surrey County Council.

## **(e) An action plan to reconfigure services**

The Council has a service offer which is shaped by a focus on its residents and customers and responsiveness to their needs and demands and which is affordable.

## **(f) Resourcing plan to support recovery – capacity; capability; skills**

The structure of the Council is proportionate to that service offer and to the wider corporate plan and is designed in such a way as to deliver the objectives of that plan.

### **Next:**

- Finalise phase 2 of the staff restructure
- Review and refresh the Working for All strategy and supporting objectives
- Audit of service strategies
- Culture change – design, develop and deliver the Organisational Strategy and Plan phase 1:
  - Commission an organisational development specialist
  - Performance development review process for appraisal and objectives setting
  - Job evaluation review and implementation
  - Values and behaviours development with change champions
  - HR policies review
- Communications strategy and plan – external and internal communications for the programme
- Residents Services Improvement programme (systems, processes and people) – customer services, planning service, environmental health, property
- Benchmarking deep dive into core services
- Data, insights and AI pre discovery work to understand the current position and gaps

## (g) An action plan to strengthen financial and commercial functions

The Council has ensured that there are effective governance, risk management and scrutiny arrangements and functions in place for Council decisions; that Members and Officers demonstrate that they understand and respect their roles in Council business; and that decisions are taken on the basis of appropriate evidence and analysis.

### **Governance and reporting**

*Maturity (4) – Commercial and Finance Governance Board well established and providing challenge.*

- **Commercial and Financial Governance Board implemented:** oversees the implementation and operation of the Companies Governance Handbook, the Commercial Strategy, and the Commercial Protocol. Significant improvements seen in commercial finance decision making.
- **Shareholder Executive Group:** governance formalised. Shareholder and take decisions in respect of companies in which the council has an interest.

### **Assurance and risk**

*Maturity (2) – in place but requires embedding.*

- **Quarterly performance reporting:** improved and more accessible for councillors and the public. Interpreting the data rather than presenting. Focussed on the new structure. Financial monitoring information has been improved with the new integrated performance report and clear milestones and delivery plans to accompany the savings. Includes operational performance, finance, key performance indicators, and risk.
- **Quarterly assurance reporting:** deep dives into all assurance areas reported quarterly – health and safety, audit, contracts, risk and business continuity.
- **IRP risks:** reviewed monthly at the Improvement and Recovery Board and six monthly at Overview and Scrutiny.

### **Commercial controls and compliance**

*Maturity (4) – improved controls in place but require further embedding.*

- **Commercial protocol:** ensures that commercial activities and use of commercial assets are demonstrably aligned to the council's prevailing strategic priorities.
- **Companies Governance Framework:** controls the way the companies operate. It acts as a practical guide for WBC members and officers, and is starting to improve with new staff and board members of entities in which the council has an interest, in their dealings with each other and with the important business that is conducted by them.
- **Constitution part 6 review:** sets out the principles and governance that relate to council owned entities. Proposals for re-drafting part 6 of the constitution have been developed and will be considered by Shareholder Advisory Group.

### **Procurement and contracts**

*Maturity (2) – issues identified, and action plan agreed. Needs implementing.*

- **Orbis** onboarded via framework agreement. Commercial Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework review carried out. Action plan drafted for roll out of improvements.



## (g) An action plan to strengthen financial and commercial functions

The council has ensured that there are effective governance, risk management and scrutiny arrangements and functions in place for council decisions; that members and officers demonstrate that they understand and respect their roles in council business; and that decisions are taken on the basis of appropriate evidence and analysis.

### Standards and Audit

*Maturity (3) – now in place but needs testing, refinement and embedding.*

- **Independent member arrangements:** decision approved to have two independent members, one acting as chair.
- **Assurance mapping exercise:** being carried out by the Local Government Association (LGA).
- **Annual Governance Statement (AGS):** 2022/23 AGS well received at November 2023 Standards and Audit committee. Quarterly Performance, Finance and Assurance meetings implemented as a result. Review of AGS monitoring process being undertaken.

### Committee restructure

*Maturity (2) – proposal for change agreed, needs to be implemented.*

- **Council meeting structure review:** proposal being reviewed by stakeholders. The proposals will streamline the calendar of meetings, reduce officer and member burden, increase transparency, and make the decision making process more efficient.

### Scrutiny

*Maturity (2) – early improvements made, however still a way to go to ensure effective scrutiny function.*

- **Scrutiny function review:** Action plan produced with support from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. Member training workshop held and input fed into action plan. Chair and vice chair received mentoring from the LGA.

### Next:

- Embed commercial protocol
- Review commercial capability required for the council
- Finance team restructure
- Overview and Scrutiny action plan implementation
- Orbis procurement and contracts improvements implementation
- Implement new Standards and Audit committee independent member arrangements
- Council meeting structure review approved by Council and implemented for 2024/25 municipal year

## (h) An action plan to secure value for money in dealing with the financing of and strategies for companies

The council's remaining assets and commercial interests following a programme of exit are appropriate to the council's size, in line with the corporate plan.

### Company assurance and governance

*Maturity (4) – in place and working effectively, but requires further maturity and embedding.*

- **Commercial protocol:** ensures that commercial activities and use of commercial assets are demonstrably aligned to the council's prevailing strategic priorities. Adopted and applied to assets sales. From 2024/25, this will be used to develop council-wide fees and charges.
- **Company Governance Framework:** produced and endorsed by the Executive. Provides a clear set of requirements for all companies in which the council has an interest.

### Companies review

*Maturity (2) – review and assessment complete however improvements and changes need to be implemented.*

- **Commercial capability:** Ethical Commercial consultancy appointed in August to provide valuable commercial expertise.
- **Company assurance review:** companies review completed using the Company Governance Framework, with issues and areas requiring improvement identified.
- **Company boards:** purchase of Moyallen shares is ready to be approved.

### Commercial strategy

*Maturity (1) – commercial strategy drafted; requires further development and supporting plans.*

- **Asset rationalisation strategy:** draft produced which sets out the approach to asset rationalisation over the next 36 months.
- WBC Investment Asset **Profit and Loss account trading performance** for top eleven assets – this is essential to support any business cases for disposals.
- **Sale of ThamesWey Central Milton Keynes** to best and final offer stage – 21 March 2024 Executive for approval to progress.
- Engagement with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero for a TW Energy Heat Network Zone pilot.
- **Asset management system** procured.

### Company solvency

*Maturity (3) – ongoing.*

- **Business cases for VS and Sheerwater:** approved by DLUHC to protect and maximise the value of assets held by the companies to subsequently reduce the debt burden on the council as far as possible.

## (h) An action plan to secure value for money in dealing with the financing of and strategies for companies

The council's remaining assets and commercial interests following a programme of exit are appropriate to the council's size, in line with the corporate plan.

### **Next:**

- Strategic review to determine how (and to what extent) the companies support the council's core strategic aims
- Company business plans to 21 March Executive
- Adopt new Shareholder Executive Governance
- Recruitment of new Chairs and NEDs
- Company loan deferrals for 2024
- TCMK BAFO decision
- Commercial strategy further developed to incorporate commissioning and procurement and supporting strategic plans for assets and companies
- Development of Strategic Options for TW and VSWL through 2024:
  - Strategic cases – end Q1 (June)
  - Outline cases – end Q2 (September)
  - Full cases – end Q3 (December)
- Asset rationalisation strategy finalised
- Market appraisals for an initial three WBC key commercial assets
- Year 1 disposals
- WBC and TW pipeline sales plan – target £30-£40m
- Implementation of WBC asset management system
- Review of WBC property services

## (i) An action plan to secure continuous improvement

- The council has demonstrated that it is focused on continuously improving in all areas and has robust processes in place to collect and analyse data on its delivery, and to manage its performance effectively, and has developed an organisational culture, at all levels, where staff are enabled and empowered to constructively challenge and improve ways of working.
- All the recommended actions from the External Assurance review and other actions identified as part of the Improvement and Recovery Plan have been progressed, or a concrete plan is in place to action them.
- The council has considered properly and decided as to whether to move to a four yearly electoral cycle.

### Electoral review

*Maturity (2)*

- Proposal identified for move to all out elections cycle – first in 2028 to align with Police and Crime Commissioner elections for maximum savings. Informal member support test to be undertaken at start of 2024/25 municipal year. Decisions paper to go to CLT for decision.

### Overview and scrutiny

*Maturity (2)*

- Action plan reviewed regularly at meetings with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to refine for best results. Plan includes immediate actions and steps for continued improvement.

### Culture change

*Maturity (1)*

- **Organisational development** approach is being developed to ensure that managers and staff are equipped to deliver the vision for the organisation.

### Constitution review

*Maturity (3)*

- Constitution amendments are being made when identified.

### Next:

- **Resident services improvement** (processes, people, platforms) review of planning, housing, environmental health and property services
- **Culture change** to shape the vision and behaviours with staff
- **Organisational Development Strategy and Plan** to be developed and shaped with extensive staff engagement
- Embed and refine **Quarterly Assurance** meetings aligned to the Annual Governance Statement
- Embed and refine the **performance management framework** and develop the culture of performance management to inform decisions
- Test member support for all out **elections** cycle
- Implementation of the **Overview and Scrutiny** action plan

# Financial Recovery

**Strategic aim:** Sustainable budget management and supporting culture, making difficult decisions whilst delivering against council strategic priorities and safeguarding future capability.

## Key directions and success measures

### **An action plan to achieve financial sustainability**

The council has a balanced revenue budget and a sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy.

### **An action plan to ensure that capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable and affordable**

The council's capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable.

### **Debt reduction plan**

The council's debt position has been improved.

### **Compliance with financial management guidelines (updated Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy)**

The council's functions are operating in line with the appropriate rules, guidance and good practice.

The council has a compliant Housing Revenue Account.

## Objectives

1. Develop and embed governance to underpin financial decision making.
2. Reduce the level of outstanding debt – support asset rationalisation, debt reduction and commercial strategies.
3. Continue to limit future borrowing to refinancing and essential/committed capital spend.
4. Delivery of a long term plan and 2025/26 budget.
5. Start work on the process and ideas for the next programme of savings for 2025/26.
6. Improve financial reporting to aid decision-making and performance management including monitoring delivery of 2024/25 savings.
7. Ensure 2022/23 draft accounts are completed and an audit process has been agreed with external auditors.
8. Deliver a balanced Housing Revenue Account (HRA), correct historic recharge issues and ensure HRA reserves correctly accounted for.
9. Ensure the finance team is fully resourced with the right skills, processes and systems in place to ensure an effective finance function.
10. Ensure budget holders and business partners clear on roles and responsibilities to manage and monitor budgets and savings delivery.
11. Deliver the requirements for the package of financial support from central government.

## 2024/25 workstreams

People and systems

Assurance and expenditure controls

Borrowing and cashflow

Annual accounts

Policies review

Debt reduction (process and quantum)

Delivery of the MTFP and savings tracking

Financial reporting

Housing Revenue Account

Set a balanced budget for 2025/26

Engagement with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)

# Action plan

Workstream	Aim	Activity
People and systems	To support having a longer term finance function with the right skills and capacity in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction of new permanent Section 151 officer</li> <li>• Appointment of deputy Section 151 officer</li> <li>• Restructure of the finance team</li> <li>• New processes and procedures</li> <li>• Service plans and team objectives</li> <li>• Integra system review (includes shared service options)</li> <li>• Budget Managers and Business Partners training &amp; development</li> <li>• Gap - commercial finance capability/capacity (connected to the commercial theme)</li> </ul>
Assurance and expenditure controls	Ensure basic governance in place to underpin financial decision making and rebuild the commercial decision making frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial control panel – incorporate procurement</li> <li>• Review financial control panel effectiveness</li> <li>• Financial Regulations training for managers</li> <li>• Work with Mazars to ensure an effective internal audit service</li> <li>• Review new arrangements for anti-fraud and corruption</li> <li>• Review processes for monitoring collection fund and benefit overpayments</li> <li>• Financial Management Code assessments updated and finalise update of financial regulations (follow on from Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) work)</li> </ul>
Borrowing and cashflow	To minimise and confirm borrowing requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure clear process for all borrowing approvals within WBC and with DLUHC</li> <li>• Understand how borrowing for capitalisation directive will operate and should be accounted for</li> <li>• Capital programme approvals and business plan process</li> </ul>
Annual accounts	To meet statutory reporting requirements and deliver updated minimum revenue position policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2022/23 final accounts to the audit committee (June 2024)</li> <li>• 2023/24 final accounts to the audit committee (July 2024)</li> </ul>

# Action plan cont.

Workstream	Aim	Activity
Policies review	Review specific policies and associated processes to ensure they are fit for purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Debt collection policy review</li> <li>Improved process for monitoring collection fund (decisions and returns)</li> <li>Holistic approach to debt collection and recovery</li> </ul>
Debt reduction (process and quantum)	Reduce the level of debt for the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly reports to scrutiny/audit</li> <li>Monitoring of borrowing cashflow and Capital Financing Requirement</li> <li>Ensure receipts are correctly accounted for and a debt reduction plan is developed, monitored and reported to Commercial and Finance Governance Board</li> </ul>
Delivery of MTFP and savings	To close budget gap as per priority 1 in the directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial benefits monitoring</li> <li>Financial savings tracking</li> </ul>
Financial reporting	To support the production of meaningful financial monitoring information and meet the requirements for government returns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement improved monthly financial reporting to leadership</li> <li>Implement quarterly financial reporting to members</li> <li>To include a new capital programme monitoring process</li> <li>Training for budget holders</li> <li>Tracker to monitor completion of all government returns</li> <li>M and A account review</li> <li>M and A account implement changes</li> <li>M and A account training and awareness</li> <li>Revenue outturns and all other statutory financial returns complete</li> </ul>
Housing Revenue Account	Deliver a balanced Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium term HRA budget projections</li> <li>Correction of historic issues (and accounting for reserves)</li> </ul>
Set a balanced budget for 2025/26	Set a balanced budget for 2025/26 (excluding impact legacy debt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop budget timetable (CLT/ Executive/ O&amp;S/ Council)</li> <li>Process for opposition amendments at budget setting</li> <li>Draft of full suite of budget documents – MTFP, Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy</li> </ul>
Engagement with DLUHC	Deliver the requirements for the package of financial support from central government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain ongoing discussions with DLUHC regarding the government support requirements</li> </ul>

# Commercial

**Strategic aim:** Release the council from unaffordable commitments, whilst protecting the public purse and optimising the value of existing assets.

## Key directions and success measures

### An action plan to strengthen financial and commercial functions

The council has ensured that there are effective governance, risk management and scrutiny arrangements and functions in place for council decisions, that members and officers demonstrate that they understand and respect their roles in council business, and that decisions are taken on the basis of appropriate evidence and analysis.

### An action plan to secure value for money in dealing with and financing of and strategies for companies

The council's remaining assets and commercial interests following a programme of exit are appropriate to the council's size, in line with the corporate plan.

## Objectives

1. Develop a commercial strategy and ensure that effective governance is in place to deliver this strategy. To include:
  - a) A review of all 24 companies and their assets to determine a company restructure programme, aligning them to council objectives and ensuring best value in reducing costs and risk to the council.
  - b) Engagement with the companies on options for the future to ensure revised business plans are in place to deliver the commercial strategy.
  - c) Implementation of improved governance, decision making and risk management frameworks for remaining companies.
2. Develop a strategic options plan for the ThamesWey (TW) Group. To include:
  - a) A strategic options plan for TW Housing (including completing the regeneration of Sheerwater, but also for the whole housing portfolio).
  - b) Strategic options for TW energy including TW Central Milton Keynes disposal.
3. Develop a strategic options plan for Victoria Place and related town centre assets.
4. Develop a strategic options plan for the council's wider commercial estate, assessing disposal and retention options.
5. Ensure that the resources and information requirements to deliver the commercial strategy are in place. To include developing the capacity and skills necessary to drive a profit centre approach to management of the asset portfolio.

## 2024/25 workstreams

Commercial strategy and governance	ThamesWey and subsidiaries	Victoria Square Woking Ltd.
Resourcing, requests and data room	Commercial estate and commercial options	Procurement services improvement



# Action plan

Workstream	Aim	Activity
Commercial strategy and governance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a long term commercial strategy to develop an asset strategy to support the delivery of a debt reduction programme</li> <li>2. Implement appropriate governance framework for each company and within the council</li> <li>3. Review the 24 council owned companies</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Commercial Strategy</li> <li>• Commercial and Financial Governance board</li> <li>• Governance review of companies</li> <li>• Implementation of changes required</li> <li>• Adopt new Shareholder Executive Governance</li> <li>• Company loan deferrals</li> <li>• Company Business Plans</li> <li>• Appoint WBC investor advisor</li> <li>• Recruit to boards</li> </ul>
ThamesWey and subsidiaries	Develop strategic options for ThamesWey Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Strategic Options for TW through 2024:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic cases</li> <li>• Outline cases</li> <li>• Full cases</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Victoria Square Woking Ltd.	Develop strategic options for Victoria Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Strategic Options for VSWL through 2024:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic cases</li> <li>• Outline cases</li> <li>• Full cases</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Resourcing, requests and data room	Ensure resourcing and information requirements are in place, including skills and capacity for a profit centre approach to asset management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet resourcing requirements to operate the strategy, and meet governance requirements effectively</li> <li>• Assessment of existing commercial asset information, and creation of rectification plan as required to ensure complete asset information is available</li> <li>• Following the identification of strategic options for the council's wider commercial estate, propose resourcing requirements to manage these appropriately based on sector norms through benchmarking vs performance</li> </ul>

# Action plan cont.

Workstream	Aim	Activity
Commercial estate and commercial options	Develop strategic options for the council's wider commercial estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis of revenue and capital impacts of disposal, development or repurposing</li><li>• Create subsequent options for each asset</li><li>• Make recommendations for each asset based on 'keep, hold or dispose'</li></ul>
Procurement services improvement	Reviewing contracts to ensure value for money and embedding improved procurement and commissioning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commercial Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework review of procurement and contract management procedures</li><li>• Contracts register and procurement forward plan</li><li>• Improved processes and procedures</li><li>• Manager training and guidance</li><li>• Incorporation into Commercial Strategy and protocol</li></ul>

# Governance and Assurance

**Strategic aim:** Ensure risk is managed and decisions are made transparently and safely, improving future decision-making.

## Key directions and success measures

### An action plan to strengthen financial and commercial functions

The council has ensured that there are effective governance, risk management and scrutiny arrangements and functions in place for council decisions, that members and officers demonstrate that they understand and respect their roles in council business, and that decisions are taken on the basis of appropriate evidence and analysis.

### An action plan to secure continuous improvement

The council has demonstrated that it is focused on continuously improving in all areas and has robust processes in place to collect and analyse data on its delivery, and to manage its performance effectively, and has developed an organisational culture, at all levels, where staff are enabled and empowered to constructively challenge and improve ways of working.

The council has considered properly and decided as to whether to move to a four yearly electoral cycle.

## Objectives

1. Strengthen the role of scrutiny within the organisation including how the council scrutinises the performance of its companies.
2. Improve standards and audit to ensure greater scrutiny of the audit and governance functions and avoid past mistakes recurring.
3. Develop a legal function to support the council and future commercial activity with the right skills and capacity in place.
4. Work with the commercial theme to ensure enhanced oversight as a shareholder in the remaining companies in line with best practice.
5. Undertake improvements to the constitution in order to ensure it remains effective and fit for purpose in light of changing circumstances.
6. Review the election format to aid long term strategic decision making within the council.
7. Improve the democratic process to ensure members are making well informed decisions that are communicated to officers and the public.
8. Strengthen the process for producing the Annual Governance Statement.

## 2024/25 workstreams

Elections review

Overview and scrutiny function

Democratic process review

Standards and audit (+ Annual Governance Statement)

Legal capability and capacity

# Action plan

Workstream	Aim	Activity
Elections review	Review election format and approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLT approval to gauge member support</li> <li>• Carry out gauge of member support for moving to all out elections</li> <li>• Subject to levels of support, consider a paper to Council outlining the process to change the election format and seek approval to carry out formal consultation</li> <li>• If relevant, Council to approve a move to all out elections. Potential implementation in May 2028 to align with the Police and Crime Commissioner elections for maximum cost savings</li> </ul>
Overview and Scrutiny function	Review and implement improvements to Scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Overview and Scrutiny action plan, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to work programming</li> <li>• Improvements to the quality of scrutiny carried out</li> <li>• Improvements to transparency and communication</li> <li>• Improvements to the training of committee members</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Review the need for ongoing support and training requirements</li> </ul>
Democratic process review	Review and implement improvements to the council's democratic process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement internal and external comms plans for improving understanding of and engagement with the Executive and Council, pre and post decision making</li> <li>• Introduce updated report template for committee reports for better quality report writing and more transparent decision making</li> <li>• Complete Council meeting structure review prior to 2024/25 Municipal Year</li> <li>• Update members' induction programme to address the impact of being a council under government intervention and promote the member/officer protocol</li> <li>• Initiate and complete consequential constitutional amendments</li> </ul>
Standards and Audit (+ Annual Governance Statement (AGS))	Review and implement improvements to the Standards and Audit committee and monitoring process for producing the AGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance mapping carried out by the Local Government Association</li> <li>• Recruit and train new independent member(s) as necessary</li> <li>• Implement improvements to the monitoring process to feed into the AGS</li> <li>• Review the need for ongoing support and training requirements</li> </ul>
Legal capability and capacity	Right-size the legal team capability and capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review legal team requirements following staff restructure and review of companies</li> <li>• Implement new 'right-sized'/skill matched legal team</li> </ul>

# Organisation and service redesign

**Strategic aim:** Deliver a smaller, data driven organisation, where staff feel empowered and digitally confident, and are delivering on key priorities.

## Key directions and success measures

### An action plan to reconfigure services

The council has a service offer which is shaped by a focus on its residents and customers and a responsiveness to their needs and demands and which is affordable.

### An action plan to secure continuous improvement

The structure of the council is proportionate to that service offer and to the wider corporate plan and is designed in such a way as to deliver the objectives of that plan.

## Objectives

1. Ensure the staff savings and structural changes are delivered in a timely manner and are managed consistently.
2. Work with communities to deliver the community asset transfers which will lead to some services remaining open.
3. Ensure that all actions within service Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are delivered for resident-facing services and consistently communicated.
4. Manage and monitor the UKSPF funding for EIA actions ensuring timely delivery of required actions.
5. Move customer-facing services online, improving processes and technology to deliver further efficiencies and improved customer service.
6. Develop a culture that ensures the workforce is empowered and digitally confident and aligned to the new vision for the organisation.
7. Improved internal communication and engagement with staff to support the new organisation and culture change.
8. Understand the data we hold, where the gaps are and identify opportunities to improve performance and decision making with better use of data, insights and AI.

## 2024/25 workstreams

Savings delivery: staff changes

Resident services programme (core service improvements & channel shift)

Organisational development

Staff communications and engagement

Savings delivery: resident-facing

Data, insights and AI

# Action plan

Workstream	Aim	Activity
Savings delivery	To ensure the effective delivery of the service changes to realise financial savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EIA action plan implementation</li> <li>Communicating service changes to residents</li> <li>Community Asset Transfers</li> <li>Working with partners to support their transformation (CAW, Lightbox)</li> </ul>
Resident services programme	Move customer-facing services online, improving processes and platforms to deliver further efficiencies and improved customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Channel Shift (phase 1): delivery of identified 'quick wins' and improvements. Design of a new operating model and wider improvements for Phase 2</li> <li>Channel Shift (phase 2): Customer Services, Revenues and Benefits. Delivery of the new operating model for Customer Services, Revenues and Benefits and the functions, processes and capability to maximise its impact</li> <li>Channel Shift: consistent Resident Experience, other service areas. Same remit as above in, for example housing, planning, parking, environmental health</li> </ul>
Organisational development	To have skilled people delivering good quality services, focusing on organisational priorities and delivering improving organisational performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisational development strategy &amp; Plan</li> <li>Vision and values</li> <li>Working for All refresh</li> <li>HR policies review</li> </ul>
Communications and engagement	Improved internal communication and engagement with staff to support the new organisation and culture change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and engagement plan</li> <li>Staff surveys and temperature checks</li> </ul>
Data, insights and AI	To understand the data we hold and where the gaps are and identify opportunities to improve performance and decision making with better use of data, insights and AI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-discovery piece of work to establish our position and shape the project</li> </ul>

# Housing Recovery and Improvement

**Strategic aim:** Ensure the service is compliant with housing regulatory standards and deliver an efficient, reliable and modern service that meets statutory requirements and supports strong neighbourhoods and communities for our residents.

## Key directions and success measures

### An action plan to secure continuous improvement

The council has demonstrated that it is focused on continuously improving in all areas and has robust processes in place to collect and analyse data on its delivery, and to manage its performance effectively, and has developed an organisational culture, at all levels, where staff are enabled and empowered to constructively challenge and improve ways of working.

### The Regulator for Social Housing concluded that:

- Woking Borough Council has breached the Home Standard; and
- As a consequence of the breach, there was the potential for serious detriment to the council's tenants.

The regulator is working with the council as it seeks to remedy the breach (relating to fire safety and installation of carbon monoxide and smoke detectors) and will continue to consider what further action may need to be taken.

## Objectives

1. Demonstrate compliance with the regulatory standards, leading to homes for our tenants that are safe and fit for purpose.
2. Improve all housing services through the greater use of performance data, benchmarking data and resident feedback.
3. Comply with the regulatory standards, build strong communities and neighbourhoods and increase tenant and leaseholder satisfaction across all parts of the service.
4. Build the council's relationship with its tenants and leaseholders and increasingly involve and seek their views in shaping its service offer.
5. Modernise tools and practice across the housing service, including digital tools and channel shift to online applications and information.
6. Ensure the Council has a sustainable Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30-year Business Plan that can adequately deliver services to tenants and support its capital investment requirements.
7. Deliver the cultural change across the housing service to deliver the Housing Improvement Programme and achieve compliance with all regulatory standards.

## 2024/25 workstreams

Homes and safety

Data and insight

Tenants and communities

Resident engagement and consultation

Tools and ways of working

Finance

Staffing and culture

# Action plan

Workstream	Aim	Activity
<b>Homes and safety</b>	Demonstrate compliance with the regulatory standards, leading to homes for our tenants that are safe and fit for purpose. Design and deliver the capital investment programme and asset management strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire risk assessment actions</li> <li>• Compliance monitoring system</li> <li>• Carbon monoxide and smoke detection</li> <li>• Lakeview estate – cladding</li> <li>• Sheerwater refurbishment</li> <li>• Decent homes stock condition survey and 30 year plan</li> <li>• Annual rolling asset management strategy and capital investment programme</li> <li>• Brockhill risk mitigation and closure</li> <li>• Repairs contract reprocurement</li> </ul>
<b>Data and insight</b>	Improve all housing services through the greater use of performance data, benchmarking data and resident feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that our data is available to demonstrate our performance and compliance</li> <li>• Benchmarking with peers to learn and improve via Housemark</li> <li>• Improve internal performance monitoring and utilisation of data in service delivery</li> </ul>
<b>Tenants and communities</b>	Comply with the regulatory standards, build strong communities and neighbourhoods and increase tenant and leaseholder satisfaction across all parts of the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment against regulatory standards and development of action plan</li> <li>• Delivery of DHLUC Homelessness Advice Support Team recommendations</li> <li>• Review of safeguarding policies and procedures</li> <li>• Income collection improvement plan</li> <li>• Void turnaround improvement plan</li> <li>• Update tenancy agreement and handbooks</li> <li>• Review end to end customer journey</li> </ul>
<b>Resident engagement and consultation</b>	Build the council's relationship with its tenants and leaseholders and increasingly involve and seek their views in shaping its service offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant satisfaction survey</li> <li>• Resident communications on fire safety</li> <li>• Complaints improvement plan</li> <li>• Resident engagement plan</li> </ul>



# Action plan

Workstream	Aim	Activity
<b>Tools and ways of working</b>	Modernise tools and practice across the housing service, including digital tools and channel shift to online applications and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Process mapping across the service</li><li>• Implement Capita system upgrade and asset management module</li><li>• Policy review across housing</li><li>• Channel shift and improvements to online resources</li></ul>
<b>Finance</b>	Ensure the Council has a sustainable Housing Revenue Account 30-year Business Plan that can adequately deliver services to tenants and support its capital investment requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set balanced 2024/25 budget</li><li>• Recharge review and budget structuring</li><li>• Develop a 30 year Housing Revenue Account business plan</li><li>• Housing Private Finance Initiative (PFI)</li></ul>
<b>Staffing and culture</b>	Deliver the cultural change across the housing service to deliver the Housing Improvement Programme and achieve compliance with all regulatory standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create vision and ways of working with housing managers</li><li>• Roll out to all housing staff</li><li>• Culture shift programme of activities within the service</li></ul>