

Notice of Audit and Governance Committee



Date: Thursday, 22 October 2020 at 6.00 pm

Venue: Virtual meeting

Membership:

Chairman:

Cllr J Beesley

Vice Chairman:

Cllr L Williams

Cllr M Andrews
Cllr M F Brooke
Cllr D Butt

Cllr M Cox
Cllr L Fear
Cllr A Filer

Cllr S McCormack

All Members of the Audit and Governance Committee are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

The press and public are welcome to view the live stream of this meeting at the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=4354>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Democratic Services Team or email democratic.services@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office: Tel: 01202 454668 or email press.office@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk

GRAHAM FARRANT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

14 October 2020



Available online and
on the Mod.gov app

Icons for various mobile operating systems: a blue globe with white dots (likely representing a web browser or app), an Apple logo, a green Android robot, and a blue Windows logo.

Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

Declaring interests at meetings

Familiarise yourself with the Councillor Code of Conduct which can be found in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

Before the meeting, read the agenda and reports to see if the matters to be discussed at the meeting concern your interests

Do any matters being discussed at the meeting relate to your registered interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

Yes

Declare the nature of the interest

Do NOT participate in the item at the meeting. Do NOT speak or vote on the item EXCEPT where you hold a dispensation

You are advised to leave the room during the debate

Local Interest

Yes

Declare the nature of the interest

Applying the bias and pre-determination tests means you may need to refrain from speaking and voting

You may also need to leave the meeting. Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer

No

Do you have a personal interest in the matter?

Yes

Consider the bias and pre-determination tests

You may need to refrain from speaking & voting

You may also need to leave the meeting. Please seek advice

No

You can take part in the meeting speak and vote

What are the principles of bias and pre-determination and how do they affect my participation in the meeting?

Bias and predetermination are common law concepts. If they affect you, your participation in the meeting may call into question the decision arrived at on the item.

Bias Test

In all the circumstances, would it lead a fair minded and informed observer to conclude that there was a real possibility or a real danger that the decision maker was biased?

Predetermination Test

At the time of making the decision, did the decision maker have a closed mind?

If a councillor appears to be biased or to have predetermined their decision, they must NOT participate in the meeting.

For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer
(susan.zeiss@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Selflessness

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

Objectivity

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

Accountability

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

Openness

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

Honesty & Integrity

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

Leadership

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence from Councillors.

2. Substitute Members

To receive information on any changes in the membership of the Committee.

Note – When a member of a Committee is unable to attend a meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee, the relevant Political Group Leader (or their nominated representative) may, by notice to the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated representative) prior to the meeting, appoint a substitute member from within the same Political Group. The contact details on the front of this agenda should be used for notifications.

3. Declarations of Interests

Councillors are requested to declare any interests on items included in this agenda. Please refer to the workflow on the preceding page for guidance.

Declarations received will be reported at the meeting.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 10 September 2020.

7 - 12

5. Public Issues

To receive any public questions, statements or petitions submitted in accordance with the Constitution. Further information on the requirements for submitting these is available to view at the following link:-

<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/documents/s2305/Public%20Items%20-%20Meeting%20Procedure%20Rules.pdf>

The deadline for the submission of public questions is Thursday 15 October 2020.

The deadline for the submission of a statement is 12.00 noon, Wednesday 21 October 2020.

The deadline for the submission of a petition was Wednesday 7 October 2020.

6. 2019/20 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman annual report

13 - 16

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) provides an independent and impartial service to investigate complaints about Councils, or actions taken by another body on behalf of the Council.

The LGSCO provides a report annually which details the number of enquiries, investigations and resolved complaints for each authority in the

past financial year. BCP Council's annual report is attached as Appendix A
The 2019/20 report shows that the number of enquiries to the LGSCO have risen slightly, as have the investigations, but there has been a fall in the number of investigations upheld by the Ombudsman to 50%.
There are no major concerns relating to LGSCO findings.

7. Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2019/20

17 - 46

The 2019/20 Equality & Diversity report appended to this paper provides an overview of the work undertaken by BCP Council to meet its responsibilities as set out under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty.

BCP Council's equality commitments are embedded throughout the council's corporate strategy and delivery plans.

Equality and diversity actions are captured in a council wide Equality & Diversity Action Plan which is included in the report appended to this paper.

The action plan is built around the requirements for achieving the excellent level of the Equality Framework for Local Government and the Council is progressing well against this.

8. Governance of Corporate Health & Safety and Fire Safety

47 - 58

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Health & Safety and Fire Safety Board scheduled to take place in July was postponed and instead, an interim report was provided to the Director's Strategy Group on 23rd June 2020, to ensure governance of Health & Safety and Fire Safety was reported and discussed. During this meeting, it was agreed that the next Health & Safety and Fire Safety Board would take place on 28th September 2020 and remain quarterly moving forward.

This report details progress made on the delivery of Health & Safety and Fire Safety governance arrangements for BCP Council and highlights;

- The steps taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing subsequent recovery,
- implementation of Governance framework
- Reporting of Health and Safety and fire safety to the board
- Covid 19 response
- An overview of service delivery

9. Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Annual Update (from November 19 to October 20)

59 - 84

Emergency planning and business continuity activity in BCP Council over the reporting period has been dominated by COVID-19. This update provides a high-level overview of the scale and nature of the COVID-19 response, from a governance perspective, in addition to more business as usual aspects that have continued in parallel. It also provides a consideration of concurrent and future risks.

10.	Risk Management – Corporate Risk Register Update	85 - 94
	<p>This report updates councillors on the position of the council’s Corporate Risk Register. The main updates are as follows: The comprehensive review of the Corporate Risk Register including the incorporation of the COVID-19 risks.</p>	
11.	Internal Audit - Quarterly Audit Plan Update	95 - 100
	<p>This report details progress made on delivery of the 2020/21 Audit Plan for the period July to September (inclusive) 2020. The report highlights that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight audit assignments have been completed (with the following summary opinions - one ‘Substantial’, six ‘Reasonable’ and one Consultancy Review); • Twenty-two audit assignments are in progress; • Implementation of audit recommendations is satisfactory. • Internal Audit have completed their support of COVID 19 grant verification work. 	
12.	Annual Review of Register of Declarations of Outside Interests and Receipts of Gifts & Hospitality by Officers (2019/20)	101 - 106
	<p>For the 2019/20 financial year, the first operating year of BCP Council, legacy Council Declaration of Interests, gifts and hospitality policies and procedures have been followed by officers.</p> <p>The BCP Council - Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality for Policy (for Officers) was introduced on 1st April 2020 and made provision for retrospective ‘base’ declarations dating back to the start of BCP Council, 1 April 2019.</p> <p>An effective corporate wide roll-out of the Policy has taken place and assurance can be provided that senior managers (tier4 officers and above) are complying with the requirements of the new Policy.</p> <p>There have been no internal or external identified instances, whistleblowing or reports by any other means where an un-declared interest has led to any disciplinary action or led to reputational damage.</p>	
13.	External Audit - Progress Report & Sector Update	107 - 156
	<p>The attached report provides an update to Audit & Governance Committee on the External Auditor’s progress to date in delivering their responsibilities.</p> <p>The report also includes a summary of emerging national issues and developments that may be relevant to the Council.</p> <p>An additional presentation covering the independent review by Sir Tony Redmond into the effectiveness of local audit and the transparency of financial reporting has also been provided.</p>	

14. Audit & Governance Committee Forward Plan (refresh)	157 - 160
This report sets out the reports to be received by the Audit & Governance Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.	
15. Annual Report of Internal Audit Counter Fraud Work and Whistleblowing Referrals 2019/20	161 - 180
This report details counter fraud work carried out by Internal Audit to provide assurance on the Council's response to combating fraud & corruption.	
Internal Audit have investigated all allegations of suspected fraud or financial irregularity in a proportionate manner.	
Four whistleblowing referrals for the Council were received and investigated by Internal Audit during 2019/20.	
[PLEASE NOTE: Should the Committee wish to discuss the detail of Appendix A the meeting will be required to move into Confidential (Exempt) session]	

No other items of business can be considered unless the Chairman decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 September 2020 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr J Beesley – Chairman

Cllr L Williams – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr M Andrews, Cllr M F Brooke, Cllr D Butt, Cllr M Cox,
Cllr B Dunlop, Cllr S McCormack and Cllr M White

Also in Cllr D Brown and Cllr V Slade
attendance:

19. Apologies

There were no apologies from councillors for this meeting.

20. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

21. Declarations of Interests

Cllr M F Brooke declared a local interest in respect of agenda item 6 as he was a Council appointed representative on Bournemouth Development Company Partnership Board. He indicated that he would take part and vote if required.

22. Confirmation of Minutes

The Chairman gave an update on the Constitution Review Working Group. The Group's first meeting on 2 September had dealt primarily with procedural matters. All Members of the Council had been canvassed for suggestions, with a follow up reminder. Comments received (many of which were planning- related) had been collated into a spreadsheet for the Group to consider. The Group was due to meet again on 23 September with relevant councillors and planning officers invited. It was anticipated that two or three meetings would be required before reporting back to the Committee. It may be that a further canvass of Members' views would be required, in which case he would coordinate this with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Group and Democratic Services.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2020 be confirmed as an accurate record.**

(b) That the Chairman's update on the Constitution Review Working Group be noted.

Voting – Unanimous

23. Public Issues

There were no public issues submitted for this meeting.

24. Structure and Operation of the Bournemouth Development Company

The Director of Development introduced a presentation on the structure and organisation of Bournemouth Development Company (BDC), one of a number of topics of interest which Members had requested be brought to the Committee.

The Town Centre Vision Programme Leader explained that BDC was formed in 2011 as a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) following a lengthy public procurement process. The LLP had its own bespoke governance arrangements which enabled it to align as far as it was able to with the Council's own internal processes at key stages in the development process. He explained why BDC had been formed – to respond to market failure and previous lack of delivery, to have more control and input in the development process, and to capture the fruits of development. He outlined the role of the three tiers of decision making within which BDC operated, as follows:

- Development Manager: with delegated responsibility for day to day decisions on the development process, but required to seek guidance/approval from the BDC Partnership Board on certain matters. The role required a level of industry expertise not available within the Council and was fulfilled by Morgan Sindall Investments Limited, part of Morgan Sindall Group, a large construction services business well known in the market place.
- BDC Partnership Board: which ensured that LLP Member Approval decisions were implemented in accordance with specified requirements. At the present time the Board was made up of three councillors and two representatives of Morgan Sindall. It acted in the best interests of BDC and its four business objectives: regeneration of the area; bringing forward buildings of good quality and design; ensuring delivery on the ground; and delivering returns in line with the business plan and site development plan approved by Cabinet.
- LLP Member Approval – made up of two members, the Council and Morgan Sindall, with the Council acting in its own interests at this level. Designed as a deadlock vehicle requiring consensus to proceed. Council decisions were made openly and transparently by Cabinet or full Council. Morgan Sindall had its own internal governance arrangements to obtain its member Approval. LLP Member Approval was required for all major/strategic decisions.

The Town Centre Vision Programme Leader provided an illustrative example of the financial case for BDC, which demonstrated that the joint development approach gave a higher return and guarantee of delivery than through a straight forward land disposal. In conclusion, BDC had delivered on the ground using a model which was being replicated elsewhere. Although progress was not as far advanced as anticipated, BDC had long term regeneration objectives and was only nine years into its twenty year programme.

Councillors acknowledged the beneficial aspects of the LLP model but raised a number of issues around value for money, risk, and transparency. Councillors felt that it was important to provide assurance on these issues, particularly if this model was to be used for future regeneration programmes.

Councillors asked whether the Council was getting value for money in its partnership with Morgan Sindall and whether this was equitable in financial terms. It was difficult for a lay person to understand how the financial returns worked and it was noted that this information was not easily accessible. There were particular concerns about the land valuation process, and two examples of development sites were given where the residual land value was set either very low (Durley Road Car Park) or at nil (Winter Gardens). Councillors asked whether the returns for Morgan Sindall were fixed and if so, what happened if the profit margins were not achieved.

Officers confirmed that the BDC model provided greater financial return than the land disposal option. It also brought with it the added benefits of regeneration. Morgan Sindall held an equal stake in BDC, and shared profits 50/50 with the Council. Profit margins were not fixed. The Partnership Board was responsible for agreeing the level of profit for each specific project. This varied according to each project and the level of risk involved.

The Committee was provided with further information about the valuation procedure, which was undertaken by an independent external valuer using the industry wide accepted RICS 'red book'. The valuation was not done until uncertainties such as planning, construction cost, finance cost and planning/highways legal agreements were accounted for. This was checked against the development appraisal by BDC and more often than not when market level of profit was applied the residual land value under red book analysis was less than through the BDC mechanism. It was a complex, technical process, built into the LLP agreement. It was noted that the Council had a legal requirement to show 'best consideration' when disposing of an asset. The Section 151 Officer was asked how best consideration was achieved. He explained that this was done by making a balanced judgement on value for money. This involved a subjective assessment of all relevant factors, including land value, profit and the delivery of development where it would otherwise not be achieved.

Councillors sought further information about the LLP agreement and asked whether it was publicly available. There were questions about whether the

agreement entailed all risks falling on the Council, and how any imbalance in levels of knowledge and expertise within Morgan Sindall and the Council was addressed. The Interim Monitoring Officer gave assurance that while the LLP agreement was a very complicated document the Council had a good working knowledge and understanding of its provisions. One of these provisions required Secretary of State consent for any undervalue exceeding a certain threshold. The Town Centre Vision Programme Leader confirmed that although the LLP agreement was a private document it had been disclosed many times under Freedom of Information to other councils and interested parties wishing to use a similar template.

With regard to risk the Town Centre Vision Programme Leader reported that in the early stages a large part of the risk profile was passed on to Morgan Sindall, requiring it to fund schemes through the planning process with any remuneration for this risk not due until 'practical completion'. He assured the Committee that he had 40 years experience of the development process in various roles, having in that time worked on the delivery of £15 billion of transactions. He therefore felt he had a good understanding of the role Morgan Sindall played. He was able to support councillors and officers in understanding their roles and ensuring due process was followed.

Officers were asked about the strategic direction of BDC and any plans to add sites from the wider conurbation. Officers confirmed that this was under consideration in accordance with specific procedures contained in the agreement. A report to Cabinet in October would identify one site in Poole for further investigation.

Councillors requested that a value for money audit on BDC be carried out, to enable the Committee to consider in more detail how the joint venture approach worked in real terms financially. It would be useful to look at specific developments, particularly in the context of the independent valuation process and the other issues raised during the discussion.

The Chairman thanked the Director of Development and the Town Centre Vision Programme Manager for their presentation and agreed to arrange in consultation with the Director of Development for a value for money audit on BDC to be reported to a future meeting of the Committee, as soon as practicable.

25. Review of Organisational and Operational Structure of BCP Council

The Committee received a presentation from the Chief Executive about the ongoing development of the corporate structures and functions of the Council. He explained how this sat within the context of delivering the objectives and values of the Corporate Strategy and the Council's new operating model. He gave an overview of the current structure of five corporate directorates and sixteen service directorates which had been established by the Shadow Authority. Particular points of note included:

- Corporate Management Board now included the statutory officer roles of Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.
- Public Health was a shared service with Dorset, with the Director forming part of the ASC management team.
- Children’s Services had seen some of the first external appointments made. All three Children’s Services in Dorset required improvement.
- The new service within Regeneration and Economy (Destination and Culture), which had been unable to recruit a permanent director.

The Chief Executive reported that the corporate structure had served the Council well during its initial transition period. Compared to some other councils it was quite lean but it was also larger than either of the preceding unitary authorities. He anticipated that the number of directorates would reduce once the Council reached its business as usual stage. In the meantime he highlighted some interim changes that he was proposing following consultation with corporate/service directors.

Firstly, it was suggested that the Directors of Resources and Law and Governance should report direct into the Chief Executive, allowing the Corporate Director for Resources to focus on the transformation agenda. Secondly, within Regeneration and Economy it was proposed to transfer some operational services including the seafront to Environment and Community, to provide more clarity in place shaping/leading. Within the Growth and Infrastructure service it was also proposed to split planning and transport in order to increase capacity to deliver the transforming cities fund and transport infrastructure and improve planning performance.

The Chief Executive highlighted other potential structural changes which could bring together expertise at the same time as reducing the cost of the function. One proposal under consideration was to create a Director of Communications, Marketing and Strategy (replacing Destination and Culture) to centralise functions currently spread across other services. Another area being looked at was commissioning and procurement. In conclusion the Chief Executive predicted an extensive and continual evolution of the structure, with further refinements made during the business as usual phase in around 18 months from now.

The Chief Executive responded to questions from the Committee on his presentation. He was asked about the evolution of the structure in the context of the Covid-19 situation. He explained that the capacity of the current structure had been needed in the last six months and he commended staff for their response. In areas such as safeguarding the situation had brought the Council and partners closer together in their working arrangements. It had also changed thinking and highlighted the need to drive through transformation.

He was asked about the rationale for moving seafront services in view of its pivotal place in the visitor economy. He explained that it was the day to day operational services along the seafront which would transfer. The development of a new seafront strategy was part of the place shaping agenda and would remain where it was. A councillor asked if the entire

length of the coastline could be included in the transformation plans. It was noted that the Beach App did not extend beyond Sandbanks and the Leader of the Council confirmed that this was because the app was intended to cover managed beaches to ensure social distancing and would in future be managed by digital means (meaning all areas could not be included).

The Chief Executive was also asked whether transformation and evolution were incongruous. He explained the differentiation between the need to transform rapidly the way the Council worked and the advantages of continual evolution of the structure as opposed to one major reorganisation. The Leader of the Council responded to a question to the Chief Executive on the structure chart and explained that she had worked with senior officers to produce a version of the structure chart with contact details at Tier 4 officer level to assist councillors in their day to day work. This would be available in the next 14 days. The Chief Executive confirmed that a guaranteed route for councillors to submit and track complaints was also being worked on.

The Corporate Director of Resources highlighted the scale of both transitional and transformational changes which would be taking place across the Council over the next few years. He explained that while the response to the Covid-19 situation had required a significant change in working practices the underlying challenges of transformation, such as technology and office requirements, had yet to be addressed.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Executive for his presentation and requested an update to the Committee at a future meeting.

The Chairman thanked councillors and officers for their contributions to the meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm

CHAIRMAN

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Report subject	2019/20 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman annual report
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) provides an independent and impartial service to investigate complaints about Councils, or actions taken by another body on behalf of the Council.</p> <p>The LGSCO provides a report annually which details the number of enquiries, investigations and resolved complaints for each authority in the past financial year. BCP Council's annual report is attached as Appendix A</p> <p>The 2019/20 report shows that the number of enquiries to the LGSCO have risen slightly, as have the investigations, but there has been a fall in the number of investigations upheld by the Ombudsman to 50%.</p> <p>There are no major concerns relating to LGSCO findings.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Members of the Audit and Governance Committee note the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Reports</p>
Reason for recommendations	To ensure that members of the Audit and Governance Committee are informed with regard to the Council's performance in relation to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Drew Mellor – Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Julian Osgathorpe
Contributors	Graeme Smith – Policy and Performance Officer
Wards	All
Classification	For Information

Background

1. BCP Council operates a two-stage complaint investigation process for all complaints that sit outside of a statutory complaints process. These are referred to as corporate complaints.
2. There is a separate statutory process for handling complaints relating to Adult Social Care, Children Social Care and for Bournemouth held council housing stock.
3. All stages of the council's complaint investigation process are managed within service units.
4. Policy, process and corporate reporting is managed by the Insight, Policy and Performance team for corporate complaints.
5. Head of Insight, Policy and Performance is the LGSCO Link Officer for BCP.
6. If a complainant remains unhappy after corporate and statutory complaints processes have been completed, they are advised to refer their complaint to the LGSCO.
7. The role of the LGSCO is to provide an independent and impartial service to investigate complaints about Councils, or actions taken by another body on behalf of the Council.
8. The remit of LGSCO is limited to complaints of maladministration leading to injustice, a failure in a service, or failure to provide a service.
9. When aiming to settle complaints, a financial payment may be suggested. The LGSCO uses a scale of payments to help investigators to be consistent. These may range from a few pounds to several thousands. The LGSCO may also suggest changes in the Council's policy or practices.
10. The LGSCO issues an Annual Review Letter and Report in June/July each year regarding the authorities' performance. The report for 2019/20 is attached as Appendix A to this paper.
11. Their report includes two sets of information:
 - Enquiries and investigation concluded for legacy councils during 2019/20
 - Enquiries received and concluded, and investigations concluded for BCP Council during 2019/20.

12. All reports are sent to Council Leaders, Head of Paid Services and the Chairs of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny panels to support greater democratic scrutiny of local complaint handling and to ensure effective local accountability of public services.
13. Further information on the Annual Review and summary of statistics can be found on the LGSCO's website www.lgo.org.uk

LGSCO Report Headlines

14. As the Ombudsman notes, the number of complaints taken alone is not a reliable indicator of an authority's performance. The volume of complaints should be considered alongside the upheld rate and alongside statistics that indicate the authority's willingness to accept fault and put things right when it goes wrong.
15. The total number of complaints/enquiries received by the LGSCO for the legacy councils and BCP Council during 2019/20 was 105 compared to 93 in 2018/19 and 129 in 2017/18.
16. In 2019/20, 28 of the complaints/enquiries received were subject to a detailed investigation. The LGSCO will only investigate a complaint where there is the possibility that injustice and maladministration has occurred. As a result, most complaints and enquiries received by the LGSCO do not proceed to detailed investigation.
17. The LGSCO upheld 14 of the complaints they investigated This is an upheld rate of 50% for BCP Council, which is below the national average of 61%.
18. Across all authorities, the Ombudsman has highlighted the upheld rates in Education and Children Services which were 72%, and relating to Education and Health Care Plans where 91% of all complaints investigated were upheld. For BCP Council, all 3 complaints relating to Children's Services that were subject to detailed investigation were upheld, including 1 relating to Education and Health Care Plans.
19. The table below shows the complaints that were subject to detailed investigation, how many were upheld and in which service areas.

Service Area	Number of investigations	Number upheld
Adult Social Care	11	7
Children's Services	3	3
Housing	3	1
Growth and Infrastructure	7	2
Law and Governance	4	1

20. There is no theme to the errors found by the Ombudsman, indicating that they are not resulting from systematic issues. Two of the complaints were upheld due to minor errors and no injustice was found to have occurred. Consequently, no remedy was recommended for these.
21. Of the remaining 12, a financial remedy was recommended in 7 and 1 service improvement was recommended. This related to Adult Care Services in Bournemouth Borough Council and it recommended that the council:
- Remind staff about the timescales involved in complaint handling and to, as far as possible, provide full responses at the earliest opportunity;
 - Review processes so the revenues and charging departments are working in partnership to avoid duplication of cheques and confusion;
 - Review invoicing procedures to look at how invoices are written and payments reflected to avoid confusion.
22. 100% of all recommended remedies have been actioned to the LGSCO's satisfaction.
23. Nationally the LGSCO issued 63 public reports last year. Public reports are issued when cases raise serious issues or are of public interest. The Council had no reports issued.
24. The LGSCO report indicates that BCP Council is performing well in comparison to the national picture.

Summary of financial implications

25. In 19/20 the LGSCO recommended 7 instances of financial redress costing BCP Council £3,250.

Summary of legal implications

26. None

Summary of human resources implications

27. None

Summary of environmental impact

28. None

Summary of public health implications

29. None

Summary of equality implications

30. None of the upheld complaints indicated any equalities related implications.

Summary of risk assessment

31. Not applicable

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Report subject	Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2019/20
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The 2019/20 Equality & Diversity report appended to this paper provides an overview of the work undertaken by BCP Council to meet its responsibilities as set out under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty.</p> <p>BCP Council's equality commitments are embedded throughout the council's corporate strategy and delivery plans.</p> <p>Equality and diversity actions are captured in a council wide Equality & Diversity Action Plan which is included in the report appended to this paper.</p> <p>The action plan is built around the requirements for achieving the excellent level of the Equality Framework for Local Government and the Council is progressing well against this.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Audit & Governance Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) note the Equality & Diversity 2019/20 End of Year Performance Report b) note the changes to the Equality & Diversity Governance Framework c) identify any further equality and diversity information they require
Reason for recommendations	<p>An understanding of planned equality actions which contribute towards the achievement of our equality objectives. To help provide assurance that the council is effectively discharging its public sector equality duty.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Leader of the Council; Councillor Bobbie Dove – Cabinet Lead Member for Equalities
Corporate Director	Julian Osgathorpe – Corporate Director for Resources Matti Raudsepp – Director of Organisational Development
Report Authors	Bridget West; Sam Johnson
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For information

Background

1. BCP Council's Equality & Diversity Policy and Governance Framework was adopted by Cabinet in October 2019.
2. The council's commitments to advance equality are included in all the corporate strategy priorities and delivery plan actions. This was adopted by full council in November 2019. The aim is, to achieve the excellent level of the [Equality Framework for Local Government](#) (EFLG).
3. These commitments and other actions are captured in BCP Council's Equality and Diversity (E&D) action plan.
4. All the actions are mapped to one of the four modules of the EFLG and against the relevant Corporate Strategy priorities and objectives. Actions have been assigned to meet outcomes aligned to the excellent criteria of the EFLG. This will ensure equality is embedded throughout BCP Council.
5. The action plan has been framed this way to help ensure the council exceeds its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) enshrined in the Equality Act 2010.
6. The Strategic Equality Leadership Group (SELG) reviewed the first full equality action plan at its meeting in February 2020. In line with the agreed governance framework, this group sets the strategic direction for equality in BCP Council, monitors progress with actions and identifies new actions it will take forward.
7. Service Unit Equality Champions have contributed in collating performance updates for the E&D action plan.
8. A 2019/20 E&D performance report, along with the E&D Action plan is attached at Appendix A.
9. This report was submitted to the SELG on 14th September 2020 and to the new Equality Action Commission on 25th September.
10. A summary of the report, together with a link to the overarching E&D performance scorecard and action plan is included in the Corporate End of Year performance report submitted to Cabinet on 30th September 2020.

The E&D action plan summarises higher level actions and outcomes. Performance measures with baseline data and targets require development to incorporate more

granular data. More detailed performance reporting will be available once the above has been developed.

Performance Summary

11. The action plan consists of 152 individual actions. Overall, given the challenges of Local Government Reorganisation at the beginning of 2019/20 and the challenges of Covid 19 on the working practices towards the end of March 2020, good progress is being made with delivering these.
12. Covid 19 has brought community groups and their leaders together into a strategic partnership within the Together We Can initiative which was launched on 23rd March 2020. The community played a key role in all aspects of the council's planning and response to Covid 19, including coordination of support services and the activity of community volunteers.
13. The reduction of isolation and loneliness has been a key aspect of Together We Can as volunteers have been available to speak with members of the community who are shielding or vulnerable.
14. Wider communication and engagement with communities was established at the start of the Covid 19 response and continues.
15. The Equality and Human Rights Commission suspended PSED reporting obligations for 2020, due to the coronavirus outbreak. However, workforce equality profiles of all the legacy councils were published and new [BCP council workforce profiles](#) were subsequently published in June 2020.
16. Equality & diversity training has been delivered to some members and officer training continues to be available online and through face to face workshops.
17. The BCP People Strategy has been developed and will support the Diverse and Engaged Workforce module of the EFLG, as set out in the E&D action plan.
18. Except for the Employees Equality Champions group, all other elements of the E&D governance framework agreed in October 2019 are in place and active. This has now been amended to include the Equality Action Commission. This is introduced in more detail below.

Areas of improvement

19. Steps are 20 already being taken to address several of the areas highlighted for improvement in the end of year report. These include:
 - developing clearer equality measures and setting targets to evidence the advancement of equality.
 - reviewing and embedding the Equality Impact Assessment (EIAs) process to support informed and timely decision making and evidencing the compliance
 - improving collection, collation and utilisation of equality monitoring data to inform future service design and delivery and pay due regard to the profiles of the community and workforce
 - annually updating the community and work force profile for BCP Council to ensure they are understood. These to be recorded within equality profile papers to better understand our communities and inform EIAs
 - development of staff network groups linked to relevant protected characteristics as appropriate and to promote these persons as employee equality champions

- providing organisational advice and support to the Equality Action Commission to understand the needs of vulnerable groups such as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and individuals

Revised Equality & Diversity Governance arrangements

20. The equality & diversity policy and supporting governance framework was adopted by Cabinet in October 2019.
21. Since the 2019/20 year end, an Equality Action Commission has been established by BCP Council's Strategic Equality Leadership Group (SELG), with its inaugural meeting held on Friday 25 September 2020.
22. This group consists of elected members and four external community representatives.
23. This group is now an integral part of the council's governance framework. A revised equality & diversity governance framework is attached as Appendix B to this report.
24. SELG have appointed this group whose aim is to shape BCP Councils current practise and improve understanding of vulnerable and underrepresented groups.
25. This new commission aims to:
 - review BCP Council's current practices and what it could do to improve it's understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of BAME communities and individuals
 - review the impact of the council's public profile and encourage engagement with underrepresented groups
 - increase participation and representation from underrepresented groups
26. The commission will review issues including:
 - under representation in senior management grades
 - internal and external communications so that they are more representative of the communities served across the towns of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole
 - levels of trust and confidence from underrepresented groups
 - the cultural offer to residents and visitors including statues, memorials and plaques

Summary of financial implications

27. There are no known financial implications. Any costs of discharging public sector equality duties should fall within service budgets and any costs with the setting up and supporting the Equality Action Commission can be met from the corporate equality budget.

Summary of legal implications

28. There are no known legal implications however, it should be noted that failure to discharge our Public Sector Equality Duty could lead to damage to reputation, judicial review and subsequent financial implications for BCP Council.

Summary of human resources implications

29. There are no known new human resource implications. Service Unit Equality Champions are in place to help their services and the council to discharge their public sector equality duties.

Summary of sustainability impact

30. There are no known sustainability impacts.

Summary of public health implications

31. There are no known new public health implications as a result of this report.

Summary of equality implications

32. The E&D action plan is in place to identify and respond to known and new equality implications. The impact of Covid on protected characteristic groups and recent unrest around the Black Lives Matter protests and events across the world will be addressed through the work Equality Action Commission.

Summary of risk assessment

33. There are no known risks however, it should be noted that failure to discharge our Public Sector Equality Duty could lead to judicial review.

Background papers

Corporate Strategy & delivery plans – published works

Equality & Diversity Policy – published works

Appendices

1. 2019/20 Equality & Diversity Performance Report
2. Revised Equality & Diversity Governance Framework

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Equality & Diversity: Performance Report 2019/20

September 2020



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Background

The BCP Council Equality and Diversity (E&D) action plan sets an ambition of achieving excellent in the [Equality Framework for Local Government](#) (EFLG). This would ensure we not only meet but exceed our Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED) enshrined in the Equality Act 2010.

Summarised from the underlying principles section of the EFLG: The Framework supports Councils to consider the nine legally protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation are supported, in addition to other factors which impact upon equality such as caring responsibilities, socio-economic inequality and isolation including rural isolation. The EFLG is also supportive of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's six selected domains of equality measurement which it has identified as the areas of life that are important to people and that enable them to flourish. They are: Education, Work, Living standards, Health, Justice and personal security, and Participation.

All actions within the BCP Council Equality and Diversity action plan sit under one of the four modules of the EFLG and have then been mapped against all the Corporate Strategy priorities and applicable objectives. Furthermore, each action has been assigned a desired outcome based on the EFLG excellent criteria. This ensures equality is embedded in all we do.

The current E&D action plan summarises higher level actions and so local desired outcomes, performance measures with baseline data and targets still need to be developed using more granular detail.

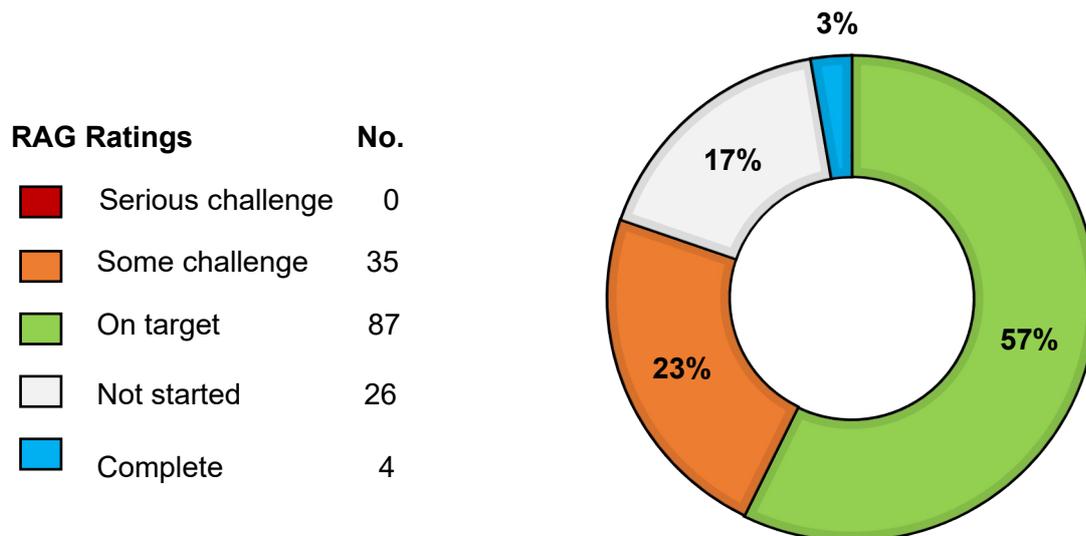
All relevant actions from the Corporate Strategy have been encompassed into the action plan. There are 152 actions in total, but this may change as the plan is designed to be organic.

The Equality and Diversity performance data is displayed in an interactive performance dashboard which can be viewed [here](#). A copy of the current Equality and Diversity action plan is appended, and relevant sections are linked in this report to add further contextual information.

Performance Summary

In the chart below you can see the RAG rated performance of all the 152 actions within the current Equality and Diversity (E&D) action plan (see [appendix 1](#)). Analysis will improve with future reporting when local desired outcomes, performance measures with baseline data and targets are developed.

Despite implications from covid-19, there are no red actions to indicate any serious challenges. Starting with the greatest percentage: 57% are marked as green where the actions are on target; 23% of the actions are marked as amber where there are some challenges, but mitigating action is in place; 17% are marked as white, where actions haven't yet been started; and 3% are marked as blue where actions have been completed.



Overall given the challenges of coronavirus on the working practices of the Council, we are performing well on the Council's Equality and Diversity actions. 60% of E&D actions are currently either complete or on target to be completed by agreed deadlines. In contrast, 40% either have some challenges or have not yet been started.

There is a breakdown in the following sections of this report, of the performance data based on the four modules of the EFLG. These four modules are:

- Understanding and working with your community
- Leadership and Organisational Commitment
- Responsive Services and Customer Care
- Diverse and Engaged Workforce

As it currently stands, performance across these four modules is quite evenly balanced. By using the combined percentage of Green and Blue RAG ratings as a positive indicator and the combined percentage Amber and White as a less positive indicator, we get the following overview:

- We have made the most progress on the 'Leadership and Organisational Commitment' module, with 9% of the actions completed and 55% on target; compared with 24% with some challenges and 12% not yet started.
- In contrast, we have the most ground to cover on the 'Responsive Services and Customer Care' module, with 25% of the actions not yet started and 17% with some challenges; compared with 56% on target and 2% completed.

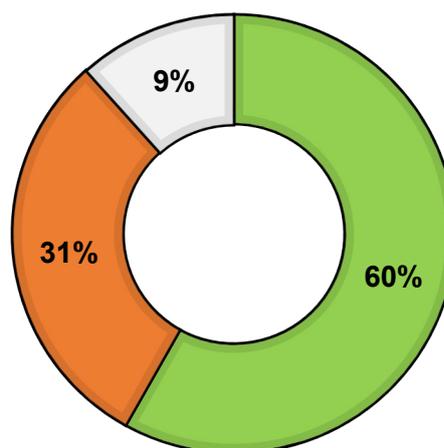
1. Understanding and Working with your Communities

Corporate Priority links: Brighter Futures; Connected Communities; Dynamic Places; Fulfilled Lives; Modern, Accessible and Accountable Council; and Sustainable Environment

Performance Summary

In the chart below you can see the RAG rated performance of the 42 actions that sit under the [‘Understanding and Working with your Communities’](#) EFLG module of the E&D action plan. There are no red actions to indicate any serious challenges nor any blue completed actions. Starting with the greatest percentage: 60% of the actions are marked as green where the actions are on target; 31% are marked as amber where there are some challenges, but mitigating action is in place; and 9% are marked as white, where actions haven’t yet been started.

RAG Ratings	No.
 Serious challenge	0
 Some challenge	13
 On target	25
 Not started	4
 Complete	0



Progress Highlights

- A Community Equality Champions group has been established and meets with representatives from the community. The group has worked on successful projects such as engaging with EU residents to inform them of the EU Settlement Scheme.
- More work is yet to be done to better understand the community and service users and subsequently, barriers to engagement. Census data will help to form a better picture of the community profile.
- The council's response to covid-19 has brought community groups and their leaders together to work as a strategic partnership within the Together We Can Workstreams. The community have played a key role in all aspects of the council's planning and response including coordination of support services and the activity of community volunteers.
- Through the workstreams of Together We Can, BCP Council has engaged representatives from a number of minority groups including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.
- A widely representative Cultural Action Group has been set-up and is working to address development, recovery and engagement, to take forward the recommendations of the Cultural Enquiry and develop the Cultural Compact and strategy.
- The pilot parks programme commenced as part of Future Parks Accelerator to test innovative ways of engaging more residents in use of public space. There is a partnership with the park's foundation and community groups.
- The Local Energy Advice Partnership scheme will make home visits to assist householders with free energy saving measures and larger grant-funded works to reduce emissions and tackle fuel poverty.
- The Corporate Parenting Board has good representation and input from children in care (CIC) and care experienced young people (CEYP). A co-produced work plan leads the development for CIC & CEYP.

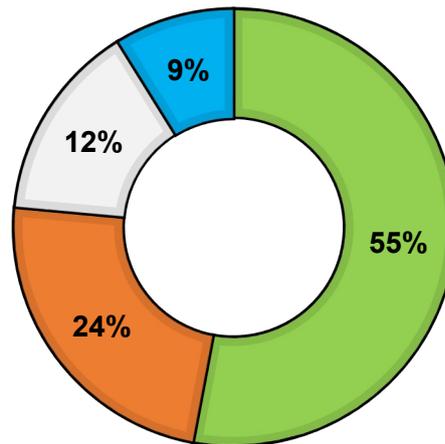
2. Leadership and Organisational Commitment

Corporate Priority links: Brighter Futures; Connected Communities; Fulfilled Lives; and Modern, Accessible and Accountable Council

Performance Summary

In the chart below you can see the RAG rated performance of the 33 actions that sit under the ['Leadership and Organisational Commitment'](#) EFLG module of the E&D action plan. There are no red actions to indicate any serious challenges. Starting with the greatest percentage: 55% of the actions are marked as green where the actions are on target; 24% are marked as amber where there are some challenges, but mitigating action is in place; 12% are marked as white, where actions haven't yet been started; and 9% of the actions are marked blue as completed.

RAG Ratings	No.
 Serious challenge	0
 Some challenge	8
 On target	18
 Not started	4
 Complete	3



Progress Highlights

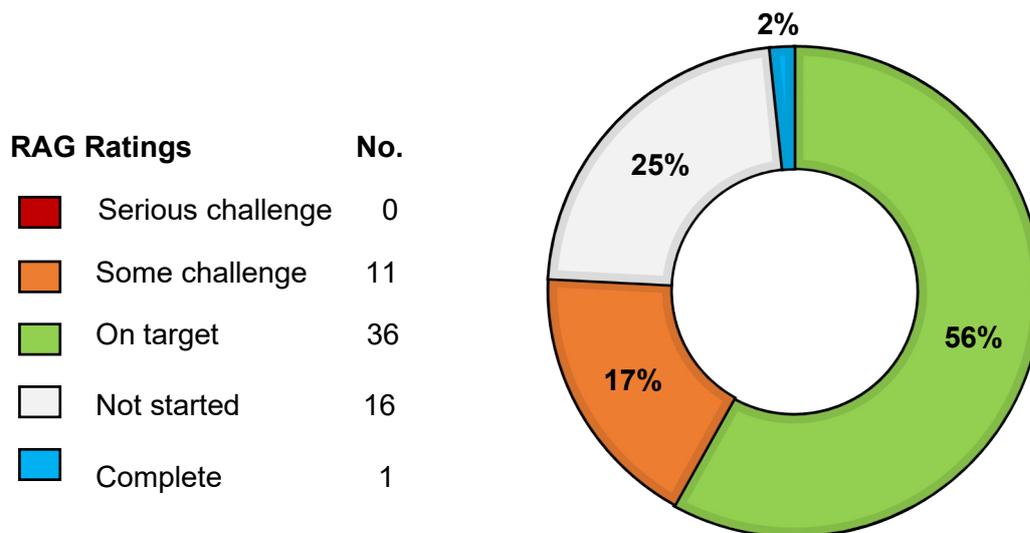
- Equality commitments are set in the Corporate Strategy which was adopted by full Council in November 2019. Further work needs to be done to develop equality outcomes, performance measures with baseline data and targets for improvement.
- Equality and Diversity Policy and governance framework was adopted by Cabinet in October 2019.
- The Strategic Equality Leadership Group; Community Equality Champions Group and Service Unit Equality Champion Group are in place and working. The Employee Equality Champions groups are still being developed.
- Equality impact assessments are required as part of the Council's decision-making processes, but application is inconsistent across the council. New guidance and templates are required along with additional training. All committee reports require equality impact statements.
- The Council has signed the Dorset Armed Forces Covenant agreement which will ensure better support for members of the armed forces community. Additionally, a Member champion is working with officers to embed the principles in relevant policy and practice and a BCP Council Action Plan is in place.
- Dorset Whole School Approach supported 29 schools across the BCP Council area through 16 successful bids providing funding towards programmes or projects that promote and enable physical activity, increasing children's mental wellbeing.
- Engagement with the Pan-Dorset Carers Steering Group is ongoing to review the Strategic Vision document 'Valuing Carers in Dorset'. An equality impact assessment (EIA) is an ongoing integral element of this work.
- Following the community volunteer response on the back of covid-19 and building on the success of the Together We Can programme, a collaborative approach will be used to involve and engage a wider range of communities/groups and residents who are not currently involved or engaged across the BCP Council area.

3. Responsive Services and Customer Care

Corporate Priority links: Brighter Futures; Connected Communities; Fulfilled Lives; and Modern, Accessible and Accountable Council

Performance Summary

In the chart below you can see the RAG rated performance of the 64 actions that sit under the ['Responsive Services and Customer Care'](#) EFLG module of the E&D action plan. There are no red actions to indicate any serious challenges. Starting with the greatest percentage: 56% of the actions are marked as green where the actions are on target; 25% are marked as white, where actions haven't yet been started; 17% are marked as amber where there are some challenges, but mitigating action is in place; and 2% of the actions are marked blue as completed.



Progress Highlights

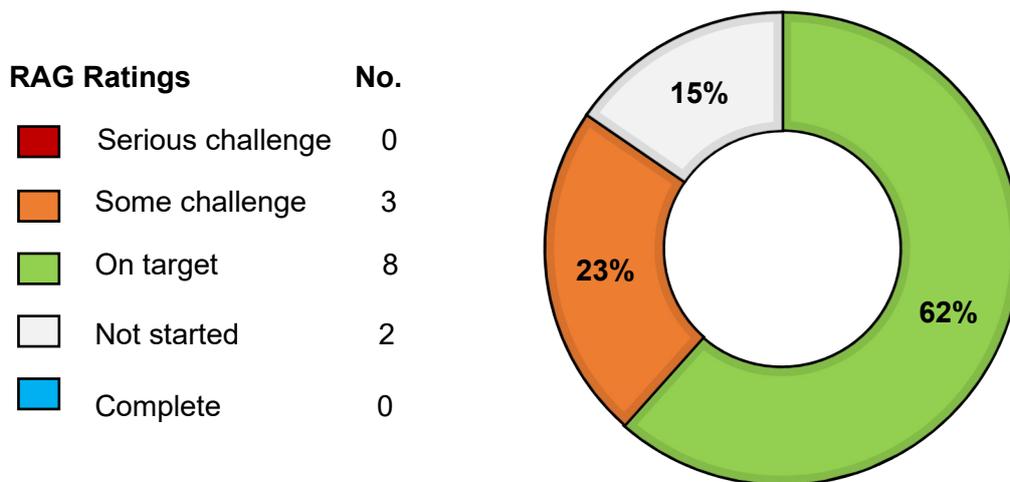
- Annual grant funding was provided to Dorset Race Equality Council.
- A contract to engage with representatives of a range of disabled communities on behalf of BCP is in place and used to inform policy development and most recently the Corporate Strategy.
- Transforming Cities fund, with funding confirmed, will deliver enhanced public transport infrastructure along specific transport corridors delivering new bus shelters with accessibility improvements over and above normal Local Transport Plan funded ones.
- There is now one BCP Fostering Team. There is an ongoing marketing campaign and monthly increases have been seen in the number of approved fostering households which results in a higher proportion of children in care in Local Authority family-based placements.
- The Care Leavers Pledge has been produced in consultation with care experienced young people.
- An Overarching Early Help (EH) strategy has been published.
- Equality commitments and performance measures are embedded in current corporate procurement process.
- Strategic Procurement support service unit commissioning officers ensure compliance with the PSED.
- The reduction of isolation has been a key aspect of the Together We Can initiative. Volunteers have been available to speak with members of the community who are shielding or vulnerable.
- Need to do more to understand the diversity of our current and potential customer base and work is beginning to establish the best way of collecting this.

4. Diverse and Engaged Workforce

Corporate Priority links: Dynamic Places; Fulfilled Lives; and Modern, Accessible and Accountable Council

Performance Summary

In the chart below you can see the RAG rated performance of the 13 actions that sit under the '[Diverse and Engaged](#)' EFLG module of the E&D action plan. There are no red actions to indicate any serious challenges nor any blue completed actions. Starting with the greatest percentage: 62% of the actions are marked as green where the actions are on target; 23% are marked as amber where there are some challenges, but mitigating action is in place; and 15% are marked as white, where actions haven't yet been started.



Progress Highlights

- Workforce diversity profiles of all legacy councils were [published online](#) and have since been updated to reflect the BCP workforce. The profiles rely on employee monitoring data collected through the Employee 1st system and there is still a lot of data missing. It is key to establish a robust workforce baseline to inform focussed improvement targets. Staff will be encouraged to provide their data through a communications and engagement campaign.
- However, monitoring data is provided more readily through staff surveys – with an average completion rate > 90% completion rate.
- Employee Equality Champion groups, which make up part of the E&D Governance Framework, are still under development but once in place will have a key role in informing the People Strategy and have a voice at the Strategic Equality Leadership Group.
- An Equality & Diversity training programme for Members and officers has been developed. This needs further review to ensure training is accessible online and can be delivered in line with covid-19 restrictions.
- HR are leading the Pay and Reward Strategy with manager and staff engagement.
- The BCP People Strategy is being developed and actions delivered. Up to date and more reliable employee monitoring data will help inform targeted actions.
- The Behaviours Framework has been developed which sets out the qualities and attributes the council expects of all its employees which incorporates respect. This is yet to be implemented.

Future Actions

Notably since year end, an independent working group has been set up to review the Council's approach to inclusivity, particularly the engagement of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and to review how the council's imagery can be improved to understand barriers of engagement.

Additional equality actions are expected to stem from the work of this group and will be incorporated into the Council's Equality and Diversity (E&D) action plan. Progress towards these actions will continue to be monitored quarterly by SELG and a summary report shared with Cabinet. Analysis will improve with future reporting when local desired outcomes, performance measures with baseline data and targets are developed.

As more of the current actions detailed in the action plan are completed, the Council will be closer to achieving excellence for the four modules in the [Equality Framework for Local Government](#) (EFLG) which helps us deliver and exceed our Public Sector Equality Duties.

Each of the actions in the E&D action plan has an associated desired EFLG outcome. As it currently stands, the Council is closest to achieving excellence for the 'Responsive Services and Customer Care' module which covers: commissioning and procuring services, integration of equality objectives into service planning, and service delivery.

In terms of further development, more actions could be developed around the excellence criteria for the 'Diverse and Engaged Workforce' module which covers: workforce diversity, inclusive strategies and policies, collecting, analysing and publishing workforce data, learning and development, and health and wellbeing.

Work currently being undertaken on equality monitoring and workforce profiling will help with this, as well as actions recommended by the independent working group.

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
1. Understanding and Working with your Communities									
30	Sustainable Environment ... Leading our communities towards a cleaner, sustainable future that preserves our outstanding environment for generations to come	Protect and enhance our outstanding natural environment	1	*	Work with partners to enhance recreation opportunities and health benefits, improve biodiversity and increase the length of accessible paths along the Stour Valley	Environment	Working with consultants to develop a new volunteering strategy for parks as part of the Future Parks Accelerator programme.	There is evidence of partnership arrangements leading to improved outcomes in participation.	Green
		Tackle the climate and ecological emergency	2	*	Launch and run a resident engagement programme to make homes energy efficient, reduce fuel poverty and raise awareness of the most effective climate friendly actions through 2020	Environment/Growth & Infrastructure	Engagement will continue but will follow different formats in light of restrictions imposed as a result of Covid 19. Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management- plan for and communicate the flood and coastal erosion risk posed by climate change by working in/with our communities to educate / set up community groups and plan for adaptation. Following the suggestion scheme via the website, a full engagement campaign and 'climate conversation' will take place during 2020. In addition, the Local Energy Advice Partnership scheme will make home visits to assist householders with free energy saving measures and larger grant-funded works to reduce emissions and tackle fuel poverty.	The organisation is working with partners to ensure that changing needs are identified and met.	Green
			3	*	Hold a climate and ecological emergency citizens assembly by summer 2020	Environment/Growth & Infrastructure	This is likely to be deferred until 2021.	Communities are encouraged or supported to influence or make decisions.	White
		Maximise access to our high quality parks and open spaces	4	*	Work with partners to increase the accessibility and diverse offer for parks and open spaces increasing the number of visitors	Environment	Pilot parks programme commenced as part of Future Parks Accelerator to test innovative ways of engaging more residents in use of public space. Partnership with parks foundation and community groups.	More people from under-represented groups are participating across a wider range of activities.	Green
	es ... Supporting an innovative, successful economy in a great place to live, learn, work and visit	Invest in the homes our communities need	5	*	Improve housing outcomes and access to good quality housing for all residents by developing a new Housing Strategy by October 2020	Housing	Overarching Housing Strategy delayed to Spring 2021 and realigned with housing market analysis being undertaken for emerging Local Plan. Revised timeline will help take into account the Covid 19 impacts on the local housing market.	Data is being used to predict and measure demand for services	Amber
			6	*	Ensure the right supply of specialist housing to meet needs	Housing	Strategy delayed as resources are directed to respond to Covid 19 - expected Spring 2022. Working with Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care colleagues to further understand unmet specialist housing needs.	The organisation and its partners are using data in the most innovative ways such as predictive analytics to target service interventions	Amber
			7	*	Build 1,000 new homes on BCP Council owned land over 5 years, including sub-market affordable and social rented homes	Housing	Strategy delayed as resources are directed to respond to Covid 19 - expected Spring 2023. Pipeline progressing well including the large Turlin Moor housing scheme, Princess road and multiple smaller scale sites. Good pipeline of sites coming through Cabinet. Interim Head of Housing Delivery in post. Developing company for private rented sector and private sale homes.	Data is being used to predict and measure demand for services	Amber
		Create a sustainable, vibrant and inclusive economy	8	*	Support the five existing key sectors of Advanced Engineering, Digital and Creative, Health and Social Care, Financial Services and Tourism to become more sustainable and increase productivity and reward	Development	A number of agreed actions have been put on hold as the organisation has diverted resource and capacity in response to Covid 19. In the 'Productive Businesses' section of the draft Economic Development Strategy (EDS), one of the priorities is 'Sustaining & expanding growth in existing business strengths' which specifically relates to our key sectors. The Economic Development team (ED) is also set up to deliver this objective with sector growth specialists in Engineering and Manufacturing (and managing the Dorset Engineering and Manufacturing Cluster - DEMC), Creative & Digital, Health & Social Care and Finance. ED also support the tourism team. ED already deliver significant sector support including Meet the Buyer events, apprenticeship events and signposting to support and grants. SMART targets will be set as part of the EDS including wages (median and lower quartiles and living wage), skills (NVQ 2-4), GDHI, house price affordability, life expectancy and hours worked per week etc. This will help ensure inclusive growth.	Achievement of outcomes are measured and there is evidence of gaps being narrowed.	Green
			9	*	Create an Economic Development Strategy by October 2020 to drive economic growth and reduce the employment inequality gap based on evidence produced by the local economic assessment	Development	Due to impact of Covid 19, the Economic Development Strategy (EDS) will now be taken to 25 November 2020 Cabinet. SMART targets will be set as part of the EDS to help ensure inclusive growth.	The organisation has a sophisticated understanding of the difference between the equality profile of their local area and how that translates to inequalities for different groups.	Amber
			10	*	Develop a Cultural Strategy by December 2021 to provide employment in the areas outstanding cultural sector	Destination & Culture	Development work affected by Covid 19 response, particularly for partner organisations and cultural activity across BCP. In response a widely representative Cultural Action Group has been set-up and is working to address development, recovery and engagement, to take forward the recommendations of the Cultural Enquiry and develop the Cultural Compact and strategy.	More people from under-represented groups are participating across a wider range of activities.	Green

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
31	Dynamic Plac	Increase productivity through skills development	11	*	Create a Skills Strategy by November 2020 which tackles inequality and supports local businesses in partnership with educational establishments and the market	Development	The BCP Skills Strategy will be part of the Economic Development Strategy and will include initiatives to support the most vulnerable in our community. BCP Council is already delivering a number of initiatives to support those most disadvantaged from the workforce. Examples include a potential new skills centre in Boscombe (as part of the Boscombe Town Deal); Young Enterprise which teaches employability skills to young people (often those most disengaged). BCP council is working with Jobcentre Plus to support those out of work back into employment through virtual jobs fairs. BCP Council's other departments such as Adult Social Care will be delivering projects to tackle loneliness and isolation.	There are a range of innovative approaches to involving communities and arrangements are made to meet specific or individual needs	Amber
	Iuded	Strengthen the cultural identity of our towns and places	12	*	Ensure strengthening the cultural identity of local communities is embedded throughout the BCP Council Local Plan by November 2022	Growth & Infrastructure	This is forming part of the prep of the Local Plan with further detail to be set out in the next consultation stage scheduled for early 2021.	There is obvious and demonstrable cross over between equality, diversity and community cohesion	Green
			13	*	Establish a Cultural Compact of BCP Council, agencies, cultural providers and communities by March 2021	Destination & Culture	Development work affected by Covid 19 response, particularly for partner organisations and cultural activity across BCP. In response a widely representative Cultural Action Group has been set-up and is working to address development, recovery and engagement, to take forward the recommendations of the Cultural Enquiry and develop the Cultural Compact and strategy.	The organisation works with others to improve performance on good relations between diverse communities.	Green
			14	*	Develop a library strategy which reflects the diversity of local communities and aspires to create neighbourhood hubs by December 2020	Destination & Culture	Library Strategy is being aligned to support the objectives and timescales of the wider customer access strategy for BCP Council.	There are a range of innovative approaches to involving communities and arrangements are made to meet specific or individual need	Green
			15	*	Promote and encourage a sense of civic pride and celebrate the historic traditions and identities of each town through the office of the Chairman, working closely with the respective Mayors	Law & Governance	The office of Chairman has been proactive in engaging with and supporting all communities. It is proposed to actively promote the role of the Chairman across the BCP area to increase the level of engagement. With the establishment of the Christchurch Town Council and the Charter Trustees for Bournemouth and Poole the historic traditions and identities of each town continue to be maintained and thrive, for example through events such as Remembrance Day.	The Council's leaders maintain a high profile on community relations.	Green
			16	*	Continue to support and promote a range of regional and local events and activities that reflect cultural diversity and are accessible to all	Destination & Culture	Public events have been put on hold in light of Covid 19	More people from under-represented groups are participating across a wider range of activities.	Amber
			17		Develop a strategy for the management of unauthorised encampments across BCP Council area.	Environment	At its meeting on 9th October 2019, Cabinet agreed to establish a cross-party member working group and to consider the alignment of policies and procedures across the Council. It was agreed that the complexity of disparate and often contrasting policy options would best be considered by a specific working group that could develop a consolidated policy with future options, for further consideration by Cabinet.	Where there is very limited or no actual representation within a local demographic, the ability to cater for difference is in evidence.	Green
			18		Qualitative and Quantitative data to be gathered from surveys, consultations and research, along with ONS data, partners, anecdotal feedback from Councillors and services	Organisational Development	Qualitative and quantitative data continues to be gathered and inform impact assessments and the design and delivery of services. Data from Together We Can is fed into the community resilience team.	Data is regularly updated and used to set priorities across the organisation and in different services, by geographical area and by protected characteristic.	Green
			19		Ensure communications for Covid 19 is accessible to speakers of other languages, disabled people and within hard to access communities	Organisational Development	Information available in alternative formats and accessible to the public via website.	Vulnerable people/ communities are participating including the hardest to reach in the community.	Green
			20		Develop and share guidance with SUEC's to support quick decision making during pandemic	Organisational Development	Equality considerations document developed and shared across the Council.	Staff and stakeholders are able to describe levels of influence within the community and changes made as a result.	Green
			21		Increase awareness of issues specific to ethnicity or culture that would make members of groups more susceptible to contraction of Covid 19 & poorer outcomes	Organisational Development	Information has been fed into the comms sub-group of community resilience to inform delivery of the Together We Can initiative.	There are a range of innovative approaches to involving communities and arrangements are made to meet specific or individual needs.	Green

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG				
32	Understanding and working with your communities	Connected Communities ... empowering our communities so everyone feels safe, engaged and included	Respect and engage with our diverse communities										
				22		Proactively encourage underrepresented groups to become more involved in public life through increased participation in key decision making forums including school governors, elected bodies and volunteers	Organisational Development	<p>We have engaged representatives from a number of minority groups through the workstreams of Together We Can including representatives from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. The community and voluntary sector form part of the cohort of the communication sub-group of the community resilience work stream. Minutes are shared and distributed to the wider community. The meetings are chaired by the Leader or Director of Communities and views captured and fed into Corporate Incident Management Team decisions.</p> <p>The council's response to Covid 19 has brought community groups and their leaders together to work as a strategic partnership within the Together We Can Workstreams. The community have played a key role in all aspects of the council's planning and response including coordination of support services and the activity of community volunteers.</p> <p>The council has identified through analysis of information collected as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic that there are still groups within the community that are not engaged and remain unrepresented within decision making processes. It has been identified that although partners such as Dorset Race Equality Council are engaged with many community groups there are many others that are informal and have no engagement with the council or its partners.</p> <p>An independent working group is being set up to review the Council's approach to inclusivity, particularly the engagement of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and to review how the council's imagery can be improved to understand barriers of engagement.</p> <p>Positive action initiatives already undertaken in preceding authorities working with young people: UK Youth Parliament, Councillor Shadowing Schemes, Independent Observers to recruitment, Apprenticeships and Mentoring Schemes for looked after children.</p> <p>Positive and strong relationships already in place between BCP Council and several under represented groups. Community Services coordinating introduction meetings with the Leader and Chief Executive.</p>	There is evidence that mainstream engagement mechanisms are increasingly involving previously under-represented groups.	Green			
				23		Profile community leadership groups and their representatives	Organisational Development	<p>We have engaged representatives from a number of minority groups through the workstreams of Together We Can including representatives from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. The community and voluntary sector form part of the cohort of the communication sub-group of the community resilience work stream. Minutes are shared and distributed to the wider community. The meetings are chaired by the Leader or Director of Communities and views captured and fed into Corporate Incident Management Team decisions.</p> <p>The council's response to Covid 19 has brought community groups and their leaders together to work as a strategic partnership within the Together We Can Workstreams. The community have played a key role in all aspects of the council's planning and response including coordination of support services and the activity of community volunteers.</p> <p>The council has identified through analysis of information collected as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic that there are still groups within the community that are not engaged and remain unrepresented within decision making processes. It has been identified that although partners such as Dorset Race Equality Council are engaged with many community groups there are many others that are informal and have no engagement with the council or its partners.</p> <p>An independent working group is being set up to review the Council's approach to inclusivity, particularly the engagement of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and to review how the council's imagery can be improved to understand barriers of engagement.</p> <p>Positive action initiatives already undertaken in preceding authorities working with young people: UK Youth Parliament, Councillor Shadowing Schemes, Independent Observers to recruitment, Apprenticeships and Mentoring Schemes for looked after children.</p> <p>Positive and strong relationships already in place between BCP Council and several under represented groups. Community Services coordinating introduction meetings with the Leader and Chief Executive.</p>	Communities are encouraged or supported to influence or make decisions.	Amber			
				24		Undertake a mapping exercise of key roles in public life across BCP Council area and identify the profile of people who occupy these positions	Organisational Development				Decision makers are from a wider range of backgrounds.	White	
				25		Support the delivery of a programme of events that celebrate diversity across the BCP Council area	Organisational Development				Proposals put forward for the Strategic Equality Leadership Group to consider 24/02/20 however this has been put on hold in light of Covid 19.	Key decision makers are involved in the engagement process.	Amber
				26	*	Develop a BCP Council-wide community engagement strategy by end of October 2020	Communities				Full consultation for a community engagement strategy not completed due to Covid 19. Consultations and report to be finalised as soon as Covid 19 restrictions are lifted. Defer to March 2021.	There is evidence that improvements have been achieved (participation in public life)	Green

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
33			27	*	Develop a community regeneration strategy by end of 2020 that takes a partnership approach to working with communities to tackle inequality	Communities	This work has been delayed due to the Covid 19 response. A portfolio holder meeting is scheduled for w/c 20/07/20 to agree revised timescales.	There is evidence of partnership arrangements leading to improved outcomes in participation.	White
		Reduce loneliness and isolation	28	*	Continue to promote the use of technology by older people and other isolated communities, raising awareness of how it helps reduce social isolation and loneliness	Communities	Significant emphasis has been made on engaging and accessing services online during the pandemic. BCP Council has used a variety of means to communicate key messages including increased use of social media. There is likely to have been an increase in the use of technology as a result of Covid 19 by older people but further support may be required to make the change sustainable and more widespread.	Vulnerable people/ communities are participating including the hardest to reach in the community.	Amber
		Empower a thriving voluntary and community sector	29	*	Build on the findings of the Cultural Enquiry to develop a Cultural Strategy that supports community arts and culture by December 2021	Destination & Culture	Development work has been affected by the response to Covid 19, particularly for partner organisations and cultural activity across BCP. In response a widely representative Cultural Action Group has been set-up to address development, recovery and engagement, to take forward the recommendations of the Cultural Enquiry and develop the Cultural Compact and strategy.	Communities are encouraged or supported to influence or make decisions.	Green
			30	*	Take a partnership approach to working with communities and attracting investment to regenerate the community using Community Infrastructure Levy funding	Growth & Infrastructure	Work is ongoing to produce the Council's first infrastructure funding statement scheduled to be published at the end of 2020. This will set out the approach for spending the Community Infrastructure Levy in accordance with this action.	Staff and stakeholders are able to describe levels of influence within the community and changes made as a result.	Green
	Brighter Futures... Caring for our children and young people; providing a nurturing environment, high quality education and great opportunities to grow and flourish	Be aspirational for our children in care	31	*	Provide strong leadership through the Corporate Parenting Board ensuring the Children in Council care and young people with care experience drive the agenda to improve how children are cared for	Children's Social Care Svs	Corporate Parenting Board implemented with good representation and input from children in care (CIC) and care experienced young people (CEYP), a co-produced work plan leads the development for CIC & CEYP.	Staff and stakeholders are able to describe levels of influence within the community and changes made as a result.	Green
			32	*	Understand the health needs of children newly into care through timely initial health assessments by early summer 2020	Children's Social Care Svs	A new pathway for initial health assessments has been implemented in June 2020 to ensure the timely completion of assessments.	Voluntary and community sector partners/health colleagues and stakeholders access and use the information.	Green
		Support parents and guardians to care for their children well	33	*	Support children to live within their own family environment by extending the Family Group Conference model and Family Network meetings by 2022	Children's Social Care Svs	Family Group Conferencing has been brought in house in order to increase capacity and develop the service.	Staff and stakeholders are able to describe levels of influence within the community and changes made as a result.	Green
	Fulfilled Lives ... helping people lead active and independent lives, add years to life and life to years	Promote happy, active and healthy lifestyles	34	*	Facilitate new opportunities for communities and people to engage in creative and heritage activities to benefit their wellbeing by March 2021	Destination & Culture	Development and Consultation delayed by Covid 19, but a Cultural Action Group has been formed and has engaged with the cultural community and is developing a Cultural Compact, for implementation in Q3 2020/21.	There are a range of innovative approaches to involving communities and arrangements are made to meet specific or individual needs.	Amber
		Value and support carers	35	*	Work with carers to improve access to information and advice ensuring it is delivered at the right time and tailored to the individual carer by March 2021	Adult Social Care Svs	During Covid 19 lockdown, up-to-date information has been posted on the Council's website and the CRISP website, as well as My Life My Care. A review of carers services was due to commence May/June 2020, but has been delayed due to the need to prioritise the ASC response to Covid 19. This review is more likely to now commence in the Autumn and will consider access to information and issues of digital inclusion as being within scope.	There are a range of innovative approaches to involving communities and arrangements are made to meet specific or individual needs	Green
		Tackle homelessness and prevent rough sleeping	36	*	Work to prevent homelessness by publishing a new homelessness strategy and deliver the action plan with partners by December 2020	Housing	Delayed due to Covid 19 - scheduled for consultation in Sept - Dec 2020. Cabinet March 2021	The organisation is working with partners to ensure that changing needs are identified and met.	Amber
			37	*	Publish a single housing allocations policy by the end of 2020 to set out how we prioritise the allocation of council/housing association homes	Housing	Consultation has started and put on hold because of Covid 19 but due to resume later this year	Staff and stakeholders are able to describe levels of influence within the community and changes made as a result.	Amber
			38	*	Prevent homelessness by utilising government funding to maximise preventative services for people including those with complex needs and reduce the numbers of those at risk of losing their accommodation	Housing	MHCLG monies have been secured to help address rough sleeping. Work will be undertaken involving significant consultation to help develop a new BCP Homelessness Strategy.	Changing needs are identified and prioritised across a wide range of services and outcomes by, for example, referring to the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Equality Measurement Framework.	Green
	39	*	Reduce rough sleeping by increasing access to suitable accommodation and re-modelling a range of sustainable housing support pathways	Housing	Positive progress made as part of the response to Covid 19. Strategy will be set out as part of the wider Homelessness Strategy set for Spring 2021.	The organisation is working with partners to ensure that changing needs are identified and met.	Green		

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
	Modern, Accessible and accountable council committed to providing effective community leadership	Accessible Council	40	*	Develop and introduce a new BCP Council website by March 2021	Organisational Development	Work has started but will be held back by Covid 19 response	There is evidence that mainstream engagement mechanisms are increasingly involving previously under-represented groups.	Amber
		Accountable council	41		Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general duty under the PSED annually.	Organisational Development	BCP Council ward and community profiles published on the council's website. Residents satisfaction survey was due to be undertaken during 2020 and updated resident profile information will be available.	The organisation has a sophisticated understanding of the difference between the equality profile of their local area and how that translates to inequalities for different groups.	Green
			42	*	Undertake a BCP Council residents satisfaction survey in 2020 and use the results to inform future decision-making and survey frequency	Organisational Development	Put on hold in light of Covid 19 response, unlikely to go ahead until before 2021.	Communities are encouraged or supported to influence or make decisions.	White
2. Leadership and Organisational Commitment									
34	Connected Communities ... empowering our communities so everyone feels safe, engaged and included	Respect and engage with our diverse communities	43	*	Deliver an Armed Forces covenant Action Plan during 2020	Organisational Development	The Council has signed the Dorset Armed Forces Covenant agreement. A Member champion is working with officers to embed the principles in relevant policy and practice and a BCP Council Action Plan is in place.	Senior leaders have and own clear knowledge of local equality priorities and how and why they are being addressed.	Green
			44		Councillors from all parties are contributing and engaging with a variety of volunteers and initiatives within their Wards	Law & Governance	Innovative ways have been adopted to disseminate information to broaden engagement within communities and to improve accessibility of support services and access to information to enable communities to feel and stay safe. For example there have been postcard drops and leaflets where local communities are known to frequent adding local intelligence to the identification of under representation and a voice for those who are sometimes hard to hear.	Staff, the community or the voluntary and community sector give good examples of improved outcomes/ reduced inequality/ improvements in health inequality	Green
		Reduce Loneliness and isolation	45	*	Work with local businesses and employers to build partnerships with schools and colleges to support initiatives with a focus on supporting the most vulnerable in our communities by January 2021	Development	In the 'Flourishing Communities' section of the draft Economic Development Strategy (EDS), one of the key priorities is 'Boosting Wage Potential for the Lowest Earners'. The draft Action Plan that will accompany the EDS will include projects to deliver this priority. The BCP Skills Strategy will also include initiatives to support the most vulnerable in our community. BCP Council is already delivering a number of initiatives to support those most disadvantaged from the workforce. Examples include a potential new skills centre in Boscombe (as part of the Boscombe Town Deal); Young Enterprise which teaches employability skills to young people (often those most disengaged). BCP council is working with Jobcentre plus to support those out of work back into employment through virtual jobs fairs. BCP Council's other departments such as Adult Social Care will be delivering projects to tackle loneliness and isolation.	The organisation plays a role in ensuring that all stakeholders collectively manage the conflicting needs of their communities	Amber
			46	*	Work with partners to develop projects using technology to reduce social isolation through the Smart Places Programme	Development	Discussed by Cabinet on 15 January 2020. A Smart Place challenge platform is being developed this autumn (2020) which includes inviting Smart Place Research & Development consortium members to use technology to help tackle isolation and loneliness. Tackling social isolation, including digital deprivation also forms part of the Towns Deal Fund.	Staff, the community or the voluntary and community sector give good examples of improved outcomes/ reduced inequality/ improvements in health inequality	Green
			47	*	Continue to work with voluntary sector partners on a lottery-funded programme to reduce loneliness among older people	Communities	Under the Good Life project BCP continues to work with local communities in Canford Cliffs, Alderney and Poole Town to help reduce loneliness amongst older people. So far the volunteer coordinator has engaged a wide range of community groups and organisations which support older people experiencing isolation and loneliness.	The community and voluntary sector say that they are treated as equal partners by the Council.	Green
		Ensure our communities feel safe	48	*	Develop with partners a Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy and Action Plan to address the priorities of the Community Safety Partnership, including the fear of crime in targeted communities by September 2020	Communities	Move back to March 2021	Staff, the community or the voluntary and community sector can offer good examples of how effective communication and engagement with the Council has enabled the organisation to prevent or manage tensions between different equality groups.	White
			49	*	Review our partnership approach to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour in local communities by September 2020	Communities	Delayed to Dec 2020	The organisation is able to show that even when making difficult decisions it continues to demonstrate a clearly articulated and meaningful commitment to equality.	White
			50	*	Work with partners including Dorset Road Safe to reduce the number of persons killed or seriously injured on the highway by 40% by 2030	Growth & Infrastructure	Work on the refresh of the Dorset Road Safe Partnership is in progress. Road Safety Schemes within the capital programme are being progressed to improve road safety. For example Boundary Rbt. plus new pedestrian crossings e.g. Merley BCP council will continue to work with partners including Dorset Roadsafes towards this target. Figures for 2019 are awaiting validation.	There is evidence that cross-organisational learning is taking place.	Green
		tary and	51	*	Develop a partnership agreement with the community and voluntary sector which details how we will work together by September 2020	Communities	Following the community/volunteer response on the back of Covid 19 and building on the success of the Together We Can programme, a collaborative approach will be used to involve and engage a wider range of communities/groups and residents who are not currently involved or engaged across the BCP Council area	The community and voluntary sector say that they are treated as equal partners by the Council.	Green

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
35		Empower a thriving volunteer community sector	52	*	Continue to support Community Action Network who provide support, advice and guidance to the community and voluntary sector across the BCP Council area	Communities	Regular programme meetings are now scheduled by BCP Council/Community Action Network to focus on engaging and supporting the community and voluntary sector across the BCP area.	Stakeholders and staff are involved in the monitoring of objectives.	Green
			53	*	Work with community organisations to harmonise the approach to supporting community centres in the BCP Council area by September 2020	Communities	To date 30 community centres have received continued updates on government guidance and advice on building maintenance during the Covid 19 shut down, as well as support to those needing to stay open for essential services. Twenty five centres have tested and are starting to use Microsoft Teams to share information and communicate with BCP Council and each other. This has provided the basis for a new way of working, relationships, sharing problems and learning and finding solutions together	The community and voluntary sector say that they are treated as equal partners by the Council.	Green
	Brighter Futures... Caring for our children and young people; providing a nurturing environment, high quality education and great opportunities to grow and flourish	Enable access to high quality education	54	*	Work with the Learning Partnership Board to deliver an educational offer to meet the needs of all children and young people with the right balance of academic and vocational opportunities, including apprenticeships by September 2022	Quality & Commissioning (Children's)	The Learning Partnership Board has identified priorities and created sub-groups to drive forward improvement activity in these priority areas. The future of the board is now being reviewed with a view to broadening its scope to have oversight of support for vulnerable children leading to a more holistic approach. An interim independent Chair has been appointed and development work is ongoing.	The organisation can provide evidence of how or where equality analysis/ impact assessment has informed decision-making and led to different, tailored services that have improved outcomes.	Amber
			55	*	Ensure children and young people have access to good, local and inclusive early years, primary, secondary and post-16 education by working with education leaders and developing a sufficiency strategy by early summer 2020	Quality & Commissioning (Children's)	A sufficiency strategy for Early Years and another for mainstream schooling have now been developed based on detailed pupil place planning data. These will be used to prioritise work to support and stimulate provider markets and adapt capacity to meet anticipated need.	The organisation can provide evidence of how or where equality analysis/ impact assessment has informed decision-making and led to different, tailored services that have improved outcomes.	Green
			56	*	Work with local Higher Education providers and the Southern Universities Network to support children from disadvantaged families to access higher education by September 2022	Quality & Commissioning (Children's)	This work is ongoing and not being stopped by the Covid 19 pandemic. We have produced a Flying Start programme which highlights to parents the options they have for their children who need support. We will also be delivering postcards to pupils in transition (years 11-12 and Years 13-University) in the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) wards so that they know the opportunities open to them no matter what their grades this summer.	The organisation can demonstrate how equality analysis/ impact assessment has been used to identify needs and improve outcomes/ reduce inequality.	Green
		Prevent harm through early intervention	57	*	Work to ensure the multi-agency partnership arrangements are effective and impactful for the local community by summer 2020	Children's Social Care Svcs	Formal governance arrangements have been agreed and regularly meet in line with the proposed performance management framework.	Staff, the community or the voluntary and community sector give good examples of improved outcomes/ reduced inequality/ improvements in health inequality	Green
			58	*	Lead a new and robust approach to tackling child exploitation across the community by developing a multi-agency place-based approach and implement by 2022	Children's Social Care Svcs	Complex Safeguarding Team launched May 2020 with agreed pathways and monitoring of children at risk of exploitation.	Steps are taken if deficiencies are identified.	Green
		66 s, add years to life and life to years	Support people to live safe and independent lives	59	*	Implement a best practice adult safeguarding model for BCP Council with partners and new Liberty Protection Safeguard legislation by April 2021	Adult Social Care Svcs	The Safeguarding Model has been agreed and implementation is being executed via the Adult Social Care Front Door Change Programme; implementation is on track for April 2021 Due to Covid 19, implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguard (LPS) legislation has been placed on hold until the government reviews its timelines. For this aspect the RAG would be Amber as the LPS timeline is uncertain.	The community and voluntary sector say that they are treated as equal partners by the Council.
	Support people to live safe and independent lives		60	*	Promote active ageing in more deprived communities through Live Well Dorset and engage at least 1,000 people over 55 for each of the next three years	Public Health	Latest report shows numbers at 70% of target, mainly caused by a delay in the start of the project date by 6 months and more recently due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Mitigating actions in place including some specific work with organisations who have a reach into those facing health inequalities. Planning underway for promotion to improve physical activity pathway registrations for LiveWell Dorset, post Covid 19.	Review mechanisms are in place.	Amber
	happy, active and healthy lifestyles		61	*	Work with our health partners to promote and enable whole school approaches to physical activity, increasing children's mental wellbeing by July 2020	Public Health	Schools were encouraged to bid for funding towards programmes or projects that they had needs-led evidence for to support their school communities. There were 16 successful bids for funding across BCP supporting 29 schools. A monitoring platform was provided to each school to provide evidence towards the learning, progress and outcomes of their own individual projects. Engagement of this tool was unfortunately low, with little learning or evidence of achieved outcomes provided to produce a true picture of the whole impact of the funding provided. This lack of evidence provided by the schools is unlikely to be due to no learning or no impact; highly likely in fact that there is a great deal of learning and impact to report given the most suitable way to do so. If this project were repeated, due to the extent of low engagement and limited evidence attached to the Monitoring Wheels, it would be important to review the support required to school leads. Much learning and impact evidence is potentially lost due to having an ineffective method of communication and recording.	Staff, the community or the voluntary and community sector give good examples of improved outcomes/ reduced inequality/ improvements in health inequality	Blue
		62	*	Agree with partners a health and wellbeing strategy by July 2020	Public Health	Health and Wellbeing Board discussed proposals for health and wellbeing strategy in November 2019. On the Health and Wellbeing Board forward plan for 6th Aug' - dates to be confirmed.	The community and voluntary sector say that they are treated as equal partners by the Council.	Green	

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS			EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG		
36	Fulfilled Lives... helping people lead active and independent liv	Promote	63	*	Work with health partners to promote the benefits of active travel and deliver a publicity campaign targeted at older people by March 2021	Growth & Infrastructure	Currently liaising with Public Health Dorset to identify resource for delivery. Budget considered from several sources. Emergency Active Travel schemes give an opportunity to encourage active travel for older people. Branding for campaign in development via TCF workstream.	Staff, the community or the voluntary and community sector give good examples of improved outcomes/ reduced inequality/ improvements in health inequality	Green	
		Develop age-friendly communities	64	*	Work with the NHS to increase the numbers of carers receiving support and services personalised to individual need by March 2023	Adult Social Care Svcs	Engagement with the Pan-Dorset Carers Steering Group is ongoing to review the Strategic Vision document 'Valuing Carers in Dorset'. An equality impact assessment is an ongoing integral element of this work.	The organisation can provide evidence of how or where equality analysis/ impact assessment has informed decision-making and led to different, tailored services that have improved outcomes.	Green	
		Value and support carers	65	*	Develop outreach support with GPs in community based settings to engage earlier and improve the quality of life for those residents at risk of worsening health and outcomes by March 2022	Public Health / Adult Social Care Svcs	Linkages have been established and are developing with the Primary Care Networks. The presence of Covid 19 has changed the immediate priority of primary care but the ICS system is looking to develop a sustainable recovery model that builds on the work established in the critical phase at this time that will focus on the most vulnerable/at risk in our communities.	Staff, the community or the voluntary and community sector give good examples of improved outcomes/ reduced inequality/ improvements in health inequality	Amber	
		Enable people to live well through quality social care	66	*	Work with all partners and people with lived experience to develop and deliver a strategy to improve the sustainability and quality of the social care market by March 2023	Adult Social Care Commissioning	This is new work and has not yet started. An EIA would be completed as part of this work	The community and voluntary sector say that they are treated as equal partners by the Council.	White	
			67	*	Work with the NHS to improve the range and effectiveness of services which support people to live well in their own homes and reduce the need for hospital admissions by March 2022	Adult Social Care Commissioning	BAU for long term commissioning. An EIA would be completed as part of this work	Staff, the community or the voluntary and community sector give good examples of improved outcomes/ reduced inequality/ improvements in health inequality	White	
			68	*	Deliver a lifelong learning strategy by March 2023, working with partners to promote a broad learning offer for work and wellbeing, culture and arts and to increase awareness of environmental issues and sustainable living	Destination & Culture	Stakeholder engagement underway with members of: the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (DLEP) Skills Advisory Panel and Board; and Boscombe Towns Fund Skills and Employment Project members. There are plans to engage the third sector in the next phase.	There is evidence that cross-organisational learning is taking place.	Amber	
		Promote lifelong learning for all	69	*	Adopt a Digital Strategy in 2020 that sets an ambition for the digital development of communities and sets the framework for the delivery of a Smart Place Strategy	Information Technology & Information Systems	The Smart Place Strategy is in draft at present, working with KPMG to be clear on the data and insight content. Lisa Cotton is regarding support to the Customer Access Strategy.	There is evidence that cross-organisational learning is taking place.	Green	
		Modern, Accessible and accountable council committed to providing effective community leadership	Modern council	70		BCP Council must prepare and publish equality objectives to further the aims of the general duty and adopt an Equality and Diversity policy	Organisational Development	Equality objectives have been prepared and are embedded within the Corporate Strategy which was adopted by full Council in Nov '19. Equality and Diversity Policy adopted by Cabinet in Oct '19	There is evidence that equality objectives have led to improved outcomes for people with protected characteristics	Blue
			Accountable council	71		Equality information and objectives must be published in a manner that is accessible to the public	Organisational Development	E&D policy and EIAs published on Council website	Stakeholders and staff are involved in the monitoring of objectives.	Blue
				72		Develop and implement an Equality & Diversity Internal Governance & Delivery Framework	Organisational Development	Internal E&D Governance Framework agreed and integral to E&D Policy which was approved by Cabinet 9/10 /19. Strategic Equality Leadership Group; Community Equality Champions Group and Service Unit Equality Champion Group in place and working. Staff Equality Champions group is yet to be formed.	Senior leaders personally challenge inequalities and drive an improvement agenda.	Amber
73				Include equality performance measures in performance management framework	Organisational Development	Performance Management Framework being presented to Cabinet for approval in Sept '20	Review mechanisms are in place.	Amber		
74				Undertake screening and full equality impact assessments	ALL	Equality impact assessment templates are in place and actively in use. Consideration of the PSED was integral to the decision making process for Phase 2 of local government reorganisaiton. All committee reports require equality impact statements. A BCP web page is in place to publish all Equality Impact Assessments. Service Unit equality champions understand their role in developing EIAs. A number of EIAs are coming through the corporate team.	The organisation can demonstrate how equality analysis/ impact assessment has been used to identify needs and improve outcomes/ reduce inequality.	Amber		
75				Prepare annual equality impact assessments for BCP Council Budget	Organisational Development	Ongoing - EIAs being prepared as requested	The organisation captures information about what budget/service cuts mean to people's lives.	Green		

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG	
3. Responsive Services and Customer Care										
37	Connected Communities ... empowering our communities so everyone feels safe, engaged and included	Respect and engage with our diverse communities	76		Develop a Research and Consultation Governance Framework for BCP that ensures full community engagement	Organisational Development	A draft governance framework will be prepared in 2020.	A research and governance framework is established and working effectively to secure inclusive engagement.	White	
			77	*	Continue to support a wide range of specialist partner organisations who advocate and provide support to our communities	Communities	Annual grant funding provided to Dorset Race Equality Council. End of year monitoring report and actions for 2019/20 agreed with BCP Council. Contract to engage with representatives of a range of disabled communities on behalf of BCP is in place and used to inform policy development and most recently the Corporate Strategy. The community engagement strategy will consider engagement & commitment to working with key partners on equality issues. The Community Equality Champion Network will provide a network of front line staff from the Council and other partner agencies to consider equality issues in our communities.	There is evidence of providers meeting the organisations equality objectives.	Amber	
			78	*	Develop a single policy for the management of publicly accessible toilets across the BCP Council area by the end of 2020	Environment	"Deep dive" with Cabinet in Feb 2020 - currently Environment, Destination & Culture and Growth & Infrastructure manage facilities - therefore, further work required to develop a BCP policy - not yet on forward plan	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green	
			79		Communicate sensitivities about the requirement to wear face coverings on public transport for certain groups	Growth & Infrastructure/ Adult Social Care Commissioning	Growth and Infrastructure have worked with Adult Social Care Commissioning and the bus operators to ensure that communications and sensitivities about the requirement to wear face coverings on public transport take account of the exemptions for certain groups including some disabled people.	The organisation has taken steps to safeguard the human rights of individuals where these have been threatened.	Green	
		Reduce loneliness and isolation	Encourage intergenerational interactions	80	*	Work in partnership with local businesses and employers to develop a programme that encourages staff to help with reading or mentoring in local schools by January 2021	Quality & Commissioning (Children's)	There is a Reading group developing a plan to address this issue within our Children's Partnership Board and they will report to the board on progress in September. We expect to involve English teachers and local libraries in this activity.	Providers understand and can articulate a commitment to equality.	Green
				81	*	Develop our understanding of issues around loneliness and map these against activities presently being undertaken by the end of 2020	Communities	The reduction of isolation has been a key aspect of the Together We Can initiative. Volunteers have been available to speak with members of the community who are shielding or vulnerable. The lockdown imposed by Covid 19 has increased home working and isolation and therefore increased the potential of domestic abuse. There has been an increase in resources needed for victims to address this. Council communication has gone out to raise awareness of information and services available to victims, with special targetting for hard to reach groups. The communications need to be easily accessible in alternative languages and formats.	Business plans review past performance, demonstrate how past objectives have been achieved, review performance and set new objectives.	Amber
		Ensure our communities feel safe	Reduce loneliness and isolation	82	*	Agree a bereavement strategy and business plan by mid-2020	Environment	"Deep Dive" of the Bereavement strategy with leader, portfolio holder and members in Jan 2020. Further work delayed due to Covid 19 and now recommenced to develop options and directions for Bereavement Services. This will include sustainability, Energy usage and SALIX funding. The Business Plan is scheduled on the cabinet forward plan for Nov 2020.	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/ protected groups.	Green
				83	*	Develop a Domestic Abuse Strategy by September 2020	Communities	The lockdown imposed by Covid 19 has increased home working and isolation and therefore increased the potential of domestic abuse. There has been an increase in resources needed for victims to address this. Council communication has gone out to raise awareness of information and services available to victims, with special targetting for hard to reach groups. The communications need to be easily accessible in alternative languages and formats.	The organisation has taken steps to safeguard the human rights of individuals where these have been threatened.	White
		Ensure our communities feel safe	Ensure our communities feel safe	84	*	Develop integrated domestic abuse services for victims and perpetrators by March 2021	Communities	In progress	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/ protected groups.	Green
				85	*	Develop a coordinated BCP Council response to prejudice incidents by June 2020	Communities	Deferred (Dec 2020)	The organisation has taken steps to safeguard the human rights of individuals where these have been threatened.	White
				86	*	Develop a plan to tackle rogue traders who target vulnerable people in their homes by the end of 2020	Communities	In progress	The organisation has taken steps to safeguard the human rights of individuals where these have been threatened.	Green
				87	*	Integrate Public Spaces CCTV systems and create a five-year CCTV Strategy by the end of 2020	Communities	In progress	The organisation has taken steps to safeguard the human rights of individuals where these have been threatened.	Green
				88	*	Continue to support and develop the night-time economy through initiatives which reduce the harm caused by alcohol and helps make residents, workers and visitors feel safe	Communities		There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/ protected groups.	White

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG		
83		Empower a thriving voluntary and community sector	89	*	Develop a single Community Asset Transfer process by June 2020	Development		Initiatives such as Community Asset Transfers and Community Right to Challenge are in evidence as delivered by local communities instead of the local authority.	White		
			90	*	Develop and deliver a BCP Council Family Support offer which includes Children's Centres and Youth/Adolescent Services by September 2020	Inclusion & Family Svs	The harmonisation and development of the BCP Early Help family support and youth services have progressed with the new Early Help Services offer going live for September 2020.	Take up of services is representative of the community in proportions that would be expected.	White		
			91	*	Create a SEND and inclusion strategy that is aspirational and an associated joint commissioning strategy by June 2020	Inclusion & Family Svs	The Inclusion strategy has been shared through the Transformation and Development Board. This has been shared with stakeholders and parents to ensure it is widely co-produced, and known about and can be implemented across the system. The Joint Commissioning Strategy has been agreed with Clinical Commissioning groups. However the document sits within the Commissioning Unit.	Services are co-produced with service users wherever possible and service users are able to influence changes	White		
	nurturing environment, high quality education and great opportunities to grow and flourish	Enable access to high quality education		92	*	Ensure the development and delivery of effective, specialist services to support inclusion in schools and early years providers by September 2022	Inclusion & Family Svs	Support services to schools and WFD offer reviewed. Creating a web-based platform for support services and WFD offer from local services across EHC. Outreach services reviewed and new offer in development. Mental Health Support Teams linked into local schools and being expanded to pupils at risk of exclusion	There is evidence of providers meeting the organisations equality objectives. Providers understand and can articulate a commitment to equality. The organisation achieves considerable social value from its contracts. Local procurement is positively influencing the local economy. There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/protected groups.	Green	
				93	*	Develop a sufficiency strategy for children in care and care experienced young people to ensure appropriate provision is available locally by early summer 2020	Quality & Commissioning (Children's)	A new Children in care & Care experiences young people Strategy is currently being written, due for sign off July 2020.	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green	
		Be aspirational for our children in care			94	*	Harmonise and improve the Foster Care offer by early summer 2020	Children's Social Care Svs	There is now one BCP Fostering Team. There is an ongoing marketing campaign and we are seeing a month on month increase in the number of approved fostering households which results in a higher proportion of children in care in Local Authority family-based placements.	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green
					95	*	Improve housing options for care experienced young people by October 2020	Housing	Draft housing offer agreed, allocations policy proposes additional priority - proposed for approval Oct 2021	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/protected groups.	Green
					96	*	Improve the robustness and impact of permanence planning for children in care, beginning with a strong training and development programme for all social workers and a new policy framework from January 2020	Children's Social Care Svs	Permanence Planning Policy and Procedure in place. Challenges remain in relation to tracking permanence across children's and legal services and this remains subject to an extensive improvement plan.	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/protected groups.	Green
					97	*	Improve educational outcomes for children in care through the delivery of a high-performing Virtual School by January 2021 which includes ambitions to actively support apprenticeships and work placements	Inclusion & Family Svs	Move to Welfare Call ePEP virtual school platform from September, WFC analytics will inform targeted operational casework. Shift of PEP ownership away from VS to build capacity for impactful casework and promote school ownership of children in care agenda. Ongoing work with Post-16 workstream to evolve local IAG and apprenticeship offer (including supported internships and traineeships) both within the organisation and in the wider community	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Amber
					98	*	Publish the Care Leaver Offer across the conurbation by September 2020	Children's Social Care Svs	The Care Leavers Pledge has been produced in consultation with care experienced young people. A Multi-Agency Care Leavers Management Board is being implemented in June. The group BCP Care Leavers Local Offer will be a priority for this group who will support, scrutinise and monitor its delivery.	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green
					care for their children well			99	*	Develop and implement an early help, family support, young peoples and youth work strategy for 0-19 year olds and align services to deliver on the strategy by March 2023	Inclusion & Family Svs
		100	*	Further develop the BCP SEND Local Offer to ensure this is comprehensive and support families to access appropriate provision by September 2021				Inclusion & Family Svs	BCP published SEND local offer is in the developmental stage and set for completion by target date. Partners and parent/carers are engaged in the development process	Gaps have been identified in terms of who may not be using the service and why. Action has been taken to change services in response.	White
		101	*	Develop an integrated health and wellbeing offer for vulnerable children and young people including SEND by September 2021				Inclusion & Family Svs	Continued work alongside health colleagues to implement the Pan-Dorset Children and Young People's Mental Health and (E)Wellbeing(B) Local Transformation Plan - including whole school approaches, projects, mental health support teams; graduated approach, training and online resources, Discovery College, Kooth, Chat Health.	The organisation achieves considerable social value from its contracts	Green

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
63	Brighter Futures... Caring for our children and young people; providing a	Support parents and guardians to	102	*	Embed new ways of working (Signs of Safety) to ensure consistency of experience and improving outcomes by 2023	Children's Social Care Svs	Signs of Safety (SOS) continues to be embedded in the teams and 2 day and 5 day training has been undertaken. A SOS lead has been recruited as a dedicated resource to ensure the adoption of the SOS operating model practices and to continue to build confidence in its use and to be the lead service expertise for the implementation of the SOS computer system configuration. A revised forward plan will be produced by end of June 2020.	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/protected groups.	Green
			103	*	Increase school attendance and reduce school exclusions and offending by introducing restorative approaches by July 2021	Inclusion & Family Svs	Reintegration team appointed for September 2020. Focus on preventing exclusion and reintegration of excluded pupils back into mainstream. New short turn around AP provision planned for September 2020 along with a Preventing exclusion panel, CMOE panel and attendance networks.	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/protected groups.	White
			104	*	Pilot an approach to address and reduce summer holiday hidden hunger within targeted wards in 2020 to inform our longer term approach	Children's Social Care Svs	Local Food Banks are working with schools to target those families who are most at risk of holiday hunger and will be providing them with food vouchers over the summer holidays, in addition to free school meal vouchers provided by the government during Covid 19.	The organisation has taken steps to safeguard the human rights of individuals where these have been threatened.	Green
		Prevent harm through early intervention	105	*	Improve the level of integration of service at the front door so families receive the right response at the right time by early summer 2020	Children's Social Care Svs	The implementation of the SPA to align CSC and Early Help into one 'Front door' with a MASH arrangement went live on 18 May 2020. The SPA includes: - an agreed Inter-Agency Referral (IAR) and new contact numbers and channel and BCP and partner websites updated - front door and Early Help integration - RHI/CE-Missing pathway at the front door - facilitated MASH Safeguarding Partnership - QA reinforced the threshold timeliness and step across	Business plans review past performance, demonstrate how past objectives have been achieved, review performance and set new objectives.	Blue
			106	*	Deliver a Sufficiency Strategy to ensure appropriate levels of services and support for children Early Help, Edge of Care, School Places for SEND, and Children's Social Care by early summer 2020	Quality & Commissioning (Children's)	A SEND sufficiency strategy has been completed and is supporting work to develop additional capacity across BCP to meet needs and address budget pressures on the High Needs Block.	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green
			107	*	Develop a BCP Council Housing Strategy which addresses the needs of vulnerable young people and their families by October 2020	Housing	Overarching Housing Strategy delayed to Spring 2021 and realigned with housing market analysis being undertaken for emerging Local Plan. Revised timeline will help take into account the Covid 19 impacts on the local housing market.	The organisation has taken steps to safeguard the human rights of individuals where these have been threatened.	Amber
			108	*	Create a consolidated young peoples protocol between housing and children's social care by early summer 2020	Housing	Protocol expected to go live from Sept / Oct 2020 Draft young people's housing offer in place and will need rolling out across all BCP housing and Children's staff teams.	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green
			109	*	Intervene early to avoid young people entering the care system and minimise risks by developing an adolescent service by September 2020	Children's Social Care Svs	Adolescent Hub model in development.	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/protected groups.	Green
			110	*	Support children and young peoples emotional mental health and wellbeing by implementing the Children and Young People Mental Health Transformation Plan by April 2021	Inclusion & Family Svs	Continued work alongside health colleagues to implement the Pan-Dorset Children and Young People's Mental Health & EWellbeingB Local Transformation Plan - including whole school approaches, projects, mental health support teams; graduated approach, training and online resources, Discovery College, Kooth, Chat Health.	There is evidence that contracts are being monitored using quantitative and qualitative analysis. The results are considered by both the supplier and client.	Green
			111	*	Agree a suicide prevention plan by June 2020	Public Health	A draft action plan was due to be presented to DSG in March but postponed due to Covid 19 response Date of Cabinet meeting to be confirmed. May need some adjustment in light of Covid 19 and presentation to DSG for comment - previously deferred from March '20 meeting. Likely route to Cabinet via CMB and O&S. Waiting for confirmation of Cabinet date	The organisation has taken steps to safeguard the human rights of individuals where these have been threatened.	Amber
		o live safe and independent lives	112	*	Improve outcomes for young people with disabilities and special educational needs as they move into adulthood by March 2022	Inclusion & Family Svs	The PFA Coordinator has been appointed, working closely with the PFA team to ensure planning across Children's and Adult Social Care. There is a PFA development plan which is overseen by the Transformation and Development Board. There is also a post 16-19 Project Board across Children's and Adult Social Care reviewing commissioning arrangements in BCP.	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/protected groups.	White
			113	*	Increase the proportion of adults with a learning disability with care and support needs who are able to live in their own home, locally, by March 2023	Adult Social Care Svs	There is a 3-year programme to reduce the reliance on residential care. This action is included in the AS strategy.	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/protected groups.	Amber

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
40	Fulfilled Lives... helping people lead active and independent lives, add years to life and life to years	Support people to live well through quality social care	114	*	Increase the proportion of adults with care and support needs in employment, training and volunteering by March 2023	Adult Social Care Commissioning	The first stage is a planned review of supported employment opportunities. This has commenced but due to the Covid 19 pandemic this has delayed the progress of this work. An equality impact assessment is currently being completed as part of a wider review of Supported Employment. This should be finalised in draft form by end of July.	The organisation achieves considerable social value from its contracts	Green
			115	*	Continue to promote and extend the use of assistive and digital technology to enable independence and enhance peoples quality of life	Adult Social Care Commissioning	BAU for long term commissioning. An EIA would be completed as part of this work	There is evidence of improved or improving outcomes, disaggregated where appropriate to demonstrate the effects on different communities/ protected groups.	White
		Promote happy, active and healthy lifestyles	116	*	Undertake a review of leisure provision and residents leisure discount schemes to enable greater participation in leisure activities by end of 2021	Destination & Culture	Review of leisure management has been postponed until further notice due to Covid 19 facility closures and market uncertainty.	Business plans review past performance, demonstrate how past objectives have been achieved, review performance and set new objectives.	Amber
			117	*	Promote positive health including mental health within our communities and partners through a comprehensive action plan by December 2020	Public Health	Suicide prevention and mental health steering group is being set up post Covid 19 with partners across the system. The steering group is developing an overarching plan, to which organisations are identifying their contributions. Each organisation is developing their workforce wellbeing offer, including BCP Council. Needs further discussion as to how to take this forward.	There is evidence of providers meeting the organisations equality objectives.	Green
			118	*	Increase the proportion of people with dependency successfully accessing alcohol and drug treatment services by March 2023	Adult Social Care Commissioning	Numbers in treatment have slightly increased during 2019-20. We are awaiting final confirmed figures for the new Council from Central Government. These are usually available Jul - Aug.	Gaps have been identified in terms of who may not be using the service and why. Action has been taken to change services in response.	White
		Develop age-friendly communities	119	*	Continue to deliver a programme to improve safer environments in built up areas with increased priority for pedestrians and improved crossing facilities for wheelchair and mobility scooter users	Growth & Infrastructure	Equality Impact Assessment developed to aid decision to close Poole Quay to traffic. Additional EIA compiled to support Emergency Active Travel Improvement schemes to be delivered Summer/Autumn 2020 which provide a safer environment for pedestrians, cyclists and the vulnerable.	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green
			120	*	Support greater use of bus services by providing new bus shelters with seating, accessible boarding kerbs and Real Time Information by March 2022	Growth & Infrastructure	Transforming Cities fund, with funding now confirmed, will deliver enhanced public transport infrastructure along specific transport corridors delivering new bus shelters with accessibility improvements over and above normal Local Transport Plan funded ones	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green
			121	*	Expand the number of dementia friendly communities by March 2023	Adult Social Care Commissioning	BAU for long term commissioning. An EIA would be completed as part of this work	Take up of services is representative of the community in proportions that would be expected.	White
		Value and support carers	122	*	Increase the availability and options for time out and short breaks for carers by March 2021	Adult Social Care Commissioning	Progress halted due to Covid 19 incident response requirements.	There is evidence that Services are being co-produced with service users.	White
			123	*	Create a single model of young carers provision across BCP Council area by Summer 2022, ensuring consistency of support	Inclusion & Family Svs	A single model is in development and a new BCP Young carers team will be confirmed for September 2020. The timeline for the single offer is well progressed and will be in place for the Autumn 2020	There is evidence that contracts are being monitored using quantitative and qualitative analysis. The results are considered by both the supplier and client.	White
		Enable people to live well through quality social care	124	*	Implement a new first point of contact service for adult social care to improve online information and advice and supports residents wellbeing and independence by March 2022	Adult Social Care Svs	This project is in its infancy but initial work has started on implementing a new first point of contact service and the project will be complete by the deadline of March 2022.	Business plans review past performance, demonstrate how past objectives have been achieved, review performance and set new objectives.	Green
			125	*	Target care leavers, disadvantaged boys and young people with the greatest barriers to learning and work to join apprenticeship schemes	Quality & Commissioning (Children's)	The VS has been temporarily brought under the umbrella of the 0-19 team & is therefore a major focus of the work. We have organised for individual mentoring for those at risk of exclusion and have developed resources for CEIAG including for apprenticeships during Covid 19. We will also be employing 2 apprentices next year. We hope that although we will probably have to postpone the Careers and Apprenticeship Show that we will be able to do some online events targeted at VG learners & boys. The DCS chairs a LPB group on Boys Education which will meet on 1st July 2020.	Gaps have been identified in terms of who may not be using the service and why. Action has been taken to change services in response.	Green

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
41		Promote lifelong learning for all	126	*	Promote high-quality careers education and information advice for young people, adults needing to retrain and those for whom English isn't a first language	Destination & Culture	<p>Progression Officer appointed within Skills & Learning in autumn 2019 to coordinate, develop and promote a whole county approach to Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) delivery for adult learners. To date, a new 'Next Steps' webpage has been added to the Skills & Learning (S&L) website with some improved materials and information about learning opportunities and careers. An online booking system has been launched for potential learners to request a 1:1 CEIAG appointment with either the Progression Officer or one of the network of IAG trained S&L staff available for this support. Learners are also able to access 1:1 support from Ansbury. Appointments are now available using video call or telephone call. The Progression Officer is undertaking a Level 6 CEIAG qualification and 25 other Skills & Learning staff have IAG qualifications at levels 2, 3 or 4. S&L maintained the Matrix accreditation for quality advice & quality in June 2020.</p> <p>An online job club has been launched during lockdown where unemployed and underemployed residents can access support with job seeking & applications, CV writing, universal credit claims and general careers and study information from trained advisers. A range of new online employability courses are available for job centre advisers to refer unemployed residents to. When safe to do so, job clubs and employability courses will return to face-to-face sessions at S&L centres, libraries and job centres alongside the online offer.</p> <p>Applications for English & maths assessment and courses can now be made online and learners are able to complete assessment activities online with an IAG phone call from a trained admissions tutor. Where English or digital skills are too low to access the online assessment, socially distanced appointments are being made available at learning centres.</p> <p>ESOL teaching continued online during lockdown and a new fully online offer for ESOL, English & maths is now available for 20/21 in addition to classroom courses.</p> <p>The Progression Officer continues to promote the Next Steps offer at local networks, with partner organisations and through job centres, children's centres and community organisations. Business Outreach Officers continue to identify local employers where staff may benefit from developing improved English skills. Partner organisations continue to provide a CEIAG service for young learners and have continued to deliver to vulnerable young people during lockdown</p> <p>Some library staff at Dorset libraries completed IAG qualifications to better support service users. This opportunity is also open to BCP library staff.</p>	Local procurement is positively influencing the local economy	Green
		Modern	127	*	Start implementation of our new operating model in 2020 and invest in new technology and ways of working so residents and customers have better services	Organisational Development	Covid 19 response has begun to accelerate this and opportunity will be built on.	There is evidence of how levels of customer satisfaction with services have improved over time.	Green
			128	*	Improve how we use data to better understand and inform service planning and to empower our communities and customers	Organisational Development	Increased data sharing across agencies has helped the organisation provide response to Covid 19	There are examples of how different customers' experiences are analysed and acted upon.	Green
			129	*	Commit to the development of a BCP Council Civic Centre in 2020 and begin a review of how we use our buildings to deliver the right services, in the right places with the right facilities for our community and customers	Organisational Development	Estates and Accommodation Strategy being drafted and supported by a full EIA. This will be supported by consultation where required and align with the Customer Access Strategy	There is evidence that Services are being co-produced with service users.	Green
		Accessibility	130		Promote availability of community and service user information across the Council and through key partnerships.	Organisational Development/ Development	Community and council response to Covid 19 has accelerated this	There are examples of how different customers' experiences are analysed and acted upon.	Green
			131		Undertake an interpreters/translation contract review	Organisational Development	SJ has written to JJ in procurement to clarify what the process is for review and to identify any deadlines in the process. Review of current interpreters/translation contracts is underway.	The organisation achieves considerable social value from its contracts	Amber
			132		Improve frontline provision for deaf & hearing impaired customers	Organisational Development	Customer Access Strategy is being developed. A BSL interpreter service was launched in response to Covid 19	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green
			133	*	Adopt a Customer Access Strategy that builds on BCP Councils commitment to the Local Digital Declaration and meets Best in Class standards for digital service design by summer 2020	Organisational Development	Customer Access Strategy is being developed A BSL interpreter service was launched in response to Covid 19	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green
			134	*	Ensure that the design of any new facilities meets Best in Class standards to provide ease of access to services and employment	Development	Ongoing as considered in any development of new facilities that Estates are involved in	Service Plans are designed and written with equality objectives in mind.	Green
			135	*	Adopt a Communication Strategy in 2020 using plain English and continually assess how well messages are being received and understood across communities	Organisational Development	Customer Access Strategy is being developed	There are examples of how different customers' experiences are analysed and acted upon.	Green

accountable council committed to providing effective community leadership

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
	Modern, Accessible and a	Accountable	136		Embed equality commitments and performance measures in procurement policy and practice	Finance	Embedded in current corporate procurement process for contracts £25K and above. The Council's Financial Regulations have also been updated accordingly and all services should be complying with these regulations. Commissioning Officers are required to complete and supply copies/evidence of EIA's for contracts over £25K. EIA's are still a requirement for contracts under £25k however Procurement would not have sight of these as they are completed within the relevant Service. The quality of the EIA produced by Services will not necessarily be 'quality assured' by Procurement as it remains the responsibility of the Service to complete a full and comprehensive EIA.	The organisation achieves considerable social value from its contracts	Amber
			137		Improve consistency of compliance with the PSED among partners, specifically those delivering public services for BCP i.e. BH Live/Tricuro through performance management of contracts	ALL	Strategic Procurement support service unit commissioning officers to ensure compliance with the PSED.	Providers understand and can articulate a commitment to equality.	Amber
			138		Divide procurements into smaller lots to encourage local SMEs to apply for BCP contracts	Finance	Supporting SME's under the BCP process is achieved by contract adverts. Contracts at or over £25k are advertised on the Government's contract finder portal and via the Council's tendering system supplying the South West. Both of these systems are free for the supplier to register with and use.	Local procurement is positively influencing the local economy	Amber
			139	*	Consider opportunities to improve local decision making and accountability for service delivery and our community governance approach during 2020	Law & Governance	We have contributed to the community engagement and consultation strategy which included a series of questions on the effectiveness and ability to influence local decision making. The outcome of this engagement will drive potential service changes.	Services are co-produced with service users wherever possible and service users are able to influence changes	Green
4. Diverse and Engaged Workforce									
42	Dynamic Places	Increase productivity through skills development	140	*	Champion BCP Councils commitment to increase the number of apprenticeships, particularly for care leavers, across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole by March 2021	Organisational Development		Good use is made of flexible working arrangements and career pathway initiatives to address potential barriers and under representation.	White
			Fulfilled Lives	Value and support carers	141	*	Recognise the needs of staff members who are carers within BCP Councils conditions of employment by 2021	Organisational Development	Some understanding of staff who have caring needs will be cleaned from the staff questionnaire that is being sent out to inform future working practice. A variety of health and wellbeing advice has been made available to staff to support in their new ways of working. This will be included in the People Strategy
	and accountable council committed to providing effective community leadership	Modern	142		Develop and deliver an Equality & Diversity training programme for Members and officers	Organisational Development	Member training has been provided but currently on hold in light of Covid 19	Feedback from service users in protected groups is positive about the skills of staff in dealing with their issues.	Amber
			143		Ensure access to Equality and Diversity Training is embedded Council wide	Organisational Development	Staff training and the development of the programme is being reviewed. Online training has remained available throughout Covid 19 and new EIA training sessions are being prepared for staff. Further focus needs to be placed on online training opportunities.	Managers and staff are accountable for ensuring equality outcomes. They can give examples of improved equality outcomes they have contributed to.	Amber
			144	*	Implement the Pay and Reward Strategy and begin the harmonisation of pay in 2021	Organisational Development	HR leading development of BCP terms and conditions. Manager and staff engagement has taken place.	The organisation considers pay gaps across other areas of inequality such as religion and belief/ race-ethnicity/ age, disability etc.	Green
			145	*	Implement our People Strategy to support modern working practices and improve staff physical and mental wellbeing	Organisational Development	The People Strategy is being developed and delivered. A staff recognition scheme has been launched.	There have been significant outcomes in the health and wellbeing of all staff including those with protected characteristics.	Green
			146	*	Implement a Behaviours Framework in 2020 which sets out the qualities and attributes we expect of all our employees	Organisational Development	The behaviours framework is being developed and is part of the people strategy and recognised as part of the overall performance management arrangements of the Council.	Issues relating to protected characteristics and equality practice are challenged confidently and effectively by managers.	Green
		Accessible	147		HR to review where opportunities with BCP Council are currently advertised to identify if jobs accessible to all communities	Organisational Development	SJ to discuss with HR and HR lead to carry this forward is to be identified	There are reasonable explanations for gaps (e.g. the community profile is constantly changing or largely retired population) and what the organisation is doing about it.	Green
			148		Adopt targeted recruitment practices including developing talent from within	Organisational Development		There are appropriate examples of positive action to improve diversity.	Green
			149	*	Promote and proactively work towards enabling a diverse workforce across all levels of the organisation, acting as a role model for Dorset employers	Organisational Development	This is a key element of the People's Strategy	There is evidence that the workforce profile at all levels broadly matches the local labour market/community profile. This is continually monitored.	Green
150		Promote collection of monitoring data from Members and staff	Organisational Development	Workforce profiles of all legacy councils has been published online. Explanation of why monitoring data is being requested sent out with staff survey on experience of home working as a result of Covid 19. Have started writing "why do you want to know that" awareness document explaining why equality monitoring data is requested and how it is used.	The organisation has sufficient information about staff to inform robust equality analysis.	Amber			

BCP Council Equality and Diversity Action Plan

EFLG Priority	Corporate Priority	Corporate Objective	No	CS	Action	Lead Service Unit	Progress	EFLG Desired Outcomes	RAG
	Modern, Accessible		151		Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general duty at least annually. Must include information relating to people who share a characteristic who are employees	Organisational Development	Some understanding of differential outcomes in recruitment, selection and progression across all groups is known. Data will be used to inform delivery of the workforce development strategy. No requirement to submit for 2019/20 (EHRC)	It is possible to analyse data by all the protected characteristics.	Green
			152		Publish information on gender pay gap under the Equality Act 2010 requirement from 30/03/18	Organisational Development	Published for preceding councils 2017/18 with publication of 18/19 to follow. EHRC has suspended the requirement for this submission for 2020 due to outbreak of Covid 19.	Workforce data includes a wide range of information and protected characteristic profiles including pay levels.	Green

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Equality and Diversity – Internal Governance and Delivery Framework

Strategic Direction

Equality Action Commission

Role and purpose

An independent working group set up to review effective and long-term inclusivity and engagement primarily with our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, customer, residents, staff and visitors

Strategic Equality Leadership Group

Who are they?

- Chief Executive
- Portfolio Holder
- Opposition spokesperson for equality and diversity
- Director of Organisational Development (or representative)
- Director of Communities (or representative)

As required:

- Other Service Directors (or representatives)
- Representative/s from Equality Implementation Groups
- Union Representative

What do they do?

- Set the strategic direction for equality and diversity in BCP Council, the objectives, public sector equality commitments and policy
- Monitor progress with actions set out in the equality & diversity plan
- Agree an annual programme of equality and diversity events or celebrations for the Council to support

How often do they meet?

- 4 times a year as a minimum with flexibility to hold additional meetings as required

Corporate Support

Insight, Policy and Performance

- Co-ordinate Strategic Equality Leadership Group and Equality Forums (4 times a year minimum)
- Horizon scan, provide guidance and advice, develop corporate policy and procedure
- Undertake consultation, research and source intelligence

HR

- Provide employee relations support and training

Legal

- Provide legal advice on E&D matters

Communications and Marketing

- Promote E&D activity and events

Implementation Groups

Service Unit Equality Champions

Who are they?

- Representatives from each Service Unit, agreed with the Service Director

What do they do?

- Communicate and help embed E&D policy and procedure in service unit activities
- Support/undertake equality impact assessments for key service decisions
- Monitor and report E&D activity and performance in the service unit
- Attend E&D Forums

Employee Equality Champions

Who are they?

- Staff representatives for the 9 protected characteristics

What do they do?

- Represent staff at Strategic Leadership Groups as required
- Provide a safe place to discuss E&D issues
- Maintain close communication links with HR
- Set up and maintain communication channels within group
- Understand and contribute to HR policy and procedures
- Attend E&D Forums

Community Equality Champions

Who are they?

- Officers with a community role/community safety officers

What do they do?

- To be a link between Council and groups in community
- Act as a two-way communication channel
- Bring community concerns into the organisation
- Take Council initiatives into the community and promote engagement, participation and consultation
- Attend E&D Forums

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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Report subject	Governance of Corporate Health & Safety and Fire Safety
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Health & Safety and Fire Safety Board scheduled to take place in July was postponed and instead, an interim report was provided to the Director's Strategy Group on 23rd June 2020, to ensure governance of Health & Safety and Fire Safety was reported and discussed. During this meeting, it was agreed that the next Health & Safety and Fire Safety Board would take place on 28th September 2020 and remain quarterly moving forward.</p> <p>This report details progress made on the delivery of Health & Safety and Fire Safety governance arrangements for BCP Council and highlights;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The steps taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing subsequent recovery, • implementation of Governance framework • Reporting of Health and Safety and fire safety to the board • Covid 19 response • An overview of service delivery
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>(a) Health & Safety and Fire Safety on-going governance arrangements are reported to the Audit and Governance Committee annually.</p> <p>(b) Audit and Governance Committee notes the continued progress in implementing the Health and Safety and Fire Safety governance arrangements, along with the significant contributions made towards managing the risks from the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
Reason for recommendations	An update six months after the January Audit & Governance Committee meeting was requested to provide reassurance that Health & Safety and Fire Safety Governance arrangements are being implemented to an acceptable standard.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor May Haines (Portfolio Holder for Community Safety)
Corporate Director	Kate Ryan (Corporate Director of Environment and Community)
Report Authors	Margareta Flicos (Health and Safety Manager) Phillip Lawrence (Fire Safety Manager)
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The service provided by the Corporate Health & Safety and Fire Safety teams is to ensure competent, specialist and risk-based advice and guidance is afforded to the Council to enable them to carry out their statutory duties regarding both the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, 2005 and to promote a positive safety culture throughout BCP Council.
2. The BCP Council Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and the Fire Safety Policy sets out the roles and responsibilities that places the Health & Safety and Fire Safety Board at the centre of strategic oversight and performance monitoring.
3. The BCP Council Health and Safety and Fire Safety governance framework details the governance arrangements including the Health and Safety and Fire Safety Board, Service Directorate Health and Safety and Fire Safety meetings and the Safety Forum.

Implementation of Governance arrangements

4. Health and Safety and Fire safety board meetings are now established and have converted to a virtual format currently due to Covid 19. Attendance at the recent September board meeting by Service Directors (or their representative) was good.
5. Service Directorate Health & Safety and Fire Safety meetings were significantly disrupted due to the Covid outbreak but are now being restarted where they were unable to run during the Covid lockdown. These meetings are a key part of the Health and Safety and Fire safety governance.
6. The Health & Safety and Fire Safety Forum, comprising of Safety Supporters from the Service Directorates, Corporate Health & Safety and Fire Safety team representatives and Union representatives is currently being set up. This is a forum for consultation with all employees per statutory requirements. The meetings will provide an opportunity for staff to share best practice and issues at the workplace and operational level, and provide a channel for communication between employees and the Board.

Progress reporting to the Board

7. Quarterly Health and Safety and Fire Safety reports are provided to each Board meeting, providing information on such matters as the audit programme, policy & governance implementation, staff training & communications, risk assessments, significant accidents & incidents, contact with enforcement bodies and accident and near miss data for health and safety and fire incidents.
8. The Action Plan (Delivery plan) is provided to each Board meeting which outlines the development of policy and procedures, training and corporate work-planning. Priorities are to re-establish effective Service Directorate meetings in all Service Directorates, set up and implement a comprehensive communications plan and

ensure that BCP wide H&S and Fire Safety systems, such as the accident reporting system and the Cautionary Contact List, are implemented and can be easily accessed by all staff.

9. A Corporate Health & Safety and Fire Safety Risk Register has now been set up and will be reviewed at the quarterly Board meetings. This contains Service Directorate high risks that are considered to need further mitigation measures to reduce the current risk level. These will be raised at the board to agree necessary risk reduction measures.

COVID-19 Response

10. Following the measures introduced on 23rd March to reduce the spread of COVID-19, Corporate Health & Safety and Fire Safety continued to provide most of its services whilst following social distancing rules. The service areas that ceased were the Premises Fire Risk Assessment Re-Inspection work programme and classroom-based Health and Safety and Fire Safety training, both in-house and external.
11. The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges to ensuring risks to BCP Council employees, visitors and property assets are suitably controlled, as well as continuing to meet our legal obligations under the Health & Safety at Work etc act 1974 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
12. The response to COVID-19 included the closure of many workplaces with uncertainty as to when these premises will reopen. Reopening or repurposing buildings have, in many instances, necessitated the review of risk assessments, guidance, templates and tools to ensure staff teams are best informed and suitably equipped to collectively identify risks and mitigate those identified appropriately.

Operational updates

Fire Safety

13. Fire Safety Audits conducted remotely (now known as, Remote Fire Safety Assurance Assessments) were piloted for temporary infrastructure projects and premises experiencing closure or change of use during the immediate aftermath of COVID-19 restrictions. Where deemed necessary, these assessments were shared with Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (DWFRS) for consultation. The remote approach adopted for assessing fire risk proved valuable, providing valuable information to the risk assessors and engaging premises managers in the current fire safety standard of their premise. As such, these assurance assessments have become a part of the approach for prioritising assessments within the Premises Fire Risk Assessment Re-Inspection work programme.
14. These assurance assessments do not replace full Fire Risk Assessments conducted on site; they merely assist with the completion of a revised risk register for premises in the wake of COVID-19.
15. Guidance continues to be reviewed, and revised, where deemed necessary and provided to service directors to ensure current information is available to be cascaded where required. This is essential to provide support to management teams, enabling them to undertake their specific Fire Safety duties.
16. Explanatory notes for the Fire Safety Bill are shown in appendix 1.
17. The identification and appointment of persons to undertake the role of Local Fire Safety Coordinator continues. In most cases, this is not a new appointment as individuals are already undertaking the associated duties required to ensure local level fire safety risks are identified and mitigated appropriately, along with providing direct liaison with the Corporate Fire Safety team.
18. Fire Risk Assessments, Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) assessments and Arson prevention surveys continue, where

a building is repurposed or closed, a temporary structure is being erected, or there is an incident.

19. Following the support provided to schools on shutdown procedures and fire safety arrangements whilst closed during the lockdown. Fire Risk Assessments recently resumed for schools. Taking into account the necessary changes to ensure premises are adhering to government guidance surrounding COVID-19 reopening for schools, changes to the premise which affect the Fire Risk Assessments are expected, therefore this work program is essential to ensure that all around safety is assessed and mitigated.
20. Support towards Safety Advisory Groups (SAG's) has recommenced, including liaison with relevant partner agencies.
21. Face to face classroom-based training remains on hold. Avenues to restart the training provision are ongoing and updates shall be provided to the board and this committee for the next reporting date.
22. The Health and Safety and Fire Safety team members are in regular contact with operational service areas. Resources are allocated to specific high-risk areas to develop a good insight into day to day practice. The knowledge gained of the service continues to result in improved and specific support and advice offered by the corporate teams. Advice is given to all Service Directorates and schools on many different aspects, including risk assessments.
23. Several policies have been selected as a priority for development as BCP Council policies. A full programme to review and create Corporate BCP policies/procedures to replace the legacy versions is being developed.
24. The Health and Safety and Fire Safety teams continue their contribution to the Events team and to major events through the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) meetings. This now includes giving advice on Covid 19 aspects of events. Both Health and Safety and Fire Safety teams provide pragmatic and risk assessed advice to event coordinators and maintain key liaison with external partner agencies.

Health and Safety

25. Advice and support continues to be given to Service Directorates and maintained schools on writing and implementing Covid 19 risk assessments to ensure workplaces are Covid Secure, interpretation of national changes to Covid requirements, use of face coverings, use of personal protection equipment (PPE), completion of individual risk assessments for colleagues and dealing with suspected Covid cases.
26. Other Covid 19 work includes assistance with formulation a process for gaining Covid 19 assurance statements from Service Directorates, writing of guidance to cover use of Display Screen equipment whilst working from home and writing of guidance on Dealing with suspected or actual Covid 19 cases/outbreaks
27. Legacy accident reporting systems - the legacy Bournemouth accident and near miss reporting system can now be accessed by all colleagues on the H&S page on the BCP intranet. The remaining work requested by the Corporate H&S team will start in late September that will include a back-office function to allow analysis by the team of Corporate and Service Directorate data from all BCP legacy areas.
28. Legacy cautionary contact systems - IT have contacted an external company with regards to the Cautionary Contact system work to undertake this work on IT's behalf. When the expected approval has been received, the work can be planned in detail with anticipated start date.
29. Final versions of the following Corporate procedures have been prepared and consulted following the procedure approval process:
 - Violence and threatening behaviour
 - Risk assessment (and general risk assessment form)

- Managing contractors
- Construction Design and Management
- Underground Services and Excavations

A plan for the Corporate procedures and policies showing the development schedule, and the progress against this, is presented to every board meeting. This is shown in appendix 2.

30. Due to Covid and resource issues, no H&S audits or inspections have yet been carried out. A Corporate H&S audit plan is to be developed, taking into account any changes resulting from Covid 19.

Staffing and team structure

31. The Corporate Health & Safety team and Fire Safety team are located within the Communities Directorate, under the Head of Regulatory Services.

Fire Safety

32. The Fire Safety team for BCP Council is comprised of the legacy Bournemouth Borough Council's Fire Safety team. It includes one full-time Fire Safety Manager, one full time and one part-time (3 days per week) Fire Safety Advisors. A review of service delivery options to incorporate previous arrangements of Fire Safety within the Poole geographic is near conclusion. There is an overall requirement for an increase in resource to accommodate the required advisory support service for the now wider, overall BCP Council geographic.

Health and Safety

33. The BCP Council Corporate H&S team comprises a Corporate H&S manager, five H&S practitioners (one vacant) and a Health and Safety and training support officer. From March to September the team was operating with two H&S practitioner vacancies which affected the level of service given.
34. Urgent consideration is being given re options to recruit to the remaining vacant H&S practitioner post, as only one of the two vacant posts was filled during the recent recruitment drive.
35. A temporary H&S resource has been engaged to increase capacity until the vacant posts have been filled. He will provide advice and support to Service Directorates on the continuing Covid 19 requirements and on writing BCP policies and Corporate Procedures.

Summary of financial implications

36. The 2020-21 budget for Health and Safety is £268,100 and for Fire Safety it is £113,200.
37. No financial implications are arising from the recommendations of this report.
38. There are potential financial risks associated with inadequate or non-compliant Health and Safety or Fire Safety practices that could lead to financial penalties and losses. The governance arrangements outlined in this report will help to mitigate these.

Summary of legal implications

39. No legal implications are arising from the recommendations of this report.
40. The Council is legally obliged to have adequate Health and Safety and Fire Safety arrangements in place, and the new governance arrangements support in demonstrating compliance with these obligations.

Summary of human resource implications

41. No human resource implications are arising from the recommendations of this report.

Summary of environmental impact

42. There is no environmental impact arising from the recommendations of this report.

Summary of public health implications

43. There are no public health implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Summary of equality implications

44. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Summary of risk assessment

45. Failure to report annually would leave the Committee unaware of continuing governance arrangements. This increases the risk of on-going governance falling below acceptable standards.

46. A further report in six months is not considered necessary. However, there should remain the option for exception reporting if relevant officers or members are concerned that governance arrangements may have been compromised.

Background papers:

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Fire Safety Bill Explanatory Notes

Appendix 2 - Progress summary for Corporate Health and Safety policies / procedures development

Fire Safety Bill explanatory notes

Fire Safety Bill: explanatory notes

The Fire Safety Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 19 March 2020 (Bill 121).

In December 2019, the Government was elected with a manifesto commitment that reaffirmed its intention of ‘implementing and legislating for all the recommendations of the Dame Judith Hackitt Review and the first phase of the independent inquiry’. Both the review and the independent inquiry (the Grenfell Tower public inquiry) were set up as a result of the Grenfell Tower tragedy in June 2017.

The Queen’s Speech included a commitment to bring forward a Fire Safety Bill, its purpose being to clarify that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Fire Safety Order) applies to external walls (including cladding, balconies and windows) and individual flat entrance doors in multi-occupied residential buildings. This will be of particular interest to:

- building owners
- leaseholders
- managers for multi-occupied residential buildings.

These are likely to be the responsible persons and those who need to ensure that they have assessed the fire safety risks of the premises for which they are responsible, and have taken the necessary fire precautions as a result of that assessment. The Fire Safety Bill will also affirm Fire and Rescue Authorities have the relevant enforcement powers to hold owners or managers to account.

It will also complement the existing powers local authorities have to take enforcement action against building owners and managers under the housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) provided for in the Housing Act 2004 and the Building (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1230) which came into force on 21 December 2018 and banned the use of combustible materials within the external walls, and certain attachments to the external walls, of any new building with a storey at least 18 metres in height where:

- a. the building contains at least one dwelling
- b. the building contains certain residential accommodation for the treatment, care or maintenance of persons
- c. the building contains certain rooms used for residential purposes, including student accommodation and school dormitories.

(Including such a building created by a material change of use.)

The Fire Safety Bill will also support the Government’s intended action to introduce secondary legislation to implement the specific recommendations made in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase One Report. For example, recommendations included new legal duties on “building owners or managers of high-rise buildings” in relation to

inspection and information sharing with the local Fire and Rescue Service. This includes the requirement for building owners or managers to share information with their local Fire and Rescue Service about the design of its external walls and details of the materials of which they are constructed and to undertake regular inspections of individual flat entrance doors.

The provisions in the Bill extend and apply to England and Wales

Scotland has its own legislation in place – Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

Northern Ireland is covered in Part 3 of The Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and The Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010.

Provisions

The provisions in the Bill are as follows:

- premises to which the Fire Safety Order applies
- power to change premises to which the Fire Safety Order applies
- extent, commencement and short title.

The explanatory notes are available [here](#).

MPs will next consider the Bill at Second Reading. The date for second reading has not yet been announced.

House of Commons

March 2020

Progress summary for Corporate Health and Safety policies / procedures development

Health and safety policies/ corporate procedures development 2020-21

	BCP Priority	Who	Progress Sep 20	Target for first draft	Target for final version date, following consultation
Asbestos - general advice to staff who may encounter asbestos.	High	TBC	First draft prepared	FM to determine	TBC
CDM (Construction, Design, Management)	High		Final version being prepared	Complete	Q3
Violent, aggressive or abusive behaviour	High		Complete	Complete	Complete
Contractors	High		Final version being prepared	Complete	Oct-20
Driving at work	High		Work in progress	Q3	Q4
First aid	High		First draft prepared	Complete	Q3
Health risks and health surveillance (HAV, noise, dust, resp, skin)	High		Work in progress	Q3	Q3
Lone working	High		Resource allocated	Q3	Q3
Risk assessment	High		Final version being prepared	Complete	Oct-20

Substance misuse	High	TBC		HR to determine	TBC
Underground services and excavation procedure	High		Final version being prepared	Complete	Oct-20
Working at height	High		Resource allocated	Q3	Q4
Hand arm vibration at work	High		Resource allocated	Q3	Q3
Accident and Incident Reporting	Medium		Minor changes only when IT system upgrade completed	Oct-20	Dec-20
Cautionary Contact List	Medium			Dependant on IT system development	Dependant on IT system development
Confined spaces	Medium		Resource allocated	Oct-20	Dec-20
Legionnaires disease	Medium	TBC			
Manual handling (objects)	Medium		Resource allocated	Q3	Q3
PAT (Portable appliance testing)	Medium	TBC			
Sharps and needle sticks	Medium		Resource allocated	Q3	Q3
Stress	Medium	TBC			

Agile working including DSE, to include DSE guidance from H&S	Medium	TBC			
COSHH	Medium			Q3	TBC
Working outside	Medium			Q3	TBC
Noise at work	Medium			Q3	TBC
Electrical Safety	Low		Resource allocated	TBC	TBC
Lifting equipment and operations (LOLER)	Low		Resource allocated	TBC	TBC
Model school H&S policy template	Low			TBC	TBC
New and expectant mothers at work	Low	TBC		TBC	TBC
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Low		Resource allocated	TBC	TBC
PUWER (Provision and use of work equipment)	Low		Resource allocated	TBC	TBC

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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Report subject	Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Annual Update (from November 19 to October 20)
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	Emergency planning and business continuity activity in BCP Council over the reporting period has been dominated by COVID-19. This update provides a high-level overview of the scale and nature of the COVID-19 response, from a governance perspective, in addition to more business as usual aspects that have continued in parallel. It also provides a consideration of concurrent and future risks.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Audit and Governance Committee is asked to note the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant emergency and business continuity response to COVID-19 to date undertaken by BCP Council alongside multi-agency partners • the new resilience governance framework • the forward look for the remainder of the year
Reason for recommendations	It is a statutory requirement for the Council to have effective emergency planning and business continuity arrangements in place in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This is of particular significance currently during the ongoing response to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Drew Mellor
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Alyson Whitley Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager ☎ 07584 490684 ✉ alyson.whitley@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For update and information

Background

1. This report provides an update on the emergency planning and business continuity arrangements in place across BCP Council and related activity during the period of this monitoring report.
2. It is a statutory requirement for the Council to have effective emergency planning and business continuity arrangements in place in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA).
3. Whilst a legal requirement, emergency planning and business continuity are always one of many competing priorities. The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a spotlight on emergency planning and business continuity and highlighted their importance and value.
4. The following specific activity / topics are considered in more detail in this report:
 - BCP Council and Dorset LRF response to COVID-19
 - Dorset LRF multi-agency partnership and Civil Contingencies Unit
 - BCP resilience governance framework
 - Forward look for the remainder of 2020/21
5. Whilst this monitoring report does consider COVID-19, it does not seek to be an exhaustive account of the Council's and partners' response.

COVID-19 Overview

6. Emergency planning and business continuity activity across BCP Council since March 2020 has been primarily focussed on understanding and responding to COVID-19 and in so doing providing support and leadership to our communities during these unprecedented times. COVID-19 has affected countless lives and continues to shape everything on a day-to-day basis both professionally and personally.

7. COVID-19 has been particularly challenging as it has required a hybrid response, i.e. both an emergency planning and business continuity response in tandem over a prolonged period. The Council has had to be very reactive, quickly developing new services in response to government initiatives such as establishing the 'Together We Can' community resilience work, the telephone helpline and paying out almost £90 million to business and individuals from various government grant schemes. These were not in any plan and have had to be implemented from scratch. In addition to the direct impacts of the pandemic, the Council has had to manage the consequences of the indirect impacts such as overcrowding on its beaches.
8. Most emergency plans and structures are based on more traditional short duration incidents and were not necessarily designed for the current longer-term response and so there has been and continues to be a real need to be flexible and adaptable whilst adhering to emergency planning and business continuity frameworks and principles.
9. Unlike most emergencies, all those involved in responding have also been directly affected by the incident in their personal lives and have had to contend with the additional stresses and pressures that this brings at the same time. It has been a very intense and protracted response and this is likely to continue over coming months. Staff resilience has therefore been an important consideration.
10. The reach and remit of emergency planning has been extended in response to COVID-19 and other recent and concurrent activity (e.g. EU exit/transition) to include a much wider range of activity than would traditionally be seen as an emergency. Emergency planning structures have been drawn on extensively as they provide a tried and tested and truly multi-agency collaboration mechanism that does not currently exist elsewhere across the public sector.
11. The sections that follow concentrating on COVID-19 provide a high-level overview of activity to date, but it is difficult to truly reflect the scale and enormity of the challenges faced and effort made by BCP Council and partners over the past seven months in response to the pandemic.

BCP Council COVID-19 Response

12. An early key decision made by BCP Council decided was to nominate a dedicated Gold (strategic level) and Silver (tactical level) to focus on COVID-19 and to maintain the normal duty gold and silver rota arrangements to respond to any other emergency issues that may arise.
13. In line with corporate emergency and business continuity plans, a Corporate Incident Management Team (CIMT) was convened to lead and coordinate the corporate response to COVID-19. Various workstreams were established and continue to feed into CIMT.
14. CIMT met daily on weekdays (and sometimes at weekends) from 18th March to 6th April at which point it moved to three times a week. It currently meets twice a week. Membership consists of:
 - Chief Executive, Chair of CIMT, dedicated COVID-19 Gold and SCG link
 - Leader of the Council, latterly the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for COVID Resilience

- Corporate Director Adult's Services and health and social care (pan Dorset) workstream lead
 - Corporate Director Children's Services
 - Corporate Director Resources and recovery workstream lead
 - Corporate Director Communities and Environment and excess deaths (pan Dorset) workstream lead
 - Corporate Director Economy and business and economy workstream lead
 - Director Financial Services and Section 151 Officer
 - Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
 - Director of IT & IS and technical resilience workstream lead
 - Director of Communities and community resilience workstream lead
 - Dedicated COVID-19 Silver, TCG link, warning and informing workstream lead, testing and PPE
 - Head of HR and people and wellbeing workstream lead
 - Director of Public Health Dorset/Assistant Director of Public Health Dorset
 - Head of Audit and Management Assurance
 - Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager
 - Executive Support
 - Loggist – this is a vital role. All decisions made by CIMT are logged in a consistent format and retained in line with emergency planning best practice principles which are embedded within BCP Council
 - Other officers join CIMT meetings to facilitate discussions in relation to particular decision records being brought
15. An interim debrief of CIMT has been held and a number of short-term and longer-term recommendations and actions have been identified and are being taken forward. Other areas of the council response have also undertaken debriefing to capture any learning to feed into the ongoing situation. This debriefing process again draws on emergency planning good practice principles which are embedded within BCP Council.
16. All schools in BCP remained open throughout the lockdown period providing places for key worker and vulnerable group children.
17. Recent developments have been understanding the new legislative measures introduced at the end of September and putting in place proportionate measures in conjunction with partners to educate, contain and enforce. Customer Services went live on 5th October with new proactive welfare calls to those who have been told to self-isolate either through having a positive COVID test result or being a close contact. Work is also underway to explore what the COVID-19 marshals announcement by Government might look like on the ground and how a scheme could be implemented across BCP and Dorset.

Consequence Management

18. Following the incident on a Thursday in late June which saw significant overcrowding across Bournemouth beaches, BCP Council established a multi-agency summer consequence management group. This met initially in June and then every Thursday in advance of the weekend from July to early September to ensure a joined-up approach to managing the situation across the beaches and town centres during the period. This involved the emergency services, H M Coastguard, BCP seafront services, highways, community safety, corporate comms, Bournemouth Station and South Western Railways and health services. This was coordinated with a similar group in Dorset Council to ensure effective and joined-up action across the whole of Dorset.
19. As part of these groups, arrangements were put in place for pan Dorset pre-scheduled multi-agency calls during potentially busy weekends where demand was considered to be high. These took place at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays and provided the early sharing of situational awareness and intelligence to help manage demand and proactively deal with emerging issues. A debrief was held on 8th October to capture any learning and to inform similar arrangements for the future if these are needed. Early thinking from this is that this collaborative approach provided an effective way to forecast and manage busy periods and should not just be reserved for emergencies.

Dorset LRF COVID-19 Response

20. The multi-agency command structure of Dorset LRF has been stood up since early March 2020 and BCP Council has played a major role in this with a wide range of officers participating across the structure, supported by Emergency Planning. The Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) and the Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) have been supplemented by a range of sub groups and workstreams. These include:
 - Warning and informing
 - Excess deaths (supported by several sub groups)
 - Health
 - Health and social care (supported by a care home sub group)
 - Ports and borders
 - Strategic safe and well group (safeguarding, vulnerable and homeless)
 - PPE
 - Testing
 - Volunteer Cell
 - Strategic Staff Wellbeing Group
 - Workforce demand
 - Multi-agency intelligence cell
 - Epidemiology Cell (EpiCell)
 - Contingencies sub group

- Recovery
21. Meeting frequency for all the groups has flexed and been adjusted in line with prevailing risk. During the first wave peak the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) was meeting three times a week and the Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) twice weekly. The SCG moved to a meeting every third week in July with the TCG continuing to meet weekly. Since mid September, the SCG has resumed meeting weekly.
 22. There are also two new sub groups that have recently been agreed:
 - Contain and Engage - a multi-agency sub group to look at the Dorset partnership approach to enforcement in the widest sense.
 - Mass vaccination sub group – to manage the necessary aspects of planning for and delivering a mass vaccination programme across Dorset for COVID-19.
 23. In addition to the Dorset LRF command structure there is an extensive health structure from local to national level, weekly regional Response Coordinating Group meetings, a regional public health Test, Trace, Contain and Enable Group as part of the national Contain framework and a host of ministerial level briefings and meetings.

Excess Deaths

24. The local authority has responsibility for planning and preparing for and managing the response to excess deaths in the event of a pandemic. An LRF strategic level multi-agency coordination group co-chaired by BCP and Dorset Councils was stood up to oversee the management of the death management pathway which starts with death certification through death registration to burial or cremation. Membership included H M Coroner, Police Disaster Victim Identification experts, Registration Services, Bereavement Services and funeral directors.
25. As part of this process, specialist temporary facilities for the deceased were established at Poole Port and the Old Radio Station in Dorchester. Whilst stood down at the moment, these facilities could be stood up within 72 hours. The Emergency Planning Teams from both BCP Council and Dorset Council have made a significant contribution to this workstream.

Social Care

26. An LRF strategic level multi-agency coordination group chaired by BCP's Corporate Director Adult Services was stood up to oversee the safe delivery of Adult Social Care services in the county of Dorset during the pandemic. Membership included representatives from BCP and Dorset Councils, various health service bodies and care providers.
27. During March, April and May there was considerable emphasis on ensuring the care sector had access to adequate and sufficient Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which included the coordinated distribution of stocks provided to BCP and Dorset Council under emergency arrangements, referred to as LRF PPE drops. The Government announced an Infection Control Grant scheme and BCP and Dorset Council have distributed grants to care providers and created a compliance process to ensure all care providers who wanted to accept the grant had the necessary grant qualifying conditions and arrangements in place. Care providers

in the BCP area have currently received about £6 million in the first two tranches of this grant with further payments due to be released up to 31st March 2021.

Local Outbreak Management Plans

28. In response to COVID-19 as part of the Contain framework the Government introduced the requirement for every upper tier/unitary authority to have a COVID-19 local outbreak management plan (LOMP). The plan had to be in place by the end of June and had to address how an outbreak and communication will be managed in the local area. The local outbreak management plan requirements have seen the establishing of two new groups:

- Our Dorset Health Protection Board, chaired by the Director of Public Health Dorset with officers from a range of organisations and disciplines including Emergency Planning. It meets weekly and its role is:
 - To provide strategic planning and direction for managing COVID-19 outbreaks in the Dorset and BCP Council areas through close collaboration of the Our Dorset system.
 - To provide coordinated advice, guidance and instruction to local agencies in relation to health protection measures.
 - To maintain and deliver Local Outbreak Management Plans in accordance with the national Contain framework.
- BCP Local Outbreak Engagement Board – a Member and Executive level group to lead on public engagement and communication. This is mirrored in Dorset Council.

29. The Our Dorset Health Protection Board has produced a local suite of action cards for managing an outbreak across a range of settings and sectors including food manufacturing premises, schools, universities and language schools, hospitality, and hotels and campsites.

30. These new groups have had to be slotted into the existing complex local authority and multi-agency response structure. Emergency Planners have been engaged in developing and delivering scenario-based discussion exercises to explore the remit of these groups and how this expanded response framework can work together and communicate collectively and effectively. A diagram setting this out can be seen at Appendix 1.

31. Alongside the local outbreak management plans, under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 3) Regulations 2020 local authorities have been given the power to close individual premises, close public outdoor places and restrict events with immediate effect if they conclude it is necessary and proportionate to do so, in order to respond to a serious and imminent threat to public health and control the transmission of COVID-19 in its area.

Dorset Civil Contingencies Unit

32. The LRF is the principal mechanism for multi-agency cooperation under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA). The LRF is based on the Dorset Police boundary which is the same as the geographical county boundary. The LRF is not a

statutory body but it is a statutory process. It does not, however, have powers to direct its members.

33. The LRF currently delivers its collective duties against the CCA through the Dorset Civil Contingencies Unit (the CCU) which is an innovative local public sector partnership. The CCU is funded by Police, Fire, Local Authority and Health partners of the Dorset LRF. The CCU coordinates the governance of the Dorset LRF and oversees the management and delivery of the Dorset LRF programme of work.
34. Following a review last year of the CCU to consider value for money, the future of the unit and its remit, the LRF Executive Group agreed a series of recommendations, the main one of which was the development and delivery of a CCU improvement plan. Work was due to begin on this in February when the new Head of the CCU joined on a 2-year secondment. Work understandably stalled on this front as efforts had to be dedicated to COVID-19. However, an improvement plan has now been drafted and signed off by the LRF Governance Group and LRF Executive Group. The Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager has been involved in a small working group to identify the key activities required to deliver the improvement plan.
35. It is worth noting that the working relationship with the CCU has seen a significant improvement this year and things are generally far more positive. The themes and activities identified within the improvement plan are designed to improve CCU and partner relationships and delivery further.
36. The Dorset Civil Contingencies Unit has provided invaluable input and support to the Dorset LRF and the response to COVID-19 during this period.

Concurrent risks

37. Despite the ongoing response to COVID-19 the Council still has a legal duty to respond to any other incident that may occur. All Dorset LRF partners are signed up to the fundamental principle that imminent risk to life, such as a fire or flooding, trumps COVID-19 risk and therefore people have to be removed from harm's way first and foremost and then COVID-19 considerations come into play.
38. Local emergency response arrangements have been revisited and considered through the lens of COVID-19. For instance, how would we safely manage an evacuation where evacuees needed to be temporarily sheltered whilst socially distancing? PPE for staff and public have therefore been an important consideration and the emergency equipment held for evacuation has been bolstered by a supply of face coverings and hand sanitiser. Additional COVID-19 guidance for evacuation has been prepared by the Emergency Planning Team and shared across the Council.
39. The Dorset LRF mass fatalities group chaired by H M Coroner has continued to meet during COVID-19 to ensure that the capability to respond to a mass fatality incident during the pandemic continues to be maintained. There is a cross over with the excess deaths workstream and some resources and learning from recent experiences can be carried over to mass fatalities planning. The biggest challenge would be staff resilience as many of the people and organisations involved in leading the excess deaths response are the same ones that would be required to manage a mass fatality response. This is not a unique situation. This picture is

mirrored in many other places across the country. It has been flagged with Government and recognised as a capability gap in a recent national risk review.

40. The Emergency Planning Team has continued to work on the BCP severe weather response plan outlining how the Council manages its response to a range of weather risks including heatwave, extreme cold, ice and snow, and wind, rain and storms and gales. A final draft is currently out for consultation and will then go to CMB for final sign off. Work is also continuing on the new BCP flood response plan which, in a similar way, will outline the Council's response to flooding.
41. The BCP Council Protocol for the death of a senior national figure has also been reviewed in light of COVID-19 and a multi-agency exercise was held on 30th September. This was to consider the multi-agency response and how this would be managed were it to happen in the near future during the current pandemic and to highlight some of the different and/or additional challenges this may bring.
42. Awareness continues to be drawn to the risk of cyber attacks as a number of sectors, higher education in particular, have experienced successful attacks over the past couple of months. Loss of IT would complicate and frustrate massively the ability of the Council and other partners to respond at a time where reliance on IT is critical.

Resilience Governance Framework

43. A resilience governance framework for emergency planning and business continuity has been developed by the Emergency Planning Team and approved by the Corporate Management Board. The framework is an important development and sets out the roles and responsibilities of the organisation and establishes two new groups to provide oversight of and ensure delivery of corporate resilience activity. Its overall purpose is to strengthen and embed emergency planning and business continuity activity and ensure that there is a clear understanding of how these statutory duties are carried out across the Council and the reporting lines. The full detail of the resilience governance framework can be seen at Appendix 2.
44. The next step is the practical implementation of the framework and getting the groups up and running and delivering against the framework and terms of reference.

Business Continuity

45. As already referenced in the section on COVID-19, business continuity has been an integral part of the Council's response to COVID-19. Service level plans and arrangements have been put to the test for real and have continued to evolve during recent months.
46. The organisational and service level learning from the business continuity response will be embedded into future business continuity arrangements. It was recognised prior to COVID-19 that a full business continuity programme needed to be implemented across BCP Council as part of the new authority and work was underway to do so. This requirement was reinforced by an Internal Audit report into business continuity undertaken in 2019 which was only able to provide partial assurance in relation to the governance arrangements for business continuity. A

management response to the audit has been agreed and will be implemented over the next 18 months subject to the demands of the COVID-19 response

47. The resilience governance framework referenced in the preceding section is a significant step in delivering the foundations of the business continuity programme.

Emergency Response

48. During the reporting period the Emergency Planning Team has continued to maintain the various duty schemes across the Council. These have been maintained separately from the COVID-19 Gold and Silver. Thankfully there have not been many additional incidents across BCP requiring an emergency response. The two most notable incidents have been:
- A planned evacuation of the Iford Home Park in December 2019 as a result of a severe flood warning being issued. The Emergency Planning Team worked with the Environment Agency and BCP command structure to support those residents affected by this.
 - A significant fire in a derelict hotel on Gervis Road in Bournemouth on 24th September. This resulted in the evacuation of the hotels either side and 170 guests having to be moved to two nearby hotels in the early hours of the morning. A range of officers were mobilised to scene and the BCP Council command structure was activated to coordinate the Council's response.
49. Hastened by the COVID-19 pandemic, but as part of the move to new ways of working, the handover for the Duty Gold and Duty Silver phones has now been made virtual. The duty gold and silver phone numbers are diverted in the background each Thursday to the nominated mobile phone of the incoming Duty Gold and Silver. The Emergency Planning Duty Officer handover is, however, still being carried out in person for resilience purposes.

Recruitment

50. Since early March this year the Emergency Planning Team has not been at full complement and has been carrying a vacancy for the Senior Emergency Planning and Resilience Officer (SEPRO). The recruitment process had been commenced but had to be curtailed as a result of lockdown. Interviews for the post were undertaken in September and a new SEPRO should be joining the team in early November.
51. Additional experienced resource was brought in on a short-term basis for three months during the height of lockdown to focus exclusively on developing arrangements for the mortality support facility at Poole Port.

Forward Look

52. The landscape for the next six months is set to be difficult having been described nationally as 'a very challenging winter'. This is not only due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, but also as a result of winter pressures from colds and flu alongside the risk of severe weather and flooding. In addition to this, the LRF has also recommenced EU transition preparation ready for January 2021.

53. The LRF command structure has been reviewed to take into account these concurrent risks and it has been agreed that there will be only one SCG and TCG and that these groups will consider all concurrent risks and work to deconflict and prioritise the response, supported by a range of sub groups as required. For instance, a key area being looked at is the potential for traffic disruption around Poole Port. The Creekmoor park and ride site had been the provisional local site for lorry holding in this situation, but this is now being used for the regional testing unit for COVID-19. Work is underway across BCP, in conjunction with Dorset Council and other partners, to explore alternative viable options.
54. A multi-agency concurrent risk tabletop exercise is being held on 21st October to provide an opportunity to work through a challenging scenario based on what may occur over the next few months.

Summary of financial implications

55. There are no direct financial implications from this report although COVID-19 and the Council's response has had a significant financial impact on the Council's budget in year and into future years.
56. The Emergency Planning Team budget is predicted to underspend by about a net £15,000 as a result of the vacant-for-six-months SEPRO post referenced above.

Summary of legal implications

57. Failure to have in place effective emergency planning or business continuity arrangements may result in the Council not meeting its statutory requirements under the Civil Contingencies Act.

Summary of human resources implications

58. There are no direct human resources implications from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

59. There are no direct sustainability impacts from this report.

Summary of public health implications

60. Whilst acknowledging the current public health emergency posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Council's response to that, there are no direct public health implications from this report.

Summary of equality implications

61. There are no direct equality implications from this report.

Summary of risk assessment

62. Failure to have in place effective emergency planning and business continuity arrangements could result in the Council not being able to effectively respond to an emergency affecting Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole or not being able to deliver critical services in the event of disruption. The potential for concurrent risks over coming months has been outlined in the main body of this report.

Background papers

None

Appendices

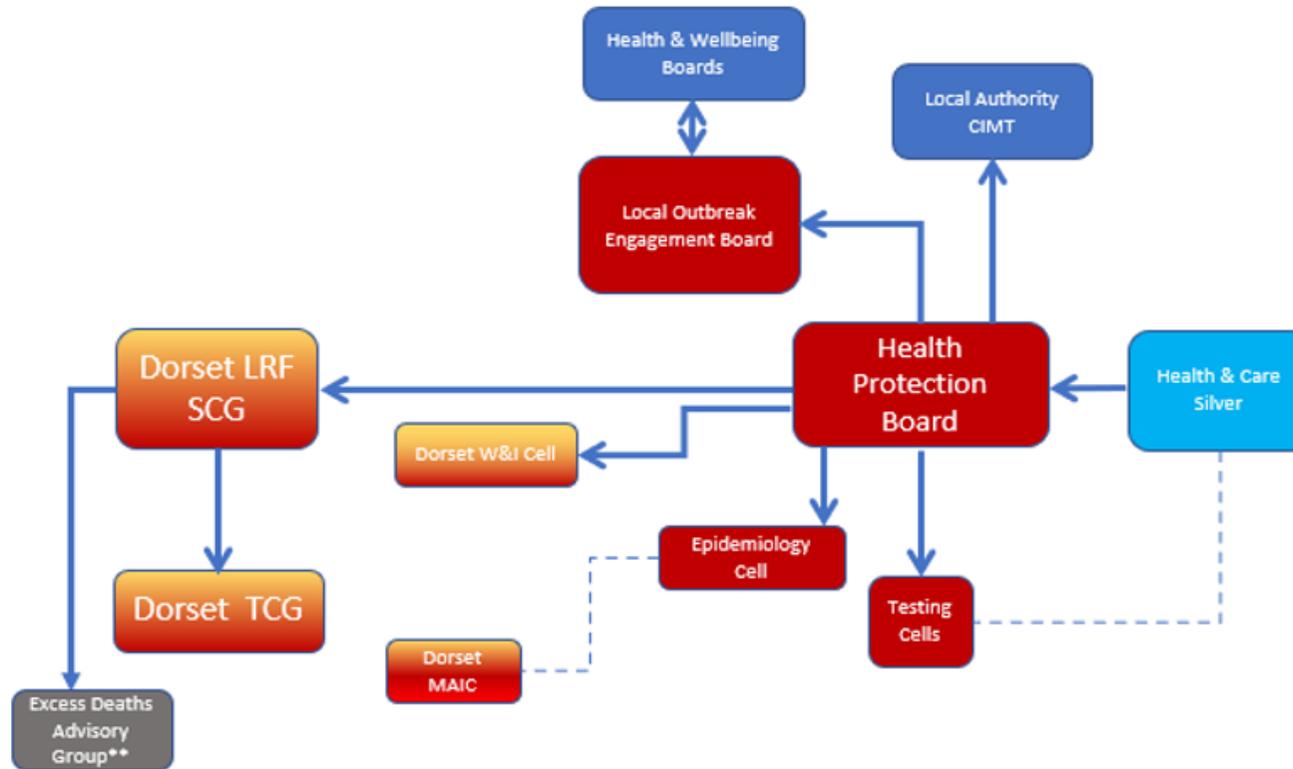
Appendix 1 – Dorset Health Protection Board Cascade Diagram

Appendix 2 – BCP Council Resilience Governance Framework

Appendix 1 – Our Dorset Health Protection Board Cascade Diagram



OUR DORSET HEALTH PROTECTION BOARD ESCALATION & CASCADE DIAGRAM



Key

- Covid-19
- EU Transition
- Health Only
- BAU
- Dormant

**EDAG is supported by Tactical and Operational Sub-Groups

Emergency Planning and Business Continuity (Resilience) Governance Framework



Version 0.2 September 2020

Approved by CMB 15.09.20

Purpose of this document

1. The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004 places a statutory duty on BCP Council to have appropriate emergency planning and business continuity arrangements in place, to be prepared to respond to a wide range of emergencies, and to continue to provide critical functions during any disruptive incidents. This duty includes working with multi-agency partners to ensure there are joined up plans in place and that partners can come together and respond effectively when required.
2. This document sets out the governance framework for emergency planning and business continuity to be adopted by BCP Council with effect from 15th September 2020.
3. This document should be read in conjunction with the Corporate Emergency Plan, the Corporate Business Continuity Plan and the Business Continuity Strategy*.
4. The Cabinet Office non-statutory guidance to the CCA, *Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Response and Recovery* and the Business Continuity Institute *Good Practice Guidelines 2018*, aligned to the international business continuity standard, are the key reference documents underpinning activity in this area.
5. This document includes the terms of reference, including purpose and responsibilities for;
 - The Corporate Resilience Board
 - The Resilience Forum Meeting

It also provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of:

- The Chief Executive
 - Corporate Directors
 - Directors
 - Service Managers
 - Emergency Planning and Resilience Team
 - Service/Team Representatives Responsible for Resilience
6. The Audit and Governance Committee will receive as a minimum an annual monitoring report on emergency planning and business continuity activity.
 7. The framework is intended to embed emergency planning and business continuity activity and ensure that there is a clear understanding of how these statutory duties are carried out across the Council and the reporting lines.
 8. In order to bring this governance framework to life, a comprehensive training and exercising programme for both emergency planning and business continuity will be required. This will be developed over the next 12 -18 months.
 9. The diagram on the following page shows the 'governance framework on a page' followed by the terms of reference for the various boards/meetings.

* The corporate business continuity strategy is currently under development.

Emergency Planning and Business Continuity – Governance Framework

Audit & Governance Committee (A&G)
To receive an annual report



Corporate Management Board (CMB)
Approval of plans and for escalation as needed



Corporate Resilience Board *

Who are they?

- Chief Executive / Corporate Director Environment & Community
- Service Directors
- Head of Audit and Management Assurance
- Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager
- Emergency Planning and Resilience Team representatives, as appropriate
- Technical representatives from key areas such as IT, HR

What do they do?
Provide strategic oversight of the Council's emergency preparedness, resilience and response arrangements and thereby ensure the Council is meeting its statutory responsibilities for Emergency Planning and Business Continuity in line with the Civil Contingencies Act.

How often do they meet?
Twice a year



Resilience Forum meeting

Who are they?

- Head of Audit and Management Assurance
- Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager
- Emergency Planning and Resilience Officers
- Service/Team Representatives responsible for Resilience
- Technical representatives from key areas such as ICT, Comms, Insurance, FM

What do they do?
Delivery group and co-ordination of EP & BC activity ensuring a joined-up approach to resilience. Share best practice

How often do they meet?
Quarterly

* In times of response, the Corporate Incident Management Team (CIMT) fulfils the role of the Corporate Resilience Board.

Corporate Support

Who are they?

- Emergency Planning and Resilience Team
- Audit & Management Assurance

What do they do?

- Offer professional and expert advice, guidance and support
- Provide assurance (compliance work) separate from those responsible for delivery
- Support the Council's command structure

Strategic Direction

Operational Direction



Terms of Reference

Corporate Resilience Board

1. Purpose

To provide strategic oversight of the Council's emergency preparedness, business continuity and resilience, and response and recovery arrangements.

2. Responsibilities

- a. Ensure the Council is meeting its statutory responsibilities with regard to the seven statutory duties placed on the Council under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- b. Ensure the Council is compliant with its statutory duties in relation to the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2019 (REPPPIR), Control of Major Accident Hazards 2005 (COMAH) and Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996 (PSR).
- c. Monitor resilience activity in line with the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity (Resilience) Governance Framework and provide a strategic platform for resolving any non-compliance issues.
- d. Direct the resilience work programme, monitoring progress and ensuring organisational 'buy-in' where required.
- e. Monitor the appropriate implementation, review, testing and exercising of emergency and business continuity plans and planning across BCP Council.
- f. Ensure key issues and risks highlighted by the Local Resilience Forum, with specific relevance to the BCP Council area, are appropriately addressed.
- g. Consult upon and approve, where appropriate, emergency and business continuity plans and procedures.
- h. Monitor emergency and business continuity response activity, review post-incident debrief reports and ensure progression of any post-incident debrief learning.
- i. Ensure relevant legislation is considered, national guidance is reviewed, and lessons identified from significant incidents are considered to identify good practice, using these as a basis for developing and improving existing arrangements and strategy.
- j. Provide a steer for future emergency planning and business continuity management activity.
- k. Promote a culture of resilience across the organisation.

- l. Ensure there are appropriate arrangements for staff welfare in place to support staff and parties working on behalf of the Council during both the planning and preparedness and response phases including appropriate wellbeing awareness and training.
- m. Mobilise task and finish groups to look at particular issues in more detail.
- n. Direct any other activity commensurate with the aim of the group.
- o. Refer such matters as considered appropriate to the Corporate Management Board.

3. Accountability and Reporting

At each Board meeting the Head of Audit and Management Assurance will present a quarterly report including a dashboard of preparedness across the Council.

The Board will escalate issues to CMB.

4. Membership

Membership is outlined as follows:

Name	Board Role
Chief Executive	Chair
Corporate Director Environment & Community	Deputy Chair
Director Finance	Lead Resilience Service Director
Directors (or their delegate)	Service level representative
Head of Audit & Management Assurance	Management Assurance
Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager	Emergency Planning and Business Continuity advice, guidance and assurance
Emergency Planning and Resilience Officers (as required)	Emergency Planning and Business Continuity advice and guidance
Insurance & Risk Manager	Key Function – Insurance
Facilities Management	Key Function – Facilities management
XXX	Key Function – ICT/Disaster Recovery
XXX	Key Function - Corporate Communications
XXX	Key Function – Learning and Development
XXX	Key Function – HR & OD and wellbeing
XXX	Key Function – Customer Services
TBC	Minute Taker

Directors are expected to fully embrace the responsibility of the Board. If they are unable to attend a meeting, they are required to find a suitable deputy to attend on their behalf and update them prior to the meeting.

5. Meeting frequency and administration

The BCP Council Corporate Resilience Board will meet twice a year and meeting dates will be published well in advance on the BCP Council intranet pages or MS Teams. Wherever possible, meetings shall not be cancelled or postponed (except in exceptional circumstances). If any attendees cannot attend, then they will nominate a deputy to attend in their place.

Agenda items will include:

- Actions from last meeting
- Progress reports including a status dashboard
- Thematic presentations, e.g. national fuel planning arrangements
- Escalated issues and matters of non-compliance

Agenda items and papers will be emailed to all attendees and copied to corporate directors prior to each meeting.

Key notes, decisions and actions will be circulated to attendees after each meeting in a timely fashion.

6. Chair

The Board will be chaired by the Chief Executive (or Corporate Director Environment and Communities - Deputy Chair).

Resilience Forum Meeting

Purpose

To act as a delivery group and provide a focal point for emergency planning and business continuity planning and activity across the organisation, sites, directorates and services to ensure there are co-ordinated, complementary and consistent arrangements in place.

Responsibilities

- a. Develop pan-organisational working to enable cross-cutting discussions and the development of effective co-ordinated and consistent service and corporate emergency planning and business continuity planning arrangements and capabilities.
- b. Oversee the dissemination of central emergency planning and business continuity information to help increase knowledge and understanding across the organisation.
- c. Receive updates from services and teams on the status of service/team level emergency and business continuity plans, training and exercising.
- d. Ensure debriefs of BCP incidents are undertaken, any relevant learning is

considered, and appropriate recommendations are proposed.

- e. Provide a forum for directorates and services for the discussion of the issues surrounding emergency planning, business continuity and wider resilience issues, and the sharing of good practice and its implementation across BCP Council.
- f. Coordinate emergency planning and business continuity awareness raising and training.
- g. Help promote a culture of resilience across BCP Council.
- h. Make recommendations to the Corporate Resilience Board and keep them up to date with progress reports ensuring areas of concern are highlighted.

Accountability and reporting

The Resilience Forum meetings are accountable to the Corporate Resilience Board. It will report on progress and escalate any issues.

Meeting frequency and administration

The Resilience Forum will be held quarterly. The minutes of the meetings will be shared with attendees and publicised on the corporate emergency planning and business continuity pages of the BCP intranet or via MS Teams.

Agenda items and papers will be emailed to all attendees prior to each meeting. Key notes, decisions and actions will be circulated to attendees after each meeting in a timely fashion.

Membership

- Head of Audit and Management Assurance - Chair
- Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager
- Emergency Planning and Resilience Officer(s)
- Service/Team Representatives for Resilience
- Technical representatives
 - Insurance & Risk Manager
 - Facilities Management
 - IT
 - HR
 - Learning and Development
 - Corporate Communications
 - H & S

- Fire Safety
- Procurement
- Legal
- Customer Services (office hours)
- Out of hours – call centres
- Site representatives (as appropriate)
 - Bournemouth Town Hall
 - Christchurch Civic Centre
 - Poole Civic Centre
 - BLC
- Note taker – admin support TBC

Roles and responsibility of members

- To attend at least 75% of meetings.
- To feedback to service directors/service/team following Resilience Forum meetings
- To undertake duties in line with the Service/Unit/Team Representatives Responsible for Resilience role, as appropriate
- To promote a positive culture of emergency planning and business continuity
- To complete identified actions within the agreed timescales

Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Executive (Tier 1)

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for resilience across the Council under the Civil Contingencies Act.

Corporate Director for Environment and Communities (Tier 2)

The Corporate Director Environment and Communities is the formal deputy chair of the Corporate Resilience Board.

Corporate Directors (Tier 2)

Corporate Directors have delegated responsibility for planning for and responding to emergencies and ensuring organisational and directorate level resilience and compliance with the legislation. They are responsible for ensuring there are appropriate emergency and business continuity plans and procedures in place across their directorate.

All Corporate Directors are to ensure that their Directorate/services within their directorate carry out at least one business continuity and/or emergency scenario exercise per year and undertakes periodic training and exercising in line with corporate training and exercising requirements.

Service Directors (Tier 3)

Directors have delegated responsibility for planning for and responding to emergencies and ensuring organisational and service level resilience and compliance with the legislation. They are responsible for ensuring there are appropriate emergency and business continuity plans and procedures in place across their service.

Directors are to ensure that their Service carries out at least one business continuity and/or emergency scenario exercise per year and undertakes periodic training and exercising in line with corporate training and exercising requirements.

Directors are responsible for ensuring that appropriate Service/Team Representatives responsible for Resilience and technical representatives are nominated and carry out their function as set out in this framework.

Service Managers (Tier 4)

Service Managers are directly responsible for ensuring their service unit has appropriate and robust emergency and business continuity plans in place in order to deliver their services in the event of an emergency. This may, for instance, be a 'business as usual' type response in the face of predicted severe weather or an emergency response to a more unforeseen, unprecedented situation.

The Emergency Planning and Resilience Team

The Emergency Planning and Resilience Team is the Council's corporate team of professional emergency planning and business continuity specialists. The team supports management who are responsible for emergency planning and business continuity for the Council.

The Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager leads a team of officers responsible for:

- Provision of professional emergency planning and business continuity advice, support and guidance to the organisation;
- Ongoing development and maintenance of corporate emergency and business continuity plans and arrangements;

- Provision of a 24/7 on-call duty officer (Emergency Planning Duty Officer - DO) who is the first point of contact for the authority in an incident or emergency and will coordinate the response.
- Working with local responders to develop multi-agency plans, share information and foster good working relationships and co-operation during emergency response;
- Ensuring effective multi-agency working including appropriate representation at and participation in Local Resilience Forum standing groups and capability groups and cooperation with the Civil Contingencies Unit in support of the LRF;
- Working with teams and services across the Council to develop the Council's response capabilities in line with the risks identified through the Community Risk Register;
- Provision of specialist advice and support to Council directorates to enable Council wide compliance with the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004;
- Supporting the corporate business continuity management programme.
- Working with individual service areas to ensure consistency between corporate and service level emergency and business continuity arrangements;
- Promotion of business continuity planning and general emergency preparedness to communities, the voluntary sector and businesses;
- Development and/or delivery of training and exercising programmes both internally and with external organisations;
- Representing Council resilience related interests at specific risk groups or national and regional resilience groups.
- Administering the corporate duty gold, silver and duty officer schemes
- Providing professional subject matter expertise to the Council and the command structure during an incident
- Ensuring the Council is compliant with its statutory duties in relation to REPPiR, COMAH and PSR.

Service/Team Representative Responsible for Resilience

Each service/service area/team has a Service/Team Representative Responsible for Resilience and one or more deputies. Their function is to be the first point of contact for their service/service unit/team on emergency planning, business continuity and resilience matters in support of the service manager. Ultimately responsibility for business continuity planning rests with individual service managers.

The role of the Service/Team Representative Responsible for Resilience is:

- To work with the Emergency Planning and Resilience Team to ensure that the service/service unit/team is prepared to respond to a range of emergencies and business disruptions including identifying and arranging training for, and exercising of, appropriate staff.
- To ensure new staff receive a general brief on emergency planning and business continuity when starting.
- To be aware of the roles and functions of other departments and external agencies in an emergency.
- To ensure that emergency planning is understood and applied throughout the service and to ensure that senior management is engaged and that sufficient resources are allocated to undertake the tasks identified.
- To follow up with the Emergency Planning and Resilience Team incidents involving the service to identify lessons learned for future actions.
- To support the service in the recovery process.
- To ensure that service contact lists are maintained and reviewed on a regular basis.
- To support managers with their Business Impact Analysis (BIA), encourage detailed business continuity planning via individual service level plans and ensure these are updated as necessary.
- To be aware of all plans in which the service plays a part and contribute to their review as requested.
- To attend internal BCP Resilience Forum meetings to represent the service/service unit/team.
- To provide a link with the service/service unit/team manager and provide feedback to the service/service unit/team following BCP Resilience Forum meetings.
- To attend the BCP Incident Management Team during an emergency or internal

business continuity incident, as appropriate;

- To ensure that their service level response is reported via a sitrep or other requested means during an emergency.
- To ensure that their service status is reported via a sitrep or other requested means during an internal business continuity incident.

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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Report subject	Risk Management – Corporate Risk Register Update
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report updates councillors on the position of the council’s Corporate Risk Register. The main updates are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The comprehensive review of the Corporate Risk Register including the incorporation of the COVID-19 risks.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Members of the Audit and Governance Committee note the update provided in this report relating to corporate risks.</p>
Reason for recommendations	To provide assurance that corporate risks are being managed effectively and continue the development of the council’s arrangements for Risk Management and enhance its governance framework.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Drew Mellor, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant – Chief Executive
Report Authors	Fiona Manton Risk & Insurance Manager ☎01202 451274 fiona.manton@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Update and Information

Background

1. Risk can be broadly defined as the possibility that an action, issue or activity (including inaction) will lead to a loss or an undesirable outcome. It follows that Risk Management is about the identification, assessment and prioritisation of risks followed by co-ordinated control of the probability and impact of that risk.
2. In accordance with the Financial Regulations and the Risk Management Strategy, the Audit and Governance Committee are specifically responsible for ensuring appropriate and effective risk management processes. In practice, this means that the committee members must assure themselves that the council's Risk Management framework is appropriate and operating effectively. The council's Corporate Risk Register is an important element of this framework and is reviewed and updated on a quarterly basis.
3. In line with the decision-making framework in place for BCP Council it was agreed that, effective from day one, BCP Council would, as an interim measure, adopt the legacy Bournemouth Risk Management framework. The scoring matrix in this framework was adjusted to reflect the increased remit of the new authority. A revised Risk Management framework for BCP Council will be developed during 2020.
4. In addition to the quarterly reviews, in immediate practical terms, the Corporate Management Board continues to monitor risks and ensure appropriate and proportionate mitigating actions continue and evolve as risks change.

Corporate Risk Review

5. Members will recall from the last risk update in July 2020 that in light of the changing risk landscape a comprehensive review of the Corporate Risk Register was scheduled to be undertaken during this quarter. This review has been completed giving consideration to the existing corporate risks and incorporating the risks identified in the COVID-19 Corporate Risk Register. A new set of risks has been created relevant to the current position with the pandemic and how services continue to respond.
6. Please see the following details of each of the risks that appeared on the Corporate Risk Register in July 2020 and the position of each in terms of the review that has taken place.

Updated Corporate Risks

Risk Reference	Risk Title	Gross Risk Score	Risk Owner	Net Risk Score
CR1	Failure to respond to the needs arising from a changing demography		Chief Executive	
<p>Commentary: In agreeing this as a continuing risk the cause is expanded to include and consider the impact of the ending of the furlough scheme and any replacement government initiatives. The risk is wide in nature and will be informed by updates from all Corporate Directors to include any additional impacts of the pandemic on service delivery requirements. This includes the relevant elements of the risks identified as CV3, CV10 and CV12.</p>				
CR2	Failure to deliver effective safeguarding arrangements for children and adults		Chief Executive	
<p>Commentary: The content of this risk has been split to separate out the risk around improved outcomes for children. This is now a separate risk at CR12 below. The risk will now also be monitored in the context of the changes that have arisen as a result of the pandemic and the other continuing challenges to the delivery of effective safeguarding and statutory responsibilities. This includes the relevant elements of the risks identified as CV3 and CV10.</p>				
CR3	Risk Removed - Failure to ensure adequate Information Governance		Corporate Director of Resources	
<p>Commentary: This risk was evaluated and whilst continues to be of importance, was deemed to sit at a level below the corporate risks. On this basis the level of risk will be monitored by the Information Governance Board with the Senior Information Risk Owner being responsible for escalating the risk to Corporate Management Board should they consider the level to be increasing. Service level risk registers to consider the inclusion of this risk if not already present.</p>				
CR4	Failure to provide adequate IT and cyber security		Corporate Director of Resources	
<p>Commentary: This risk continues as a corporate risk and includes the additional considerations of the pandemic including the increase in remote working. It is also reflective of the increasing dependency on the IT infrastructure. The changes to the external environment that has evolved over the last 6 months with publicly reported increases in phishing and an increase in the sophistication of cyber attacks are relevant risk factors.</p>				
CR5	Risk Removed - Failure to plan effectively for EU Transition		Chief Executive	
<p>Commentary: This risk continues to be relevant but will be managed at a level below the corporate risk register. Services will be asked to consider any risks to the delivery of their services and oversight of the risk at a strategic level will be maintained by the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Economy.</p>				

Risk Reference	Risk Title	Gross Risk Score	Risk Owner	Net Risk Score
CR6	Risk Removed - Failure to adequately respond to an incident involving the activation of the emergency plan		Corporate Director of Resources	
<p>Commentary: This risk continues to be current but after evaluation will be managed at a level below the corporate risk register. The risk will be included under the Finance Director's risk register and escalated as necessary. Consideration of the risk level will routinely be reviewed by CIMT as part of the continuing response to the pandemic or any other concurrent incidents that require the activation of the emergency plan. This incorporates risk CV11.</p>				
CR7	Risk Removed - Failure to provide adequate services as a result of an incident requiring a business continuity response		Corporate Director of Resources	
<p>Commentary: This risk continues to be current but after evaluation will be managed at a level below the corporate risk register. Each service will be asked to consider this as a risk within their service risk registers and escalate as necessary via the relevant corporate director should the level increase.</p>				
CR9	Failure to maintain a safe and balanced budget for the delivery of services		Director of Finance	
<p>Commentary: This risk now includes the additional financial impacts relating to the pandemic (CV4 and CV7). It reflects the degree of uncertainty around the financial risk which makes financial planning extremely difficult. It considers the pressure on traditional income streams, the fluctuations in service demands and the future financial uncertainties as the pandemic continues. The budget process allows for rapid decisions to be taken to deal with urgent budgetary pressures.</p>				
CR10	Failure to deliver effective health and safety to protect staff, councillors and the public (affected by our acts)		Corporate Director of Environment and Community	
<p>Commentary: In general terms this is an operational risk and each service of the organisation is asked to consider this as part of the evaluation of the risks to the individual services. In addition, the Health and Safety and Fire Safety Board have a separate risk register. The inclusion on the corporate risk register continues whilst the policies and procedures of the organisation continue to be embedded following LGR. Within this risk, consideration is also given to the additional health and safety requirements of the pandemic (CV2 and CV9).</p>				
CR11	Ability of the council to function and operate efficiently in the delivery of single services across the area of BCP.		Chief Executive	
<p>Commentary: The title of this has been amended to clarify the risk. It recognises the complex reorganisation that created a new council from 1 April 2019 and the ambitious transformation programme taking place with the on-going challenges of a pandemic. It reflects the risks identified in CV1 and CV6.</p>				

Risk Reference	Risk Title	Gross Risk Score	Risk Owner	Net Risk Score
CR12	Failure to achieve appropriate outcomes and quality of service for young people	New	Interim Director for Children's Services	New
<p>Commentary: This risk has previously been considered as part of corporate risk 2. It is now separately identified and reviews will include the impacts of the pandemic on the services provided to young people. This includes risks CV3 and CV10.</p>				
CR13	Failure to deliver the transformation programme	New	Corporate Director of Resources	New
<p>Commentary: This is a new risk for inclusion on the corporate risk register and links to risk CR11. It will include the risks identified under CV8.</p>				
CR14	Change to Public Health arrangements and Outbreak Management Plan	New	Chief Executive	New
<p>Commentary: This is a new risk for inclusion on the corporate risk register. The Outbreak Management Plan sets out how the council will work together to identify and contain any potential outbreaks of COVID-19 and what this might mean for residents, businesses, communities and visitors.</p>				
CR15	Effective People Strategy	New	Chief Executive	New
<p>Commentary: This is a new risk for inclusion on the corporate risk register. It reflects the multiple complex demands on the workforce both in the last 6 months and as the council continues to respond to the pandemic, progress the transformation programme and maintain services across Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole.</p>				

7. To assist Members in interpreting the scoring of the above risks, the risk matrix used for this purpose is included as Appendix 1.
8. As part of the process to create the above the following COVID-19 risks were considered and incorporated into the updated Corporate Risks.

COVID-19 Risk Register

Risk Reference	Risk Title	Gross Risk Score	Risk Owner	Net Risk Score
CV1	Leadership		Chief Executive	
CV2	Colleagues		Chief Executive	
CV3	Customer		Corporate Director of Resources	
CV4	Financial		Chief Executive	
CV5	Legal		Chief Executive	
CV6	Communication		Corporate Incident Management Team	
CV7	Contractual		Corporate Director of Resources	
CV8	Property & Assets, Transformation		Corporate Director of Resources	
CV9	Property Assets		Corporate Director of Resources	
CV10	New or Extension of Services		Chief Executive	
CV11	Multi Agency risk		Chief Executive	
CV12	Wider Community Role		Chief Executive	

9. COVID-19 risks CV5 Legal and CV6 Communication are not referenced separately. Aspects of both risks are relevant across many of the Corporate risks and have been considered as such.
10. Members will note that in addition to amalgamating the two risks registers the Corporate Management Board also included four new Corporate Risks. These are identified at CR12 to CR15. Each of these risks will be reviewed in detail over the next quarter with an update to the next meeting of this committee.

11. It should also be noted that four Corporate Risks are highlighted to note they are to be removed from the Corporate Risk Register. These will continue to be monitored and if the level of risk increases, they will again be considered in the context of the Corporate Risk Register by the Corporate Management Board.
12. Each of the new Corporate Risks will now be reviewed in detail with attention to the controls or actions in place to mitigate either the impact or likelihood of the risk arising. This will in turn support a review of the net score of each risk to ensure the controls are operating effectively and the anticipated reduction in risk is being achieved.

Horizon scanning

13. The Corporate Risk Register is a dynamic document that reflects the current risks to achieving the council's objectives. Ensuring the risks remain current and relevant requires Corporate Directors to routinely reflect on different or new areas of risk including the environment external to the council. During this quarter the following were considered but not included at this time:

- Climate Change Action
- Sustainability
- AI Technologies and Ethics

These will continue to be reflected upon in future reviews along with other emerging risks which impact not only directly on the council but also the wider environment in which the council operates or is impacted by.

14. In this respect the risk landscape continues to evolve materially with many new risks emerging as a result of the pandemic. These may not be obvious at the outset and this therefore supports the need for the review process to be completed regularly and it is usual for risks to be routinely added or removed from the Register.

Service development

15. In addition to the reviews of corporate risks, the Risk Management Team continues to be engaged in the refresh of service risk registers. This includes engaging with services to understand their current risk arrangements, how these can be improved to deliver a proactive and dynamic risk management environment, and how the Risk Management Team can support them in this to deliver a consistent and embedded approach to Risk Management throughout the council. During the current year this involves a mixture of arrangements that will gradually be working towards a new service risk register for each area in BCP Council. This work continues.
16. Work continues on the drafting of a new Risk Management framework for BCP Council. Consideration will be given to the new council's risk appetite and the processes for managing risk consistently across the council. This will also include the mechanisms for risk reporting and risk escalation.
17. The Risk and Insurance Team continues to work remotely having moved to electronic file management in January 2020.

Summary of financial implications

18. Financial implications relevant to risks are detailed within the relevant risk registers.

Summary of legal implications

19. There are no direct legal implications from this report.

Summary of human resources implications

20. There are no direct human resources implications from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

21. There are no direct environmental implications from this report.

Summary of public health implications

22. There are no direct public health implications from this report.

Summary of equality implications

23. There are no direct equality implications from this report.

Summary of risk assessment

24. The risk management implications are set out within the content of this report.

Background Papers

Risk Management – Corporate Risk Register Update Report to the Audit and Governance Committee on 30 July 2020

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Corporate Risk Scoring Matrix

BCP Council

Audit and Governance Committee – 22 October 2020

Corporate Risk Register Update

1. The table below is a key to the scoring of the risks.

THREATS					
Likelihood	Almost Certain (4) >90%	4	8	12	16
	Likely (3) 60 – 90%	3	6	9	12
	Could Happen (2) 20 – 60%	2	4	6	8
	Unlikely /Rarely (1) 0 – 20%	1	2	3	4
		Low (1)	Medium (2)	High (3)	Extreme (4)
	Impacts				

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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Report subject	Internal Audit - Quarterly Audit Plan Update
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report details progress made on delivery of the 2020/21 Audit Plan for the period July to September (inclusive) 2020. The report highlights that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight audit assignments have been completed (with the following summary opinions - one 'Substantial', six 'Reasonable' and one Consultancy Review); • Twenty-two audit assignments are in progress; • Implementation of audit recommendations is satisfactory. <p>Internal Audit have completed their support of COVID 19 grant verification work.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Audit & Governance Committee are asked to note progress made and issues arising on the delivery of the 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan.</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>To communicate progress on the delivery of the 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan.</p> <p>To ensure Audit Committee are fully informed of the significant issues arising from the work of Internal Audit during the quarter.</p>
Portfolio Holder(s):	CLlr Drew Mellor, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	<p>Nigel Stannard Head of Audit & Management Assurance ✉ nigel.stannard@bcpcouncil.gov.uk</p>
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision and Information

Background

1. This report details Internal Audit's progress against the 2020/21 Audit Plan for the period July 2020 to September 2020 inclusive and reports the audit opinion of the assignments completed during this period.
2. The report also provides an update on any significant issues arising and implementation of internal audit recommendations by management.

Delivery of the 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan – Quarter 2 review

3. Eight audit assignments have been fully completed in this quarter of 2020/21 (July-September 20) as outlined below.

2020/21 Audits Completed

	Service Area	Audit	Assurance Opinion
1	Finance	Procurement 2019/20/21	Reasonable
2	Finance	Creditors 2019/20/21	Reasonable
3	Children's Services	ICT Systems 2019/20/21	Reasonable
4	Destination & Culture	Donations	Consultancy Review
5	Finance	Treasury Management	Substantial
6	Environment	Climate Emergency Programme	Reasonable
7	Environment	Future Parks Accelerator Project	Reasonable
8	Adult Social Care	Business Continuity 2020/21	Reasonable

Key:

- **Substantial Assurance** - There is a sound control framework which is designed to achieve the service objectives, with key controls being consistently applied.
- **Reasonable Assurance** - Whilst there is basically a sound control framework, there are some weaknesses which may put service objectives at risk.
- **Partial Assurance** - There are weaknesses in the control framework which are putting service objectives at risk
- **Minimal Assurance** - The control framework is generally poor and as such service objectives are at significant risk

4. There were no 'Partial' or 'Minimal' assurance audit reports issued during the quarter.
5. The status of other audits in progress (July-September 20) is outlined below:

2020/21 Audits In Progress

	Service Area	Audit	Progress
1	SVPP	Debtors 2019/20/21	Draft Report
2	Development	Key Assurance – Asset Management	Fieldwork
3	All services	Purchase and Credit Card (counter fraud)	Fieldwork
4	All services	Employee Claims (counter fraud)	Fieldwork

5	Housing	Lifeline/Telecare Services	Fieldwork
6	Adult Social Care Service	Key Financial System – Financial Assessments & Deferred Payments 2020/21	Fieldwork
7	Adult Social Care Service	Shared Lives	Fieldwork
8	Destination & Culture	Seafront Services	Fieldwork
9	Growth & Infrastructure	Counter Fraud – Planning Applications	Fieldwork
10	Environment	Fleet Management	Fieldwork
11	Environment	Cash Income – Waste & Recycling Centres	Fieldwork
12	Adult Social Care Service	Lone Working	Fieldwork
13	Adult Social Care Service & Commissioning	Key Assurance Function: Financial Management 2020/21	Scoping
14	Development	Smart Places	Scoping
15	IT & IS	Modern Workspace Consultancy Review	Scoping
16	Law & Governance	Lone Working	Scoping
17	Quality & Commissioning	Mosaic Payments	Scoping
18	Children’s Services	High Needs Block	Scoping
19	Inclusion & Family	Asset Management	Scoping
20	Quality & Commissioning	School Transport	Scoping
21	Growth & Infrastructure	Concessionary Travel Passes	Scoping
22	Development	Project Management High Level Review	Scoping

Significant Issues Arising and Other Work

6. COVID 19 Discretionary Grant verification work – Internal Audit have completed their support of this activity with the verification of bank accounts using the National Fraud Initiative web-based tool. A total of 6 bank accounts were corrected using the tool and one application refused after it was identified they had previously received a business support grant.
7. Charter Trustees – Internal Audit were engaged to carry out the internal audits of the Charter Trustees of Bournemouth and the Charter Trustees of Poole as required and to support their Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The trustees were established in 2019 to ensure the continuation of civic, historic and ceremonial traditions of the respective legacy councils. The audits were reported to the respective Charter Trustees committee meetings in August for consideration and approval.
8. Department for Transport (DfT) grants – To meet grant conditions, Internal Audit carried out appropriate checks on relevant capital funding (including local transport capital block and national productivity investment fund) received from the DfT, prior to sign off by the Chief Executive and Chief Internal Auditor. In all cases, the grants conditions appeared to have been complied with and the returns have been successfully sent to the DfT.

9. For the avoidance of any doubt, Internal Audit have continued to thoroughly investigate all instances or allegations of fraud, theft or financial wrongdoing during the COVID 19 period. There has been no reduction in the capability to investigate such instances, the outcome of these investigations will be reported to A&G committee in the normal way; either via these Internal Audit quarterly update reports or the annual report covering all such instances.
10. The Head of Audit & Management Assurance has line management responsibilities for the Emergency Planning and Resilience Team. This team has been heavily involved in the Council's, and the multi-agency (Local Resilience Forum (LRF)), response and recovery work in relation to the COVID 19 pandemic. A full report from the Emergency Planning Team is on this Committee agenda.
11. Work was completed on the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which was made available for public inspection as part of the Statement of Accounts. The AGS together with the Statement of Accounts will be brought to the Audit & Governance Committee in November to align with the nationally set COVID 19 adjusted statutory reporting deadlines.
12. At the meeting of this Committee on 23rd January 2020, the Committee was asked to consider and offer an opinion on the potential options for the external assessment of the Internal Audit function as required by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. The Head of Audit & Management Assurance was asked to further review the preferred option of using CIPFA to carry out the assessment. COVID 19 work volume and budgetary pressures put this aspiration temporarily on hold. CIPFA are now re-engaged and a revised timetable of agreeing the assessment in quarter 1, 2021/22 is being agreed. The likely cost will be in the region of £3,500.

Recommendations Implementation

13. All high priority recommendations followed up during the period (in line with the agreed action plan) were found to have been satisfactorily implemented by management. No recommendations are required to be escalated to Audit & Governance Committee.

Independent National Review into the Oversight of Local Audit and the Transparency of Local Authority Financial Reporting

14. A national review has been undertaken by Sir Tony Redmond which has examined the effectiveness of local (external) audit and its ability to demonstrate accountability for audit performance to the public. It has also considered whether the current means of reporting Councils annual accounts enables the public to understand the financial information and whether they can obtain the appropriate assurance that the finances of Councils are sound.
15. The Chair and other members of the Audit Governance Committee were invited to attend a webinar hosted by the Local Audit Quality Forum at which Sir Tony Redmond explained his key findings and recommendations arising from the report (Internal Audit attended this meeting). A separate report on this subject is being presented by the Council's External Auditors (Grant Thornton) at this committee meeting.
16. A link to the full report can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-financial-reporting-and-external-audit-independent-review>

Options Appraisal

17. An options appraisal is not applicable for this report

Summary of financial implications

18. The BCP Internal Audit Team budgeted cost is £694,700 and which is inclusive of all direct costs including supplies & services but does not include the apportionment of central support costs (which are budgeted in aggregate and apportioned to services as a separate exercise). These numbers are also inclusive of the Head of Audit & Management Assurance who manages other teams.
19. The Internal Audit Team is currently at full establishment. There are no anticipated material projected year end budget variances to report for 2020/21. Only contracted or essential COVID 19 related expenditure will be approved from this budget for the remainder of the financial year in line with the corporate stance.

Summary of legal implications

20. This report gives an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the risk, control and governance systems in place.

Summary of human resources implications

21. The BCP Internal Audit Team consists of 13.42 FTE.

Summary of sustainability impact

22. There are no direct sustainability impact implications from this report.

Summary of public health implications

23. There are no direct public health implications from this report.

Summary of equality implications

24. There are no direct equality implications from this report.

Summary of risk assessment

25. The risk implications are set out in the content of this report.

Background papers

None

Appendices

None

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Audit and Governance Committee



Report subject	Annual Review of Register of Declarations of Outside Interests and Receipts of Gifts & Hospitality by Officers (2019/20)
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>For the 2019/20 financial year, the first operating year of BCP Council, legacy Council Declaration of Interests, gifts and hospitality policies and procedures have been followed by officers.</p> <p>The BCP Council - Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality for Policy (for Officers) was introduced on 1st April 2020 and made provision for retrospective 'base' declarations dating back to the start of BCP Council, 1 April 2019.</p> <p>An effective corporate wide roll-out of the Policy has taken place and assurance can be provided that senior managers (tier4 officers and above) are complying with the requirements of the new Policy.</p> <p>There have been no internal or external identified instances, whistleblowing or reports by any other means where an undeclared interest has led to any disciplinary action or led to reputational damage.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Audit & Governance Committee note the annual review of Register of Declarations of Outside Interests and Receipts of Gifts & Hospitality by Officers (2019/20).</p>
Reason for recommendations	To provide Audit & Governance Committee with assurance on the adequacy and robustness of the Councils arrangements for the declaration of interests, gifts and hospitality by officers.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Drew Mellor, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	<p>Nigel Stannard Head of Audit & Management Assurance ✉ nigel.stannard@bcpcouncil.gov.uk</p>
Contributors	Simon Milne, Deputy Chief Internal Auditor
Wards	All
Classification	For Information

Background

1. For the 2019/20 financial year, the first operating year of BCP Council, legacy Councils' Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality policies and procedures were followed by officers.
2. A new BCP Council Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy (for officers) was introduced on the 1st April 2020. This followed consultation with various stakeholders, including this Committee, on the adequacy and robustness of the draft Policy prior to being approved by Corporate Management Board. It should be noted that the new Policy made provision for retrospective declarations w.e.f. 1 April 2019, these are now known as 'base' declarations. Officers are now responsible for maintaining their 'base' declarations in as near to real-time as is practical, in other words officers will not be waiting to make declarations on say an annual basis.
3. The purpose of the Policy is to protect the Council and employees against conflicts of interest and allegations of impropriety. The public must be confident that decisions made by employees of whatever nature are made in the interests of BCP Council and the community it serves and are not influenced inappropriately by the interests of individual employees, their relatives or friends.

New BCP Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy Implementation

4. An effective corporate wide roll-out of this Policy, incorporating management-led training, awareness and processes to ensure compliance, has taken place during the start of the 2020/21 financial year.
5. The Policy requires all senior officers, tier 4 officers (and above), to complete a 'Form 2' to proactively declared any potential interests and gifts & hospitality, 'nil' returns are required. These forms have to be submitted to the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer and the Head of Audit & Management Assurance consider the content and determine the appropriateness of any mitigations in place to manage any potential conflicts of interest. In instances where the mitigations are considered insufficient or inadequate this would be referred to the Chief Executive; there are no such referrals to date.
6. Currently 90 out of 94 (96%) of senior officers have completed and returned these forms to the Monitoring Officer. The four outstanding forms include some officers on maternity\sick leave. Therefore assurance can be provided that senior managers are complying with the requirements of the new Policy. Approximately 80% of the Form 2's are nil returns.
7. An example of a 'Form 2' has been provided (see Appendix A) to demonstrate the type of declarations being made (personal information has been redacted only for the purpose of sharing with this Committee).
8. For other officers, those less senior in the organisation below tier4, a 'Form 1' must be completed for any potential interests and gifts & hospitality but in these cases 'nil' returns are not required. These forms have to be submitted to the relevant Service Director who considers the content and determines the appropriateness of any mitigations in place to manage any potential conflicts of interest.
9. Internal Audit will be carrying out a review later this year to assess the awareness of the new Policy and adequacy of the completion of Form 1s by officers. Work will be targeted to high risk areas such as planning and procurement officers. The results of this work will be brought back to this committee.
10. It should be noted that certain professional bodies or organisations (e.g. in Accountancy, Internal Audit) require declarations to be maintained regardless of organisational policies by their members.

Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy Enforcement and Sanctions

11. Employees must comply with the requirements of the Policy and any failure to do so is a disciplinary matter, and disciplinary action may be taken, regardless of whether the actions amount to a criminal offence.
12. During the 2019/20 financial year there have been no internal or external identified instances, whistleblowing or reports by any other means where an un-declared interest has led to any disciplinary action or led to reputational damage.

Options Appraisal

13. An options appraisal is not applicable for this report.

Summary of Financial Implications

14. There are no direct financial implications from this report.

Summary of Legal Implications

15. The Bribery Act 2010, makes it an offence for an employee to give advantage to someone in return for favours in relation to the Council's business.
16. Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that employees notify the authority in writing of any direct or indirect financial interests which they have in any Council contracts, or proposed contracts, of which they become aware. Breach of Section 117 is a criminal offence subject to a fine.

Summary of Human Resource Implications

17. There are no direct environmental implications from this report.

Summary of Environmental Impact

18. There are no direct environmental implications from this report.

Summary of Public Health Implications

19. There are no direct public health implications from this report.

Summary of Equality Implications

20. There are no direct equality implications from this report.

Summary of Risk Assessment

21. There are no direct risk management implications from this report.

Background Papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A – Declaration of Interest, Gifts & Hospitality 'Form 2' Example

BCP Declaration of Interests, Gifts & Hospitality (for officers)

Internal access

<https://bcpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/Finance/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FFinance%2FShared%20Documents%2FBCP%20Interests%20gifts%20and%20hospitality%20%20Policy%20V1%20from%201%20April%202020%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FFinance%2FShared%20Documents>

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DECLARATION OF INTEREST, GIFTS OR HOSPITALITY



FORM 2 (for Tier 4 Officers and above)

PART A – To be completed by the employee making the declaration

Employee Name:	XX, Head of XX		
Job Title:	Tier 4 Officer, please specify		
Service:	Choose an item.		
Date of Declaration:	28/04/2020		
Type of Declaration:	Other Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Close Personal Relationship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Gift and / or Hospitality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Interest <input type="checkbox"/>
	Business Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal / Other Interest <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Organisation not open to the Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	'Nil' Return <input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide as much detail as possible in relation to your declaration.

In the case of other employment, please include details relating to who the other employer will be, the nature of the role (including duties and responsibilities) and the times/days that you are proposing to work.

In the case of gifts and hospitality, please include details of the donor, the reason for the offer and the estimated value.

In the case of a close personal relationship with a fellow employee, please provide details of that person.

I am married to XX who works part-time in XX Services as a clerk to the BCP fostering panel. XX is also clerk to governors at a number of schools located in Poole one of which is a BCP Maintained School, XX.

My two boys are pupils at XX School and my daughter is a pupil at XX school. XX is a maintained school, XX is an academy school.

I am a treasurer of XX Club which has no direct relationship with BCP Council and is not in the BCP boundary area. I am the representative on the XX Sports Association which has a contractual commercial relationship with BCP Council to provide grass cutting services to the sports fields.

NB This contractual arrangement is a long-standing affair and was in place prior to me joining the XX as XX representative.

I am a resident of BCP, my home address is XX and thus I pay Council Tax to BCP Council. I accordingly use numerous BCP Council services.

I am a up-to-date paid up member of the XX Institute, accordingly I have professional ethics and an institute code of conduct to follow and I participate in a mandatory Continual Professional development (CPD) scheme. I consider this complements my role in BCP Council and in no way is a conflict of interest, but I have recorded here for complete transparency.

Please forward your completed form to your line manager for consideration

PART B - To be completed by the approving manager

The Manager is responsible for considering the contents of this form and making a decision on the declaration. In situations where the declaration relates to a Service Director, approval should be sought from the relevant Corporate Director. For declarations involving a Corporate Director and the Chief Executive, approval should be sought from the Monitoring Officer (i.e. Director of Law & Governance). For the Monitoring Officer's declaration, approval should be sought from the Chief Executive.

I confirm that I consider:	Please tick
The declared personal interest or offer of gift or hospitality to be acceptable within the employee's role and no further action is required.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The declared personal interest or offer of gift or hospitality to be acceptable within the employee's role, providing that the changes and/or actions detailed below are completed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The declared personal interest or offer of gift or hospitality to be unacceptable within the employee's role for the reasons detailed below.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The declared 'Nil' Return to be acceptable.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please include any changes, actions or reasons relevant to the above decision:

XX, Head of XX will not be involved in XX activity at XX school. XX, will deputise in all areas.

It is agreed XX will have no involvement whatsoever with any contractual matters between XX and BCP Council, on grass cutting or any other matter. If such matters are discussed XX will declare an interest (i.e. he works for the Council) and will leave the room for the discussion. XX will ensure this is recorded in the minutes of any XX records.

Line Manager's Name:	XX
Job Title:	Head XX
Date:	20 May 2020

A copy of the completed form should be e-mailed to the employee and to the monitoring officer (i.e. Director of Law & Governance).

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Report subject	External Audit - Progress Report & Sector Update
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The attached report provides an update to Audit & Governance Committee on the External Auditor's progress to date in delivering their responsibilities.</p> <p>The report also includes a summary of emerging national issues and developments that may be relevant to the Council.</p> <p>An additional presentation covering the independent review by Sir Tony Redmond into the effectiveness of local audit and the transparency of financial reporting has also been provided.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Audit & Governance Committee notes the External Auditor's progress to date in delivering their responsibilities and the sector update provided including the Redmond review.</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>To update Audit & Governance Committee on the External Auditor's progress to date in delivering their responsibilities.</p> <p>To advise Audit & Governance Committee of emerging national issues and developments that maybe relevant to the Council, including the independent review by Sir Tony Redmond into the effectiveness of local audit and the transparency of financial reporting.</p>
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Drew Mellor, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	<p>Nigel Stannard Head of Audit & Management Assurance ✉ <u>nigel.stannard@bcpcouncil.gov.uk</u></p>
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Information

Background

1. During 2017, Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) awarded contracts for audit for a five-year period beginning on 1 April 2018. The current year subject to audit (2019/20) is the first year of that contract for the new authority and Grant Thornton are the appointed External Auditors for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.
2. Grant Thornton, as the Council's External Auditors, have a responsibility to provide regular updates to those charged with governance (Audit & Governance Committee) on progress made in delivering their responsibilities.

External Audit Progress Report

Progress at July 2020

3. The attached report (Appendix A) details progress made by Grant Thornton in delivering their responsibilities as external auditors. The report includes a COVID 19 update section which details the impact on working arrangements and accounts & audit opinions and also changes to reporting requirements.

Sector Update

4. The report also includes a summary of emerging national issues and developments that may be relevant to the Council (as a local authority) which includes:
 - Covid-19 Update – including where are we now and lessons learned (Grant Thornton)
 - Covid-19 and Local Government – including example scenarios, what can we learn from previous recessions, and what strategy is needed in response (Grant Thornton)
 - Redmond Review – Key Findings (independent review by Sir Tony Redmond)

Local Government audit and financial reporting – the Redmond Review

5. An additional presentation (Appendix B) is included in the update report covering the independent review by Sir Tony Redmond into the effectiveness of local audit and the transparency of financial reporting.

Options Appraisal

6. An options appraisal is not applicable for this report.

Summary of financial implications

7. The attached report includes an update on the Audit Fee for 2019/20.

Summary of legal implications

8. There are no direct legal implications from this report.

Summary of human resources implications

9. There are no direct human resources implications from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

10. There are no sustainability impact implications from this report.

Summary of public health implications

11. There are no public health implications from this report.

Summary of equality implications

12. There are no direct equality implications from this report.

Summary of risk assessment

13. There are no risk implications from this information report.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A – Grant Thornton – Audit Progress Report and Sector Update

Appendix B – Grant Thornton - Local Government audit and financial reporting – the Redmond Review

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Audit Progress Report and Sector Update

Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council Year ending 31 March 2020

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October 2020



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Introduction



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This paper provides the Audit & Governance Committee with a report on progress in delivering our responsibilities as your external auditors.

The paper also includes a summary of emerging national issues and developments that may be relevant to you as a local authority.

Members of the Audit & Governance Committee can find further useful material on our website, where we have a section dedicated to our work in the public sector. Here you can download copies of our publications www.grantthornton.co.uk.

If you would like further information on any items in this briefing, or would like to register with Grant Thornton to receive regular email updates on issues that are of interest to you, please contact either Paul or Sam..

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Progress at 7 October 2020 – Financial Statements Audit

Financial Statements Audit

We began our planning for the 2019/20 audit in February. We commenced our interim work in March and April, although our site work was halted by the implementation of the lockdown.

Our interim fieldwork included:

- updated review of the Council's control environment;
- updated understanding of financial systems;
- review of Internal Audit reports on core financial systems; and
- early work on emerging accounting issues.

We issued a detailed audit plan, following the conclusion of planning in early April an updated version was presented to the July Audit and Governance Committee.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the deadline for the submission of the draft financial statements was put back to the 31 August 2020. We received the draft financial statements on 29th July 2020. We commenced our substantive audit work on 16th August 2020. The target deadline for the audit opinion is currently 30th November 2020.

As reported in our audit plan, the key areas of audit focus and substantive testing will be on the following significant risk areas of the financial statements:

- Transfer of the opening balances from the predecessor authorities
- Valuation of land, buildings and investment property assets including council houses.
- Valuation of the Pension Liability
- The impact of Covid -19

We have commenced our detailed testing on property plant and equipment valuations, the pension liability, testing of income and expenditure transactions.

A detailed technical review of the draft financial statements has also commenced. This has identified that further disclosure is required in respect of the group accounts, major sources of estimation uncertainty, investment properties, debtors and a further review of the pension disclosures.

The Council has currently instructed five external and internal valuation experts to support the entries in the financial statements. As previously discussed the increased regulatory focus on this area requires that we engage our own valuation expert to review the terms of engagement and valuation reports for these experts, this work is currently underway. The impact of the number of valuation experts engaged and that the Council is currently maintaining two separate Housing Revenue Accounts has impacted significantly on the level of work required.

The impact of merging the three legacy councils financial systems has also added to the complexity and volume of work required to fully document, assess and test transactions.

Value for Money

Value for Money

The scope of our work is set out in the guidance issued by the National Audit Office. The Code requires auditors to satisfy themselves that; "the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources".

The guidance confirmed the overall criterion as: "in all significant respects, the audited body had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people".

The three sub criteria for assessment to be able to give a conclusion overall are:

- Informed decision making
- Sustainable resource deployment
- Working with partners and other third parties

Details of our initial risk assessment were communicated in our audit plan.

One area of focus was identified at the planning stage:

- Financial Sustainability and medium term financial planning

The Council's response to the impact of Covid -19 on costs and income streams is an area of focus within this risk.

Our detailed work is ongoing. We would however note that the Council has significant financial challenges moving into 21/22 , along with many other authorities. The level of future Government support is not clear at this stage. The Council will need to continue to focus on setting a balanced budget as required by law.

Covid-19 update

Impact on working arrangements

- Following the government's announcement on Monday 16 March 2020, we closed our Grant Thornton offices for the foreseeable future and your audit team are now working from home.
- Grant Thornton have continued to review Central Government guidelines and start to reopen some offices across the country.
- At present, your audit team are currently working remotely and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Although there are some audit tasks which are best undertaken in person, we will be able to complete the majority of the audit remotely. This is however likely to make the audit process considerably slower. We continue to work closely with your finance team to make this different way of working as efficient as possible. We would note that as at October 7th, we have only signed one set of financial statements due to the issues arising from remote working etc.
- The urgent need for the Council to respond to the pandemic and its impact on current and medium-term financial planning has also impacted on their ability to respond to queries as they arise.

Impact on accounts and audit opinions

There are a number of key issues which your finance team has had to consider as part of the year-end closedown and accounts production:

- Impact on reserves and financial health and whether the Council needs to provide additional disclosures that draw attention to a Material Uncertainty around Going Concern (this could also impact on the VfM conclusion) or asset valuations. At present, the Council have disclosed a material uncertainty relating to the year end balances for Property Plant and Equipment and Investment Properties. Will include specific narrative within our Audit Report drawing attention to the material uncertainties disclosed.
- Impact on collectability of debt and assumptions made in bad debt provisions.
- Impact on post-balance sheet events. The consequences of the virus post 31 March 2020 will generally be non-adjusting post balance sheet events but some form of disclosure may be needed.
- Disclosure of impact in narrative report.
- Disclosure of critical judgements and material estimation uncertainties.
- Impact on the content of the Annual Governance Statement, particularly with regards to risks, controls and mitigation.
- Considerations in respect of service continuity and disaster planning arrangements (this could impact on the VfM conclusion).
- Impact on reporting to those charged with governance and signing arrangements.

Changes to reporting requirements

- The Secretary of State announced that for the 2019/20 accounting period he would be extending the period for publication of principal authority accounts to 31st August 2020.
- For principal authorities, this means that the whole chain of publication requirements will be amended. The audited financial statements are now to be published by 30 November 2020.
- IFRS 16 implementation has been delayed by one year to 1 April 2021. IAS 8 disclosures in respect of new accounting standards which have been issued but are not yet effective are still required for IFRS 16 (Leases) even though implementation is deferred to 2021/22.

Progress at 7th October 2020

Significant risk	Planned approach	Progress
<p>Covid- 19 (Council and Group)</p> <p>The global outbreak of the Covid-19 virus pandemic has led to unprecedented uncertainty for all organisations, requiring urgent business continuity arrangements to be implemented.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with management to understand the implications the response to the Covid-19 pandemic has on the organisation's ability to prepare the financial statements and update financial forecasts and assess the implications on our audit approach; liaise with other audit suppliers, regulators and government departments to co-ordinate practical cross sector responses to issues as and when they arise; evaluate the adequacy of the disclosures in the financial statements in light of the Covid-19 pandemic; evaluate whether sufficient audit evidence using alternative approaches can be obtained for the purposes of our audit whilst working remotely; evaluate whether sufficient audit evidence can be obtained to corroborate significant management estimates such as asset valuations evaluate management's assumptions that underpin the revised financial forecasts and the impact on management's going concern assessment; and discuss with management any potential implications for our audit report if we have been unable to obtain sufficient audit evidence. 	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have worked with management to understand the implications the response to the Covid-19 pandemic had on the Council's ability to prepare the financial statements and update financial forecasts and assessed the implications for our materiality calculations. No changes have been made to materiality levels as a result of the impact of the pandemic. The draft financial statements were provided on 29 July 2020; liaised with other audit suppliers, regulators and government departments to co-ordinate practical cross-sector responses to issues as and when they arose. Examples include the material uncertainty disclosed by the Council's property valuation expert; evaluated the adequacy of the disclosures in the financial statements that arose in light of the Covid-19 pandemic; and engaged the use of auditor experts for asset valuations. <p>We are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring to obtain sufficient audit evidence through remote technology; evaluating whether sufficient audit evidence can be obtained to corroborate significant management estimates such as assets; evaluating management's assumptions that underpin the revised financial forecasts and the impact on management's going concern assessment.

Significant risk	Planned approach	Progress
<p>Fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition (Council and Group)</p> <p>Under ISA (UK) 240, there is a rebuttable presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue.</p> <p>This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition.</p>	<p>Having considered the risk factors set out in ISA (UK) 240, and the nature of the revenue streams at the Authority, we have determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue recognition can be rebutted in all areas.</p>	<p>We have not identified any changes to our assessment reported in the audit plan.</p>
<p>Management override of controls (Council and Group)</p> <p>Under ISA (UK) 240, there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management override of controls is present in all entities. The Authority and the Group face external scrutiny of its spending and this could potentially place management under undue pressure in terms of how they report performance.</p> <p>We therefore identified management override of control, in particular journals, management estimates, and transactions outside the course of business as a significant risk for both the Council and Group, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate the design effectiveness of management controls over journals; • analyse the journals listing and determine the criteria for selecting high risk and unusual journals; • test unusual journals recorded during the year and after the draft accounts stage for appropriateness and corroboration; • gain an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied made by management and consider their reasonableness with regard to corroborative evidence; and • evaluate the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions. 	<p>We are in the process of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating the design effectiveness of management controls over journals; • analysing the journals listing and determine the criteria for selecting high risk and unusual journals; and • analysing and selecting those journals that will require further testing. We will then: • test unusual journals recorded during the year and after the draft accounts stage for appropriateness and corroboration; • gain an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied made by management and consider their reasonableness with regard to corroborative evidence; and • evaluate the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions.

Significant risk	Planned approach	Progress
<p data-bbox="114 244 566 336">Valuation of land and buildings and Investment Properties (Council and group)</p> <p data-bbox="114 352 629 671">The Council re-values its land and buildings on a five-yearly rolling basis to ensure that carrying value is not materially different from fair value. Group assets, council houses and investment properties are revalued annually. This represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved, and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p data-bbox="114 703 629 927">Additionally, management will need to ensure the carrying value of assets not revalued as at 31 March 2020 in the Council's financial statements is not materially different from the current value at the financial statements date, where a rolling programme is used.</p> <p data-bbox="114 959 629 1118">We identified the valuation of land and buildings, particularly revaluations and impairments, as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p data-bbox="645 244 741 268">We will:</p> <ul data-bbox="645 288 1339 1174" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="645 288 1339 379">• evaluate management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to valuation experts and the scope of their work; <li data-bbox="645 395 1339 459">• evaluate the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation experts; <li data-bbox="645 475 1339 539">• discuss with or write to the relevant valuer to confirm the basis on which the valuation was carried out; <li data-bbox="645 555 1339 794">• engage our own valuer expert, Montague Evans, to provide commentary on: <ul data-bbox="734 624 1339 794" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="734 624 1339 687">• the instruction process in comparison to requirements from CIPFA/ IFRS / RICS; and <li data-bbox="734 703 1339 794">• the valuation methodology and approach, resulting assumptions adopted and any other relevant points; <li data-bbox="645 810 1339 901">• challenge the information and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding; <li data-bbox="645 917 1339 1008">• test revaluations made during the year to see if they had been input correctly into the Authority's asset register; and <li data-bbox="645 1024 1339 1174">• evaluate the assumptions made by the management for those assets not revalued during the year and how management has satisfied themselves that these are not materially different from the current value at year end. 	<p data-bbox="1352 244 2107 379">Management has engaged five separate valuers to undertake valuations work for the Council and group, based on the valuers engaged by the legacy authorities. This has added to the level of work required to evaluate and challenge their work.</p> <p data-bbox="1352 395 2107 459">Work has been undertaken on the valuation instructions and the review of valuation reports is underway.</p> <p data-bbox="1352 475 1906 491">Our detailed testing in other areas is underway.</p>

Significant risk	Planned approach	Progress
<p>Valuation of pension fund net liability (Council)</p> <p>The pension fund net liability, as reflected in the Council's balance sheet as the net defined benefit liability, represents a significant estimate in the financial statements.</p> <p>The Council is a member of the Dorset Pension Fund administered by Dorset Council.</p> <p>The pension fund net liability is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the numbers involved and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of the Council's pension fund net liability as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • update our understanding of the processes and controls put in place by management to ensure that the Council's pension fund net liability is not materially misstated and evaluate the design of the associated controls; • evaluate the instructions issued by management to their management expert (an actuary) for this estimate and the scope of the actuary's work; • assess the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the Council's pension fund valuation; • assess the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the Council to the actuary to estimate the liability; • test the consistency of the pension fund asset and liability and disclosures in the notes to the core financial statements with the actuarial report from the actuary; and • undertake procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made by reviewing the report of the consulting actuary (as auditor's expert) and performing any additional procedures suggested within the report 	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documented our understanding of the processes and controls put in place by management to ensure that the Council's pension fund net liability is not materially misstated and evaluate the design of the associated controls; • evaluated the instructions issued by management to their management expert (an actuary) for this estimate and the scope of the actuary's work; and • assessed the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the Council's pension fund valuation. <p>We are currently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessing the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the Council to the actuary to estimate the liability; • testing the consistency of the pension fund asset and liability and disclosures in the notes to the core financial statements with the actuarial report from the actuary; and • undertaking procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made by reviewing the report of the consulting actuary (as auditor's expert) and performing any additional procedures suggested within the report. • We are currently awaiting a report from the auditors of Dorset Pension Fund administered by Dorset Council, we will undertake a review of this report once issued and consider whether any further action required.

Significant risk	Planned approach	Progress
<p data-bbox="107 280 338 304">Opening Balances</p> <p data-bbox="107 344 613 563">2019/20 is the first year of operation for the Council, the merger of the systems and activities of the three predecessor councils as well as the upper tier services, assets and liabilities transferred from the former Dorset County Council creates many challenges.</p> <p data-bbox="107 579 613 730">On creation on 1 April 2019, the Council's opening balances are the closing balances of the predecessor councils and assets and liabilities transferred from the former Dorset County Council.</p> <p data-bbox="107 746 613 863">We therefore identified transfer of opening balances to the new Council as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p data-bbox="645 280 734 304">We will:</p> <ul data-bbox="645 323 1335 639" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="645 323 1335 411">• update our understanding of the processes and controls put in place by management to ensure that the opening balances are transferred correctly to the new Authority; <li data-bbox="645 427 1335 491">• Consider the results of any work undertaken by Internal Audit on the transfer of opening balances; <li data-bbox="645 507 1335 563">• Agree the assets and liabilities transferred to agreement with the former Dorset County Council; and <li data-bbox="645 579 1335 639">• sample testing of opening balances for existence and to land registry documents. 	<p data-bbox="1352 280 1648 304">We are in the process of:</p> <ul data-bbox="1352 323 2074 523" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1352 323 2074 387">understanding the amendments made to the opening balances of the three legacy Councils; and <li data-bbox="1352 427 2074 523">• considering the changes made to the balances transferred from Dorset County Council, since our previous review in February and obtaining supporting corroborating evidence.

Other audit areas

In addition to our work on the significant risks, work is also in progress in the following areas:

- PPE additions
- Heritage assets (group)
- Cash
- Expenditure (including welfare expenditure)
- Employee benefits
- Debtors and bad debt provision
- Creditors
- Leases
- Reserves
- Financial instruments, investments and borrowings
- Provisions
- Financial statements disclosures
- Related parties
- Collection Fund

Other areas

Certification of claims and returns

Housing Benefit Subsidy claim in accordance with procedures agreed with the Department for Work and Pensions (DwP). The detailed certification work for the 2019/20 claim is underway.

This work is complicated as the Council is currently continuing to operate housing benefit systems separately for the three former council areas. We have also engaged with officers and DwP to agree a testing approach for work required as a result of errors identified in previous years claims.

The DwP has moved the reporting deadline back to 31 January 2021, however our plan is complete this work by the original deadline of 30 November. We will report our findings to the Audit and Governance Committee in our Certification Letter in March 2021.

We certify the Council's annual Teachers' Pensions return in accordance with procedures agreed with Teachers' Pensions. The certification work for the 2019/20 claim is currently due to be completed for the 30 November deadline.

We certify the Council's annual pooling of housing capital receipts return in accordance with procedures agreed with MHLCG. The certification work for the 2019/20 claim is currently due to be completed for the 31 January deadline, although detailed instructions have yet to be issued by the Department.

Meetings

We meet with Finance Officers every week and bi monthly with the Section 151 officer and quarterly with the Chief executive.

Audit Fees

During 2017, PSAA awarded contracts for audit for a five year period beginning on 1 April 2018. 2019/20 is the second year of that contract. Since that time, there have been a number of developments within the accounting and audit profession. Across all sectors and firms, the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) has set out its expectation of improved financial reporting from organisations and the need for auditors to demonstrate increased scepticism and challenge and to undertake additional and more robust testing.

Our work in the Local Government sector in 2018/19 has highlighted areas where financial reporting, in particular, property, plant and equipment and pensions, needs to improve. There is also an increase in the complexity of Local Government financial transactions and financial reporting. This combined with the FRC requirement that all Local Government audits are at or above the "few improvements needed" (2A) rating means that additional audit work is required.

We have reviewed the impact of these changes on both the cost and timing of audits. We have discussed this with your Chief Financial Officer, including any proposed variations to the Scale Fee set by PSAA Limited, and have communicated fully with the Audit and Governance Committee.

As a firm, we are absolutely committed to meeting the expectations of the FRC with regard to audit quality and local government financial reporting.

All fee variations require review and agreement by PSAA.

Audit deliverables

2019/20 Deliverables

Planned Date

Status

Fee Letter

Our fee letter was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee in January 2020

January 2020

Complete

Accounts Audit Plan

We are required to issue a detailed accounts audit plan to the Audit and Governance Committee setting out our proposed approach in order to give an opinion on the Council's 2019-20 financial statements.

July 2020

Complete

Audit Findings Report

The Audit Findings Report will be reported to the November Audit and Governance Committee.

November 2020

Not yet due

Auditors Report

This is the opinion on your financial statement, annual governance statement and value for money conclusion.

November 2020

Not yet due

Annual Audit Letter

This letter communicates the key issues arising from our work.

January 2021

Not yet due

Sector update

Councils continue to try to achieve greater efficiency in the delivery of public services, whilst facing the challenges to address rising demand, ongoing budget pressures and social inequality.

Our sector update provides you with an up to date summary of emerging national issues and developments to support you. We cover areas which may have an impact on your organisation, the wider local government sector and the public sector as a whole. Links are provided to the detailed report/briefing to allow you to delve further and find out more.

Our public sector team at Grant Thornton also undertake research on service and technical issues. We will bring you the latest research publications in this update. We also include areas of potential interest to start conversations within the organisation and with audit committee members, as well as any accounting and regulatory updates.

- [Grant Thornton Publications](#)
- [Insights from local government sector specialists](#)
- [Reports of interest](#)
- [Accounting and regulatory updates](#)

More information can be found on our dedicated public sector and local government sections on the Grant Thornton website by clicking on the logos below:



Public Sector



Local
government

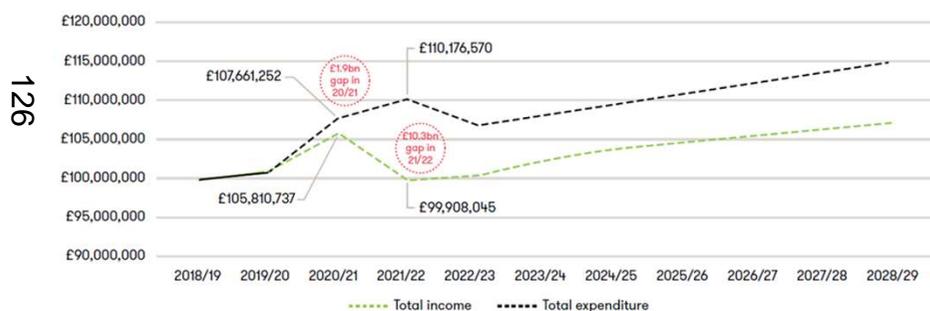
Covid-19 update

Where are we now?

Over five months into lockdown and councils have moved from the initial emergency response phase to focus on recovery planning which is running in parallel with on-going responses to the pandemic, such as supporting vulnerable people, and managing the capacity challenges of delivering business as usual alongside Covid-19 response.

The Government has confirmed three tranches of funding to support the impact of increase spend and reduced income directly attributed to Covid-19, and are in the process of confirming further support via the income compensation scheme.

Local Authority Income and Expenditure (England) 2018/19 to 2028/29



Source: Grant Thornton/CIPFA Financial Foresight

Local government finances remain significantly impacted and our Financial Foresight forecast indicates that English local authorities have a funding gap of £1.9bn this financial year, rising to over £10bn in 2021/22. There is significant uncertainty as to whether the Government will provide further Covid-19 related funding, and what the medium-term funding for the sector will be following the Autumn's Comprehensive Spending Review. Our modelling currently assumes that government funding will remain broadly unchanged, with income being affected by ongoing reduction to Council Tax and Business Rates, both in terms of a reduction to these tax bases, alongside reduced payments as a consequence of the recession brought about by the pandemic.

The uncertainty also impacts on future spending pressures and sales, fees and charges income. For example, leisure centres and swimming pools can now be opened, but must follow Government guidelines on issues such as social distancing. Not all leisure services have been able to reopen, and those that have are not able to generate levels of income originally forecast pre-covid. Social care faces uncertainty in relation to future demand, for example most councils responsible for children's services are forecasting an increase in case load when children return to schools in September. For adults, where in some cases demand has fallen during the pandemic, there is uncertainty over future levels of demand. There is also concern over provider failure in relation to social care and other services such as leisure and transport, with many councils providing financial support and loans to some providers, which will not be sustainable in the medium term.

As place leaders, councils are managing the conflict between revitalizing footfall in high streets and keeping people safe, with some leading by example and encouraging council officers to spend some of the week in council offices. Use of public transport as a key mode of travel to get to work remains a particular challenge.

Lessons learned

All organisations, including councils, have been reflecting on the lessons learned from the pandemic, and are seeking to maintain the positive experiences as well as learn from the challenges, as part of recovery planning. There is a recognition that technology has enabled many people to successfully work remotely, and that this will have a fundamental impact on working patterns well after Covid-19 has passed. Councils are reviewing their property portfolios to understand the changes required in terms of future usage patterns, including how councils interact with their communities, whether parts of the municipal estate should be disposed, and whether alternate use of space can support income generation.

There will be demographic variations between places, meaning there is no "one size fits all" to economic recovery. For example, home to work geographies will vary, with some people who previously commuted into a council area for their work may now be considering office space closer to home, leading to a rise in demand for shared office space in some areas, that will in part counteract the fall in demand elsewhere.

Covid-19 update (cont'd)

Lessons Learned (Cont'd)

Many councils have recognised the improvement in community engagement and partnership working with the voluntary sector and other public sector organisations during the pandemic and are seeking to build on this, with a recognition that sharing responsibility for place-based recovery plans can help sustain the improvements gained. Although a shared view of place-based recovery takes an investment of time and resource that not all partner organisations are able to provide.

Wider learning relates to central vs local response to issues such as provision of PPE, housing the homeless and rough sleepers, and provision of food and equipment to the vulnerable. This is currently playing out on test and trace and how local lockdowns should be managed, with ongoing tension between national and local government.

Many councils understand the importance of data in supporting recovery planning decision making, to effectively understand where to prioritise resources and activity in the right way and at the right time to achieve the right outcomes.

The future?

Covid-19 has only increased volatility and uncertainty for local government, and when working with councils delivering Financial Foresight we have prioritized scenario planning to support strategic financial planning. Understanding best, worst and optimum case scenarios from the impact of the pandemic are critical in strategic discussion when setting next year's budget and updating the Medium-Term Financial Plan – impacts on the place and communities, as well as on the council services and the council as an organization. Some councils are more confident than others in being able to manage their financial position during 2020/21 but all are concerned about 2021/22 and beyond. And it is not just Covid-19 scenarios that need to be understood, but other global, national and local issues that will impact over the medium term, including the impact of a no deal Brexit trade deal, and new government policies such as those expected on devolution and health and social care integration.

As already noted, places will vary depending on their socio-economic and demographic characteristics, but all councils are working through demand impacts arising from the ongoing pandemic and the associated recession, and ensuring their workforce continue to be supported to ensure they remain personally resilient.

Until a vaccine has been successfully produced and rolled out, the public health threat remains, and there are likely to be further local lockdowns, such as we have seen in Leicester and towns in the north west of England. There could be difficult trade offs for national and local politicians to consider to avert further waves of restrictions. For example to keep schools open after they return in September, will there be a need to increase restrictions elsewhere to ensure the cases of Covid-19 remain at a management level?

Local government has always demonstrated a remarkable resilience in managing significant challenges, including ten years of austerity, and being at the forefront of the pandemic response. And whilst much uncertainty remains, we are confident that councils will continue to demonstrate the capacity to lead places, deliver services.

Covid-19 and Local Government

Public services have been at the forefront of the emergency response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) including local government. Very few local government services have not been impacted by the Covid-19, and councils have also had to create new service lines as part of the emergency response, such as their work in identifying and supporting shielded and other vulnerable citizens, and to redeploy people to new roles and assets to new functions (for example closed leisure centres repurposed as temporary mortuaries and food banks).

Prior to Covid-19 local government has had to adapt to significant reductions in funding during the period of austerity. For example, spending on local services fell by 21% in real terms between 2009-10 and 2017-18. However, underlying this reduction are much larger reductions to some services expenditure. In broad terms, councils managed during austerity by significantly reducing spending on more discretionary services in order to protect statutory services to the most vulnerable people, particularly social care services. In addition, councils have had to place greater reliance on fees and charges income, and to be innovative in the generation of new income source, including a more commercial approach, a trend which is changing as authorities seek to balance social outcomes with financial sustainability.

Covid-19 has had a further significant impact on local government finances, which is the result of three main factors:

- increase in expenditure in managing the emergency response, such as purchase of PPE, provision of food and medical supplies to shielded citizens, and increased costs in relation to adult social care;
- lost income due to closed services, such as leisure centres, and the reduction in other sources of income from other sources, such as car parking, business rates and council tax; and
- the non-delivery of savings plans.

Whilst central government has made significant additional funding contributions to local government in recognition of the financial consequences of Covid-19, the total funding gap for councils in England is currently estimated to be £6billion by the LGA, with the sector still in the process of determining the longer term financial impact. The tranches of government funding provided so far have generally focussed on alleviating the financial pressures created by Covid-19 related spend, and so have had limited benefit for lost income such as that relating to leisure services.

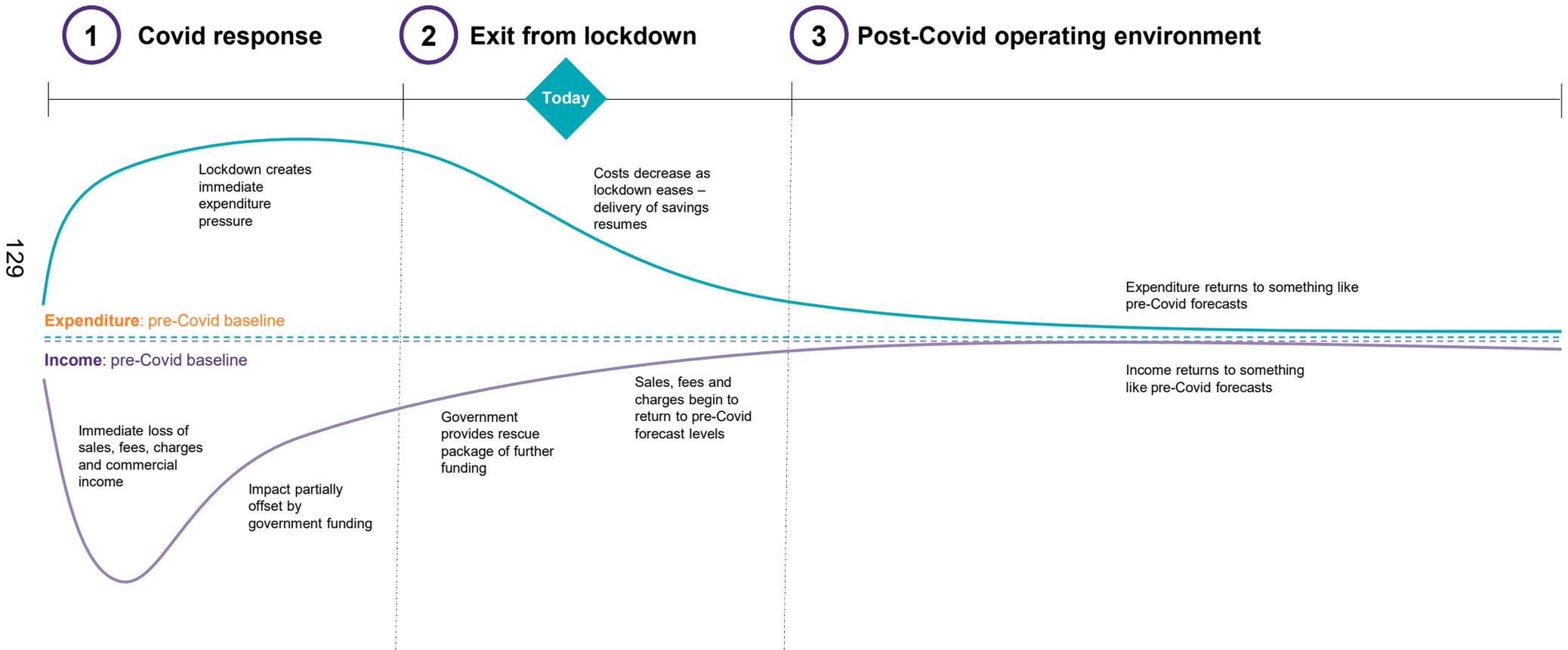
This stark financial context has significant implications for the sector as councils start to move from the emergency response stage to the recovery planning stage of Covid-19. The key risks we will need to consider:

- how they stand up closed services such as leisure centres, the impact of Covid-19 on future demand, and the operational challenges of service delivery with on-going social distancing rules;
- how service delivery may need to change as a result of learning from Covid-19 and how long-lasting cultural and behavioural changes will impact on their operating models;
- the impact on local markets such as social care and transport, and the financial consequences of market and supply chain failure;
- how the economic impact of Covid-19 will impact on service need and on the demand for income generating services; and
- whether certain services will need to reduce or cease to manage the funding gap
- exploration of opportunities for more radical change that may have arisen from Covid-19, such as building on the large-scale transfer of care that has taken place and the opportunities regarding reablement, and broader integration with health.

Understanding the various scenarios, their financial implications, and the resources available to deliver them will be critical over the short to medium term.

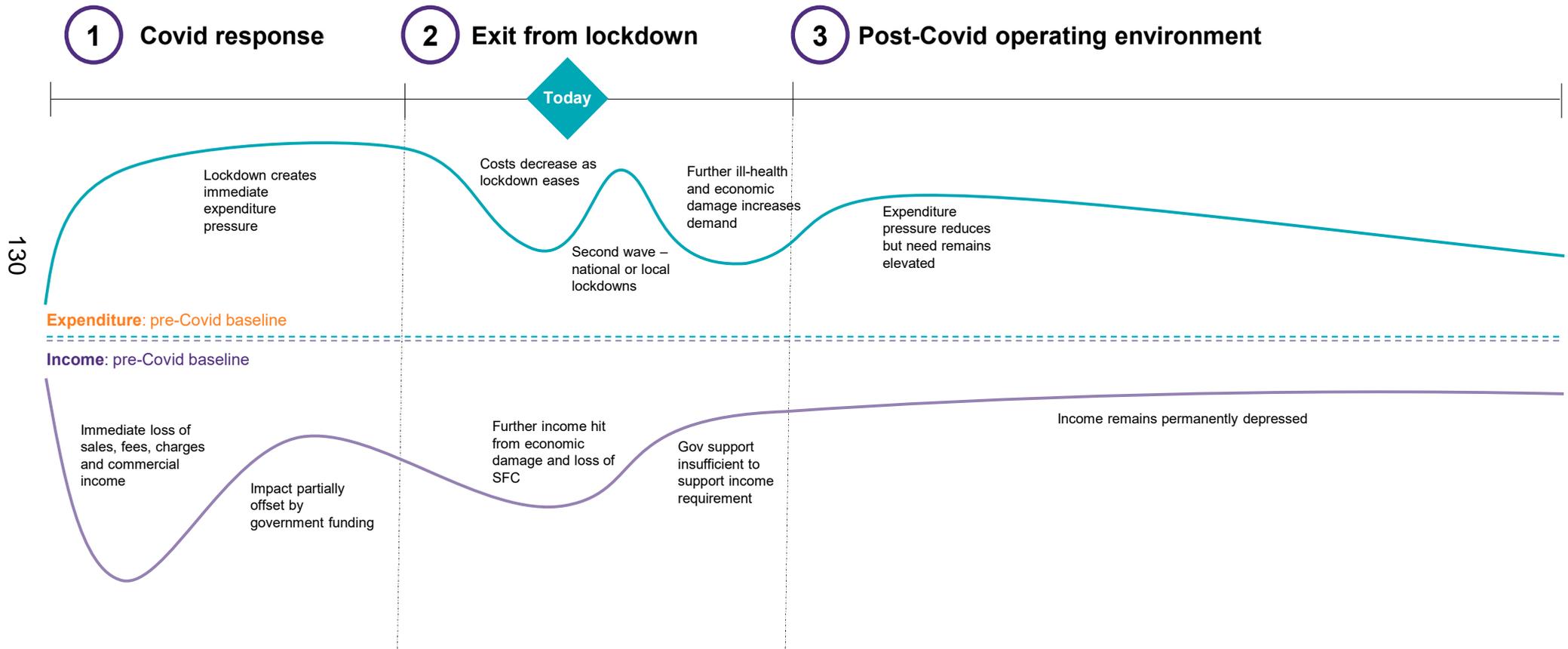
Example scenarios

Scenario 1 – swift return to normality



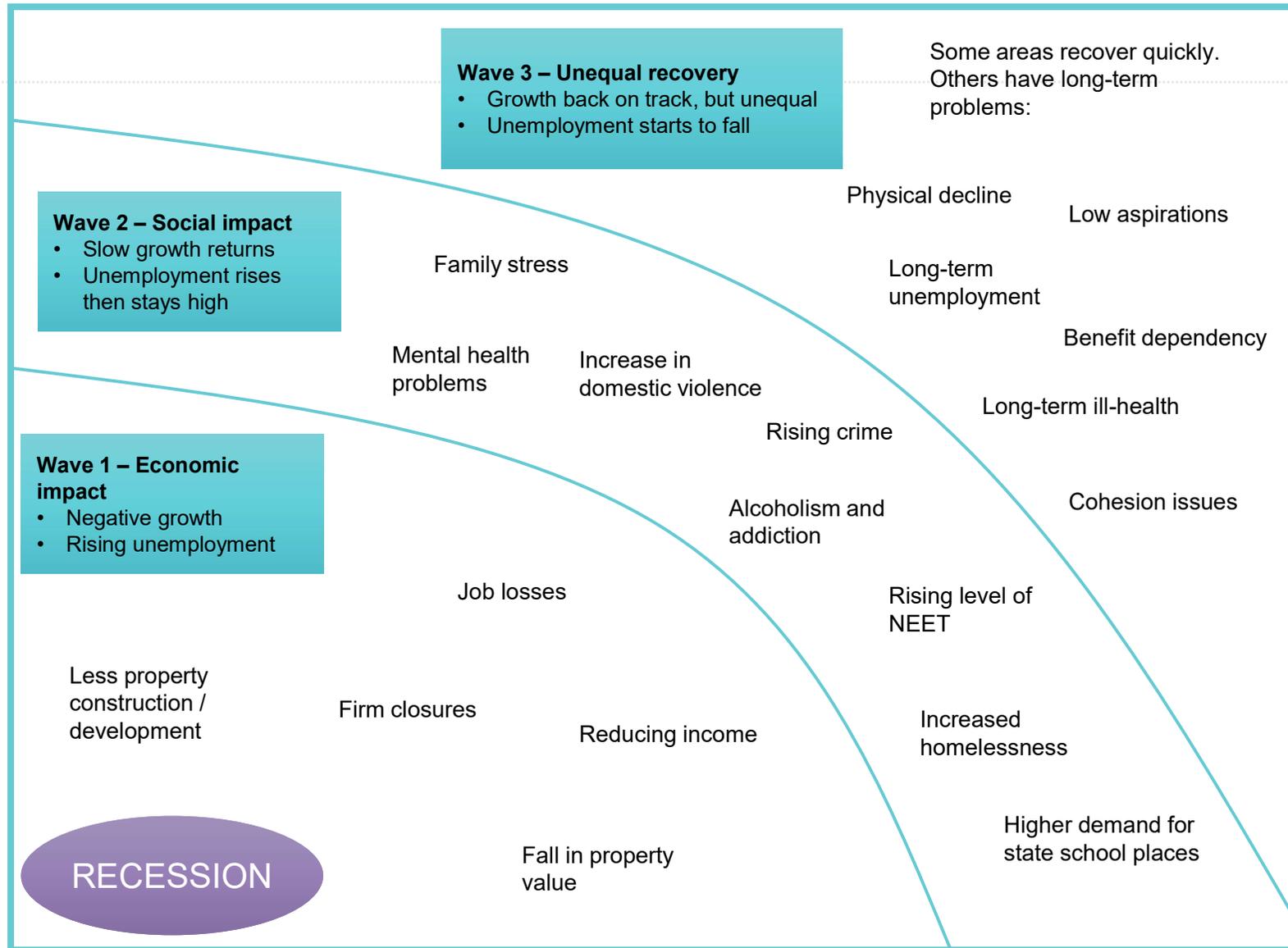
Example scenarios (Cont'd)

Scenario 2 – second wave and ongoing disruption



Can we learn from previous recessions?

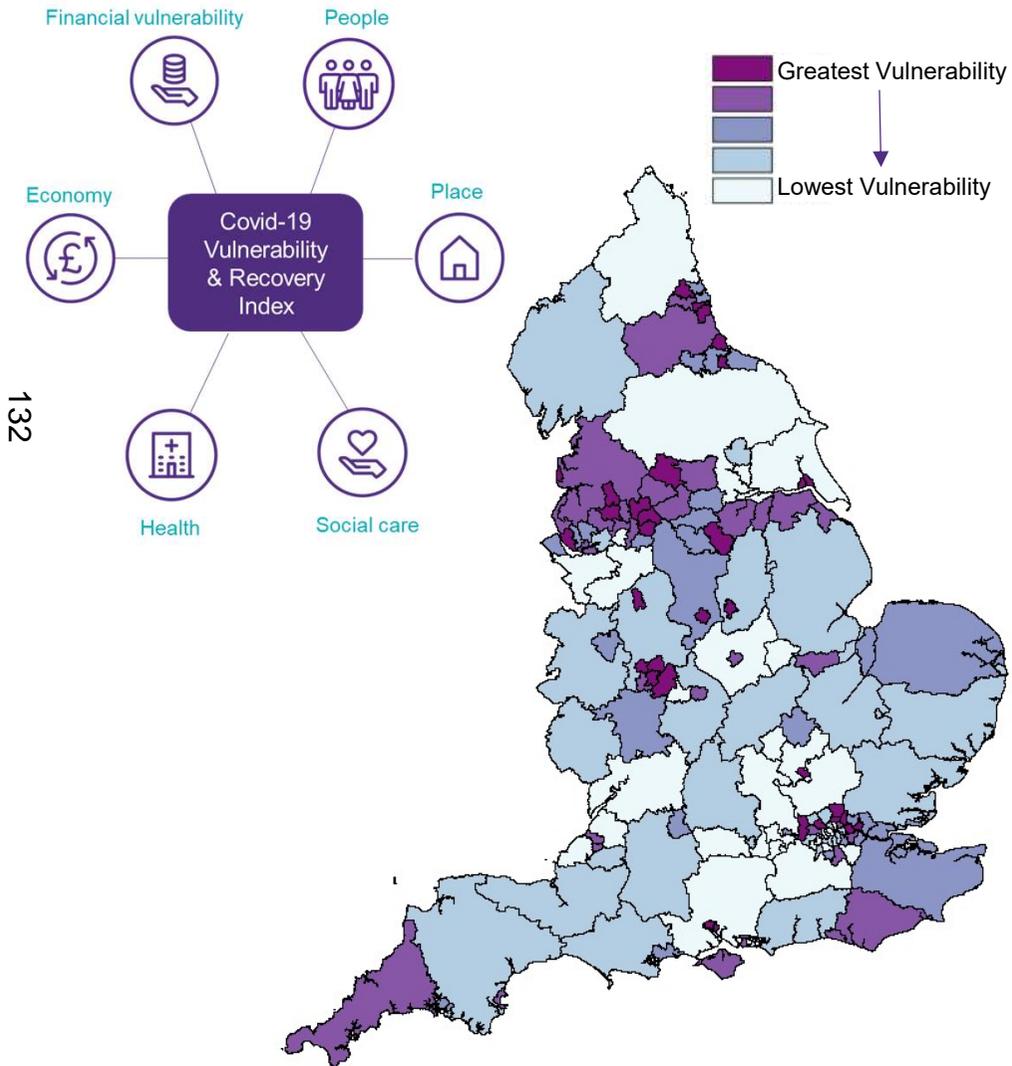
131



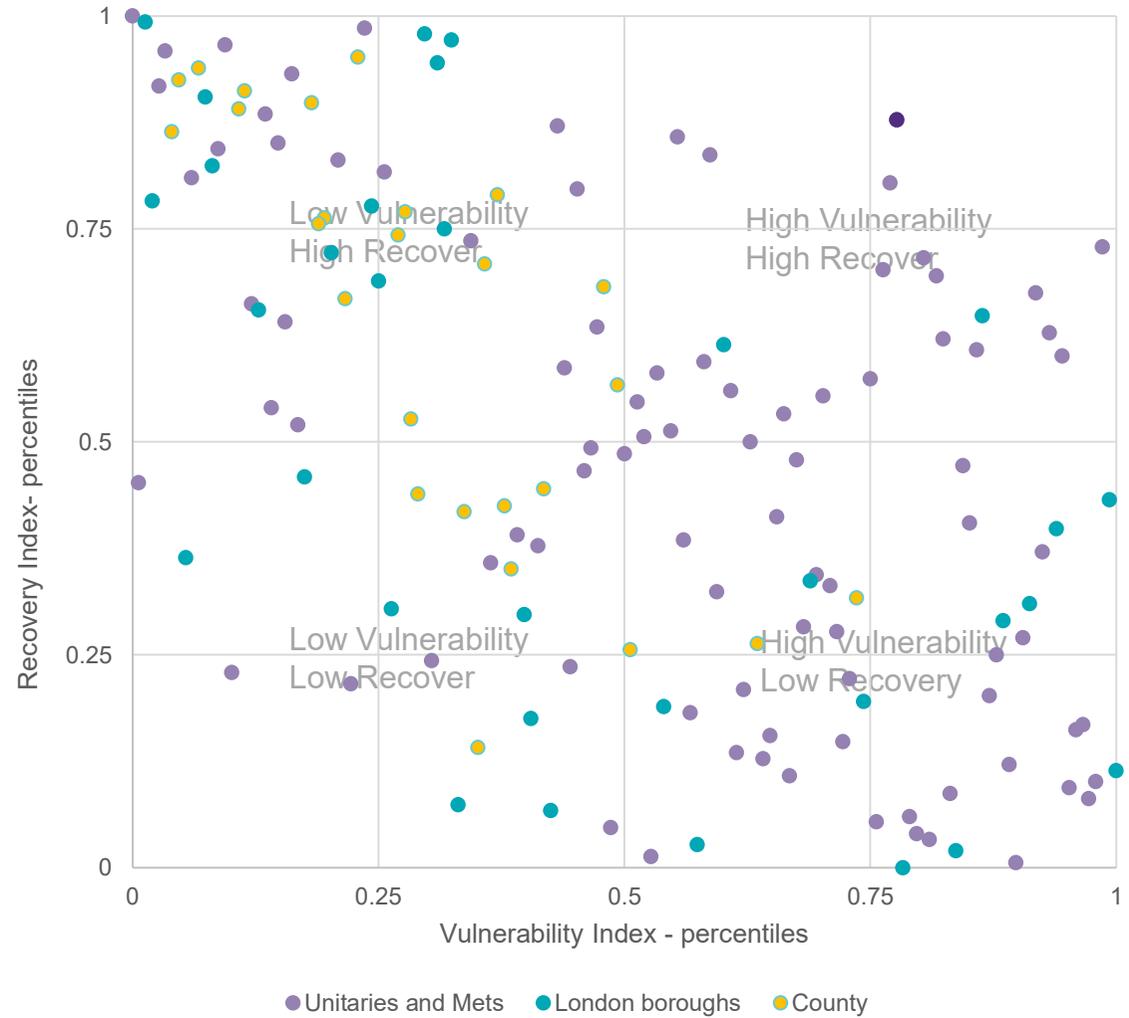
Source: Audit Commission

Covid-19 Vulnerability Index

Overall Index (including Financial Recovery basket)



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Scenarios and hypotheses

Local authority areas in 12-24 months?

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Theme	Reasonable worst case	Reasonable best case
People & community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple lockdowns and ongoing disruption Community dependency and expectation of sustained response Turbulence and activism within the VCS Socio-economic inequality is compounded Failure of leisure and cultural services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smooth exit from lockdown to a “new normal” Community mobilisation is channelled into ongoing resilience Strengthened VCS relationships and focus Systemic response to inequality is accelerated Leisure and cultural services adapted to social distancing
Business & economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16% reduction in GVA for 2020 based on OBR reference scenario Slow / uneven economic recovery and “long tail” on unemployment Central gov / BEIS focus investment on areas furthest behind Loss of tourist & student spend causes unmitigated damage 'V' shaped recovery results in 2-3 year recovery period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-10% reduction in GVA Rapid economic recovery with employment levels close behind Central government “back winners” with investment Adaptation allows resumption of tourist and student economy Business base is weighted towards growth sectors
Health & wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased demand and escalating need due to fallout from lockdown Newly-vulnerable cohorts place strain on the system Unit costs increase further as markets deteriorate and providers fail SEND transport unable to adapt to social distancing Imposed disruption of care system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive lifestyle changes and attitudes to care reduce demand Needs of newly vulnerable cohorts met through new service models New investment in prevention and market-shaping manage costs New ways of working leading to stronger staff retention Locally-led reform of health and care system
Political & regulatory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local government side-lined by a centralised national recovery effort Unfunded burdens (e.g. enforcement and contact-tracing) Councils in the firing line for mismanaging recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local government empowered as leaders of place-based recovery Devolution and empowerment of localities Councils at the forefront of civic and democratic renewal
Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity missed to capture and sustain environmental benefits The end of the high street / town centres Emissions and air quality worsened by avoidance of public transport Capital programmes stuck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to invest in transport modal shift and green infrastructure Changed working patterns rejuvenate town centres Sustained impact on emissions due to new behaviours New, shovel-ready infrastructure programmes
Organisational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate funding forces fiscal constraint Working practices return to status quo – increased operating costs Imposed structural change within the place Austerity 2 Commercial portfolio becomes a liability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate funding enables a programme of targeted investment Learning and adaptation to new operating environment Energised system-wide collaboration and reform Fiscal reform and civic renewal Commercial portfolio reshaped for economic and social gain

What strategy is needed in response?

From response to recovery

Learn, adapt and prioritise

- Develop and test hypotheses around impact on place, services, operations, finances.
- Design rapid interventions - implement, test and evaluate.
- Learning from the response to lock in the good stuff – reflection on operations, services and the system.
- Set priorities and principles – what is the Council's purpose in an uncertain context and where will it focus?

Mitigating the worst case

Consolidate and build resilience

- Ensure that emergency management and response structures are resilient for the long haul.
- What is the minimum operating model to deliver this?
- Predict and model demand for social care and assess care market vulnerability.
- Contingency plans for structural disruption.
- Re-evaluate infrastructure pipeline.

Steering towards the best case

Invest in renewal

- Programme of priority-based investment framed by recovery and renewal.
- Focus on inequality, community resilience, targeted economic stimulus, skills and employment support and adapting public spaces.
- Continued system leadership, pushing for positive reform and resilience.

Recovery planning and implementation

Set out below are examples of recovery planning activity that are being considered by councils. This activity needs to align to the Government's recovery strategy, and to existing government priorities such as levelling up, whilst future proofing against Covid-related government policy shifts.

Recovery planning	Recovery implementation
Recovery planning strategy and framework development.	Recovery plan implementation.
Risk assessments, research into which parts of the local economy have been most severely hit and which groups of people will need additional support.	Reviews of long term corporate plans/strategies, place vision, service plans, in context of phased lockdown release.
Planning for standing up closed services.	Place-based leadership – working with other public services, private and third sector to redefine place.
Integrating social distancing into the public realm, eg offering supplies of hand sanitiser and masks. Increased need for digital advertising and awareness raising.	Redefining front-line services, council as match-maker, convener and incentiviser as well as service deliverer or commissioner. Removal of internal silos (eg supporting vulnerable families).
Review of supply chain vulnerability.	More long-term and strategic partnerships and funding models for third sector.
Supporting local businesses evolve to a new normal post-COVID-19 world, including more trading on-line.	Re-evaluation of vulnerability, including eligibility criteria. Likely to put in place structures that outlast the crisis, such as provisions to help the homeless and those in gig economy jobs.
Providing leadership for longer-term investment and delivery, to support economic recovery rather than just focusing on short-term actions.	Review and update Local Plan.
Reframe capital programme to support economic, social and environmental recovery / sustainability	Reconfiguration of municipal estate and property portfolio and commercial investments.
Renewed strategic financial planning and focus on financial management.	Emergency planning reviews and learning.
Data recognised as core pillar of resilience, barriers to data collaboration and information governance removed/standardised	Long-term financial sustainability planning.
Government monitoring regime on additional funding for councils and Covid funding administered by councils.	Increase in outcomes based procurement and focus on social value.
Business cases for new investments or for Government.	Significant investment in digital capabilities – channel shift, remote working, etc.
HR capacity and welfare, building health and safety checks.	

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Redmond Review – Outcome of the Review

The independent review led by Sir Tony Redmond was published on 8th September 2020. The review sought views on the quality of local authority financial reporting and external audit. The consultation ran from 17 September 2019 to 20 December 2019. The detailed outcome of the review has now been published. The review has made a series of recommendations which will impact upon Auditors and Local Authority's alike.

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The Key Findings are summarised below:

- The establishment of a new regulator - the Office of Local Audit and Regulation. This will replace the FRC and PSAA
- Scope to increase fees - The current fee structure for local audit is to be revised (i.e. increased) to ensure that adequate resources are deployed to meet the full extent of local audit requirements
- A move back to a September deadline - The deadline for publishing audited local authority accounts be revisited with a view to extending it to 30 September from 31 July each year
- The Accounts to be simplified - CIPFA/LASAAC will be required to review the statutory accounts to determine whether there is scope to simplify the presentation of local authority accounts
- There is a recognition of the role of authorities in improving governance and reporting.
-

- The development of audited and reconciled accounts summaries to accompany the financial statements.

As the reviews by Redmond, John Kingman, Sir Donald Brydon, and the CMA have made clear, the market, politicians and the media believe that, in the corporate world, both the transparency of financial reporting and audit quality needs to be improved. Audit fees have fallen too low, and auditors are not perceived to be addressing the key things which matter to stakeholders, including a greater focus on future financial stability. The local audit sector shares many of the challenges facing company audit. All of us in this sector need to be seen to be stepping up to the challenge. This Review presents a unique opportunity to change course, and to help secure the future of local audit, along with meaningful financial reporting.

You can read the detailed report and recommendations using the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-financial-reporting-and-external-audit-independent-review>

The NAO consultation on a new Code of Audit Practice (the “Code”) has finished, and the new Code has completed its approval process in Parliament. It therefore came into force on 1 April 2020 for audit years 2020/21 and onwards. The new Code supersedes the Code of Audit Practice 2015, which was published by the National Audit Office (NAO) in April 2015.

The most significant change under the new Code is the introduction of an Auditor’s Annual Report, containing a commentary on arrangements to secure value for money and any associated recommendations. The NAO public consultation is now underway and runs until 2 September 2020. It can be accessed through the NAO website:

<https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/agn-03-vfm-consultation/>



Local Government audit and financial reporting – the Redmond Review

Grant Thornton
September 2020



The Redmond Review – scope and purpose

Scope

- Launched September 2019. Views by December 2019
- Led by Sir Tony Redmond, former President of CIPFA

Purpose – to assess

- Effectiveness of audit in local authorities
- Transparency of financial reporting

Publication

- 8 September 2020

Context

Why the need for a review?

- Local audit is facing an unprecedented set of challenges
 - Accounts have grown far more complex
 - Authorities are engaging in more innovative / unusual transactions
 - Austerity has reduced the ability of many authorities to prepare high quality accounts and working papers
 - Audit fees have fallen to an unsustainably low level
 - The sign off date of 31 July is too tight (even without Covid 19 pressures)
 - Retention of audit staff is very difficult in this environment
 - Authorities are not getting the service they deserve
 - Radical and urgent reform is needed!

Areas of focus

A wide ranging review

- The Expectations Gap
 - Audit and Wider Assurance
 - Audit Quality
 - The Financial Reporting framework
 - Auditor Reporting
-
- 156 responses
 - Over 100 interviews
 - 83 pages
 - 23 recommendations



The system is not working



The current local audit arrangements fail to deliver, in full, policy objectives underpinning the 2014 Act.

As a result, the overriding concern must be a lack of coherence and public accountability within the existing system.

The local audit market is very fragile. The current fee structure does not enable auditors to fulfil the role in an entirely satisfactory way.

Without prompt action to implement the recommendations, there is a significant risk that the firms currently holding local audit contracts will withdraw from the market.

Covering letter to the Secretary of State

- The local audit market is very fragile. The current fee structure does not enable auditors to fulfil the role in an entirely satisfactory way.
- With 40% of audits failing to meet the required deadline for report in 2018/19, this signals a serious weakness in the ability of auditors to comply with their contractual obligations.
- In addition, the ambition of attracting new audit firms to the local authority market has not been realised.

Detailed findings

Systems leadership is lacking

- The structure is fragmented and piecemeal. Public sector specialist expertise is now dispersed around different bodies. No one body is looking for systemic problems, and there is no apparent co-ordination between parties to determine and act on emerging risks (Sir John Kingman)
- There is a need for a new organisation with the clarity of mission and purpose to act as the system leader for the local audit framework; and for a standardised statement of service information and costs, compared to the annual budget, that is aimed at taxpayers and service users.

Detailed findings

Procurement has resulted in fees which are too low

- PSAA adopted the same procurement framework in 2017 as the Audit Commission had done previously in 2014. No assessment of the amount it would cost to audit each local authority based on their level of audit risk has been made in the past ten years.
- Audit fees in the local authority sector have dropped significantly at the same time that audit fees in other sectors including other parts of the public sector have significantly risen
- Firms stated that the lack of profitability changes the way that local audit work is perceived within the firm. Specialising in this area is seen by many auditors as having a detrimental impact on career prospects.

Detailed findings

The audit timescale is unrealistic and unhelpful

- The compression of the audit timetable was mentioned as an issue by every audit firm. Firms raised concerns about the resulting peaks in workload, pressures on staff during the summer months, and knock-on effects when target dates are not met. These pressures contribute to making work unpopular with local audit staff

Detailed findings

Financial reporting is overly complex / not always relevant

- Local authority accounts are arguably more complex and more challenging for a service user to understand than accounts produced by other parts of the public sector.
- Scope identified to improve transparency and relevance of reporting e.g:
 - asset valuations: accounting is complex and the perception of many stakeholders is that it does not add value
 - going concern disclosures are perceived to be less relevant in a local authority context than financial resilience

Detailed findings

Governance and transparency of reporting needs improvement

- The ability of Audit Committees, which mostly lack independent, technically qualified members, to consider, effectively, audit reports has been challenged in responses to the call for views.
- Transparency and accountability of audit reports, from a public perspective is lacking.
- There needs to be a greater role for full council and a stronger interface between statutory officers and audit.

Detailed findings

There is too much focus on Property and Pension Valuations

- Authorities concerned that auditors are spending significant time on fixed asset and pension valuations, rather than on major areas of expenditure and usable reserves, Auditors coming through the system are not developing a wider understanding of LG context
- Firms would prefer to do less work on asset and pension valuations but explained that these areas are given more attention to secure a positive assessment from the FRC
- The FRC believes that if a focus on asset and pension valuations is inappropriate, this is the responsibility of CIPFA/ LASAAC

Sir Tony's Recommendations

A call for action

- **A new regulator** - the Office of Local Audit and Regulation to replace the FRC and PSAA
- **Scope to increase fees** - The current fee structure for local audit be revised (i.e. increased) to ensure that adequate resources are deployed to meet the full extent of local audit requirements
- **Move back to a September deadline** - The deadline for publishing audited local authority accounts be revisited with a view to extending it to 30 September from 31 July each year

Sir Tony's Recommendations

A call for action

- **Accounts simplification** - CIPFA/LASAAC be required to review the statutory accounts to determine whether there is scope to simplify the presentation of local authority accounts
- recognition of the **role of authorities in improving governance and reporting** and
- development of **audited and reconciled accounts summaries.**

Where next?

A call for action

- Consultation
- Legislation
- Immediate actions

Given the urgency, it is imperative to introduce change where possible now, even ahead of legislation

Grant Thornton's View

Sir Tony Redmond's report provides a clear road map to secure appropriate scrutiny and a sustainable future for local government audit. Reinforcing transparency and accountability is critical in protecting the interests of citizens who both fund and rely on the services delivered by local authorities. Introducing an Office of Local Audit and Regulation will help simplify and re-energise this vital public function at a time when local finances and governance are in need of effective oversight. We look forward to supporting Sir Tony and Government as this report progresses from recommendation to reality.



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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Report subject	Audit & Governance Committee Forward Plan (refresh)
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report sets out the reports to be received by the Audit & Governance Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>The Audit & Governance Committee approves the forward plan set out at Appendix A.</p>
Reason for recommendations	To ensure that Audit & Governance Committee are fully informed of the reports to be considered during 2020/21.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Drew Mellor, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	<p>Nigel Stannard Head of Audit & Management Assurance ✉ nigel.stannard@bcpcouncil.gov.uk</p>
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Recommendation Approval

Background

1. Good practice dictates that a Forward Plan should be agreed which sets out the reports to be considered by the Audit & Governance Committee over the next 12 months.

The Forward Plan

2. The Forward Plan set out at Appendix A has been developed through discussion with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee, the S151 Officer and the Council's External Auditors. The plan sets out proposals for the forward management of reports to be considered by the Audit & Governance Committee in order to enable it to fulfil its terms of reference.

3. The Audit & Governance Committee should note that the plan does not preclude extraordinary items being brought before the Committee in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair as necessary and appropriate, thus ensuring that the Audit & Governance Committee business is consistent with the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations.
4. The Chairman has asked committee members for any topics requiring this Committee's consideration within its terms of reference. These topics are generally shown in the 'Presentations' section of the Forward Plan, Appendix A. This is an on-going arrangement and topics can be added at any time in the year or as they arise. The presentations are made available to the public with the meeting minutes.

Options Appraisal

5. An options appraisal is not applicable for this report.

Summary of financial implications

6. There are no direct financial implications from this report.

Summary of legal implications

7. There are no direct legal implications from this report.

Summary of human resources implications

8. There are no direct human resource implications from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

9. There are no direct sustainability impact implications from this report.

Summary of public health implications

10. There are no public health implications from this report.

Summary of equality implications

11. There are no direct equality implications from this report

Summary of risk assessment

12. The risk implications are as set out in the report.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A – Audit & Governance Committee - Forward Plan 2020/21

APPENDIX A

Audit & Governance Committee - Forward Plan 2020/21

REPORT	18 JUN 2020 (extra)	30 JUL 2020	10 SEP 2020 (extra)	22 OCT 2020	26 NOV 2020 (extra)	21 JAN 2021	11 MAR 2021 (extra)	22 APR 2021
ANNUAL REPORTS								
Statement of Accounts 2019/20 (*Note delayed due to COVID 19 and the Government's decision to allow more time for the production of the Council's statutory accounts).		*			✓			
Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 and Annual Review of Local Code of Governance (1 update on Action Plan only)		*			✓			✓ ₁
Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Opinion Report 2019/20		*			✓			
Annual Breaches, Waivers & Exemptions Report 2019/20		✓						
Annual Review of Register of Declarations of Outside Interests & Receipts of Gifts & Hospitality by Officers				✓				
Use of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Annual Report (including Report to the Office of Surveillance Commissioner) 2019/20		✓						
Annual Report of Internal Audit Counter Fraud Work and Whistleblowing Referrals 2019/20				✓				
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report 2019/20				✓				
Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2019/20				✓				
Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Update				✓				
Treasury Management Policy Refresh/Approval for next financial year						✓		
Assurance Framework & Internal Audit Planning Consultation						✓		
Information Governance Update						✓		
Internal Audit Charter & Audit Plan for next financial year								✓
QUARTERLY / HALF YEARLY REPORTS								
Internal Audit - Quarterly Audit Plan Update (2 to include Audit Charter & Audit Plan for 2020/21)		✓ ₂		✓		✓		✓
Risk Management – Corporate Risk Register Update		✓		✓		✓		✓
Forward Plan (refresh)		✓		✓		✓		✓
Treasury Management Monitoring Report		✓						✓
Health & Safety and Fire Safety Update				✓				✓
AD HOC / OTHER REPORTS								
Whistleblowing, Counter Fraud and Corruption, and Declaration of Interests, Gifts & Hospitality Policies (x3) - annual evolution for 2021/22.							✓	
Financial Regulations - annual evolution for 2021/22.							✓	
Establishment of Constitution Working Group Review		✓						
Governance of Budget Monitoring		✓						
PRESENTATIONS (rather than formal reports)								
Review of BH Live contractual and governance arrangements		✓						
Review of structure and operation of the Bournemouth Development Company			✓					

Review of organisational and operational structure of BCP Council			✓					
EXTERNAL AUDITS REPORTS								
External Auditor – Audit Plan 2019/20 (<i>3 Audit Plan 2020/21</i>)		✓						✓ ₃
External Auditor – Audit Findings Report 2019/20					✓			
External Auditor – Annual Audit Letter 2019/20						✓		
External Auditor – Annual Audit Fee 2020/21						✓		
External Auditor – Certification of Claims and Returns 2019/20						✓		
External Auditor – Audit Progress & Sector Update		✓		✓		✓		✓

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Report subject	Annual Report of Internal Audit Counter Fraud Work and Whistleblowing Referrals 2019/20
Meeting date	22 October 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report details counter fraud work carried out by Internal Audit to provide assurance on the Council's response to combating fraud & corruption.</p> <p>Internal Audit have investigated all allegations of suspected fraud or financial irregularity in a proportionate manner.</p> <p>Four whistleblowing referrals for the Council were received and investigated by Internal Audit during 2019/20.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Audit & Governance Committee are asked to note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The counter fraud work & investigations carried out by Internal Audit during 2019/20 b) The whistleblowing referrals received during 2019/20.
Reason for recommendations	To enable the Audit and Governance Committee to consider the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements surrounding counter fraud & corruption including whistleblowing.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Drew Mellor, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	<p>Nigel Stannard</p> <p>Head of Audit & Management Assurance</p> <p>✉ nigel.stannard@bcpcouncil.gov.uk</p>
Contributions	Simon Milne, Deputy Chief Internal Auditor
Wards	All
Classification	For Information

Background

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Audit & Governance Committee of counter fraud work undertaken by Internal Audit during the 2019/20 financial year for the Council.
2. This report also provides a summary of the number, nature and outcome of specific investigations and formal whistleblowing referrals received for the Council during the 2019/20 financial year.

Internal Audit Counter Fraud Work 2019/20

3. During the year, Internal Audit have carried out the following work to provide assurance on the Councils response to combating fraud & corruption:

Strategic

- New BCP Council Fraud Risk Register implemented, reviewed and updated during the year
- BCP Council Anti-Fraud & Corruption and Whistleblowing Policies were reviewed and updated in the year and have been assessed as being effective during 2019/20. A new BCP Declaration of Interests, Gifts & Hospitality Policy was introduced at the end of the 2019/20 year. These policies are subject to an annual evolutionary review and approval by the Audit & Governance Committee. *NOTE Links to these documents can be found at the end of this report under Appendices.*
- Further developed the new investigation case management system for BCP Council.

Culture

- Monitored general employee fraud awareness through completion of the BCP Council mandatory e-learning modules which covered fraud prevention, bribery and whistleblowing.
- Provided targeted fraud training to specific services and senior management teams as required.

Deterrence

- Published corporate Fraud Bulletins on BCP news to promote fraud awareness and give guidance to staff on counter fraud policy/procedures.
- Issued specific 'Fraud Alerts' to relevant service areas (including schools) throughout the year.

Prevention & Detection

- Participated in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching exercise 2019/20. For the Council Tax Single Person Discounts data match, discounts with a total value of approximately £5,000 have been removed to date. Further work is ongoing and discounts are expected to be removed for several additional cases.
- Work is currently ongoing to prepare for the main bi-annual exercise which matches several datasets.
- Five high risk fraud areas were reviewed as part of the 2019/20 Audit Plan as detailed in the table below:

Fraud Risk Area	Outcome & Recommendations
NDR small business rate relief	Data matched using specialist software application (IDEA). Identified incorrect (erroneous) award of small business rate relief for 2 companies; approximate value £15k. Accounts corrected and reminder to follow established procedures issued.
Creditor Duplicate Payments	Data matched using specialist software application (IDEA). Identified payment of 21 duplicate invoices totalling £14,163. All overpayments subsequently recovered.
Cash Income	Improvements to cash income controls across various services were recommended.
Petty Cash (replaced in exceptional circumstances by 'client cash floats')	Improvements to controls for several petty cash accounts were recommended. It should be noted that a corporate decision was made to cease all petty cash accounts w.e.f. 1 st April 2020. All low value expenditure on goods previously purchased using petty cash now more securely paid and controlled using Council p-cards.
No Recourse to Public Funds	Reasonable assurance audit opinion. Improvements to authorisation of applications and transparency in payment calculations.

- As part of the 2020/21 Audit Plan the following high-level fraud risk areas are planned to be reviewed this year; employee subsistence and travel claims, p-cards/credit cards, declaration of interests, planning applications, concessionary travel passes, crisis payments and housing tenancy data matching.

Investigation

- Internal Audit have investigated all allegations of suspected fraud or financial irregularity in a proportionate manner. Details of investigations that have been carried out by Internal Audit during 2019/20 are detailed in Appendix A. This appendix involves exempt information and is submitted as a confidential paper to this report.

NOTE - Human Resources are responsible for supporting management with investigations into potential staff misconduct for matters which are non-financial related.

Corporate Counter Fraud Work

4. From the 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, Internal Audit have provided specialist investigative resource to support Management with high risk fraud areas.
Note - Single Fraud Investigation Service (DWP) are responsible for taking action with Housing Benefit fraud and BCP Revenues and Benefits or the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (depending on legacy council locality) are responsible for taking action on Council Tax and NDR fraud.
5. Work was carried out with Housing teams to assist in the validation of all Right to Buy and Housing Tenancy Applications. The results of this work are detailed below.

Fraud Risk Area	Total 19/20 BCP Council	Total 18/19 (Legacy Councils)
Right to Buy Checks	68	62
Concerns raised	1	2
Cases Refused	0	1
Housing Application Checks	1,089	817
Concerns raised	39	73
Applications withdrawn	33	7

6. Work has also been carried out to assist with the investigation of Blue Badge and Housing Tenancy fraud referrals as detailed below:

Fraud Risk Area	Total 19/20 BCP Council	Total 18/19 (Legacy Councils)
Blue Badge Referrals	40	27
Badges recovered	1	2
Warning letters issued	5	6
Housing Tenancy Referrals	30	33
Tenancy Reviews instigated	6	15
Housing Tenancy ceased	0	2

Counter Fraud Best Practice – CIPFA Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption

7. An annual assessment has been carried out to review the Council's arrangements on managing the risk of fraud and corruption using a tool provided by CIPFA.
8. The assessment outcome states that the Council has reached a good level of performance against the Code of Practice and that the Council has put in place effective arrangements across many aspects and is taking positive action to manage its fraud and corruption risks.
9. The counter fraud resource available during 2019/20 was adequate to enable this outcome to be achieved and the Council has achieved its goal of continually improving its resilience to fraud (as stated in the Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy).
10. An action plan to further improve arrangements is in place and progress will be reported on next year.

Counter Fraud Best Practice – Fighting Fraud & Corruption Locally 2020

11. Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally 2020 is the updated counter fraud and corruption strategy for local government. It provides a blueprint for a coordinated response to fraud and corruption perpetrated against local authorities.
12. The report contains 'live companions' to the strategy document which set out more information on how local authorities can ensure that their counter fraud response is comprehensive and effective. An assessment against these has been included at Appendix B along with proposed actions to further improve arrangements.

Whistleblowing Referrals 2019/20

13. A Whistleblowing Policy exists to ensure qualifying individuals are able to raise concerns they may have safely, without fear of harassment or victimisation. There are certain types of disclosure covered by a Whistleblowing Policy which are specified in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
14. The Council's Whistleblowing Policy, approved annually by this Committee, requires a summary of the number, nature and outcome of Whistleblowing referrals investigated in the year to be presented to this Committee.
15. Four whistleblowing referrals were received and investigated during the last financial year (April 2019 - March 2020), details are included in Appendix A.
16. Use of the BCP Whistleblowing Policy is promoted through reminders in regular 'Fraud Bulletins' to all staff, briefings at officer meetings and as part of the Fraud Prevention e-learning module on the Council's Intranet.
17. Work will continue to be undertaken to monitor, review and assess the effectiveness of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy. The Policy itself will continue to be subject to annual evolution and annual approval by this Committee.

Options Appraisal

18. An options appraisal is not applicable for this report.

Summary of financial implications

19. The Fighting Fraud & Corruption Locally 2020 strategy states "Every £1 that a local authority loses to fraud is £1 that it cannot spend on supporting the community".

Summary of legal implications

20. There are no direct legal implications from this report.

Summary of human resources implications

21. There are no direct human resource implications from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

22. There are no direct environmental implications from this report

Summary of public health implications

23. There are no direct public health implications from this report.

Summary of equality implications

24. There are no direct equality implications from this report.

Summary of risk assessment

25. The risk implications are set out in the content of this report.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A – Internal Audit Investigations Carried out During 2019/20 (Confidential)

Appendix B – Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally - Action Plan

BCP Council Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy

Internal access -

<https://bcpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/Finance/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FFinance%2FShared%20Documents%2FBCP%20Anti%20Fraud%20and%20Corruption%20Policy%202020%20FINAL%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FFinance%2FShared%20Documents>

External access –

<https://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/About-BCP-Council/Strategies-plans-and-policies/Documents/anti-fraud-corruption-policy-2020.pdf>

BCP Whistleblowing Policy

Internal access –

<https://bcpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/Finance/Shared%20Documents/BCP%20Whistleblowing%20Policy%202020%20FINAL.pdf>

External access –

<https://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/About-BCP-Council/Strategies-plans-and-policies/Documents/whistleblowing-policy-2020.pdf>

BCP Declaration of Interests, Gifts & Hospitality (for officers)

Internal access –

<https://bcpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/Finance/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FFinance%2FShared%20Documents%2FBCP%20Interests%20gifts%20and%20hospitality%20%20Policy%20V1%20from%201%20April%202020%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FFinance%2FShared%20Documents>

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1,2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – Action Plan

Ref	Statement	Status (Yes / No / Partial)	Evidence / Issue	Action	Responsible Officer & Date
Chief Executive					
1.1	Ensure authority is measuring itself against the checklist of FFCL	Yes	This checklist is evidence that the Council is measuring itself against the FFCL	-	-
1.2	Is there a trained counter-fraud resource in your organisation or do you have access to one?	Yes	Internal Audit has a dedicated counter fraud specialist and training has been given to other members of the team to provide additional support	-	-
1.3	Is the audit committee receiving regular reports on the work of those leading on fraud and is the external auditor aware of this?	Yes	The Audit & Governance Committee receives an annual report of Internal Audit Counter Fraud Work & Whistleblowing Referrals. The Chairman of the Committee is kept abreast in as close to real time as is practical on any major fraud or corruption investigations.	-	-
Section 151 Officer					
2.1	Is there a portfolio holder who has fraud within their remit?	Yes	There is a portfolio holder who attends Audit & Governance Committee meetings	-	-
2.2	Is the head of audit or counter fraud assessing resources & capability?	Yes	The Chief Internal Auditor has assessed the resources and capability required for fraud and audit as part of the annual audit planning process.	-	-
2.3	Do they have sufficient internal unfettered access?	Yes	The Council's Financial Regulations explicitly state that Internal Audit (which Counter Fraud is a part of) has the right of access to all documentation and staff where required	-	-

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – Action Plan

Ref	Statement	Status (Yes / No / Partial)	Evidence / Issue	Action	Responsible Officer & Date
2.4	Do they produce a report on activity, success and future plans and are they measured on this?	Yes	The Audit & Governance Committee receives an annual report of Internal Audit Counter Fraud Work & Whistleblowing Referrals. Outcomes against the planned Counter Fraud work are included as part of this report, along with any other counter fraud activity undertaken.	-	-
Monitoring Officer					
3.1	Are members, audit committees and portfolio leads aware of counter fraud activity and is training available to them?	Partial	Counter fraud activity is presented to the Audit & Governance committee on a quarterly basis. Minutes for this committee are reported to full Council on a monthly basis, thus all councillors have an opportunity to inform themselves about the Council's fraud prevention activity. Further fraud training is required for Councillors	Fraud awareness training will be provided to all Audit & Governance Committee members	Head of Audit & Management Assurance By March 2021
3.2	Is the fraud team independent of process and does it produce reports to relevant committees that are scrutinised by members?	Yes	As part of Internal Audit, the counter fraud team is independent of the rest of the Council. The Audit & Governance Committee receives an annual report of Internal Audit Counter Fraud Work & Whistleblowing Referrals.	-	-
Audit committee					
4.1	Does the committee receive a report at least once a year on the counter fraud activity which includes proactive and reactive work?	Yes	The Audit & Governance committee receives an annual report of Internal Audit Counter Fraud Work & Whistleblowing Referrals.	-	-
4.2	Does the committee receive a report from the fraud leads on how resource is being allocated, whether it covers all areas of fraud risk and where those fraud risks are measured?	Partial	This forms part of the Internal Audit plan which is agreed by the Audit & Governance committee annually. The Fraud Risk Register is currently not shared with the committee.	The Fraud Risk Register will be presented to Audit & Governance Committee annually on a confidential basis	Head of Audit & Management Assurance Jan 2020

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – Action Plan

Ref	Statement	Status (Yes / No / Partial)	Evidence / Issue	Action	Responsible Officer & Date
4.3	Is the committee aware that the relevant portfolio holder is up to date and understands the activity being undertaken to counter fraud?	Yes	The Resources portfolio holder attends the Audit & Governance Committee as standard and is thus informed of all Counter Fraud activity	-	-
4.4	Does the committee support proactive counter fraud activity?	Yes	Proactive counter fraud activity is part of the Audit Plan and progress is reported to the Audit & Governance committee on a quarterly basis. The Committee has approved the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and have accordingly approved and support the proactive counter fraud culture.	-	-
4.5	Does the committee challenge activity, is aware of what counter fraud activity can comprise and link with the various national reviews of public audit and accountability?	Yes	The Audit & Governance Committee offer robust challenge to the quarterly report presented by Internal Audit and to the annual Counter Fraud report. The annual Counter Fraud report includes details of any national reviews of public audit & accountability	-	-
The Portfolio Lead					
5.1	Does the portfolio lead receive a regular report that includes information, progress and barriers on the assessment against the FFCL checklist, Fraud risk assessment and horizon scanning.	Partial	This FFCL assessment is being presented as part of the annual report on Counter Fraud activity. The Fraud Risk Register is currently not shared with the committee.	As 4.2 - The Fraud Risk Register presented to Audit & Governance Committee	Head of Audit & Management Assurance Jan 2020
FFCL checklist					
6.1	The local authority has made a proper assessment of its fraud and corruption risks, has an action plan to deal with them and regularly reports to its senior Board and its members.	Yes	Internal Audit have carried out a fraud & corruption risk assessment in 2019/20. Actions have been taken to cover areas of fraud risk during 2019/20 and 2020/21 as part of the Internal Audit Plan. These are reported quarterly to Audit & Governance Committee.	-	-

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – Action Plan

Ref	Statement	Status (Yes / No / Partial)	Evidence / Issue	Action	Responsible Officer & Date
6.2	The local authority has undertaken a fraud risk assessment against the risks and has also undertaken horizon scanning of future potential fraud and corruption risks. This assessment includes the understanding of the harm that fraud may do in the community.	Yes	An assessment has been made using the CIPFA Fraud Risk Assessment tool and an action plan has been put in place to address any deficiencies. The Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy contains a statement that recognises the harm fraud & corruption can cause to the community	-	-
6.3	There is an annual report to the audit committee, or equivalent detailed assessment, to compare against FFCL 2020 and this checklist	Yes	This action plan provides the assessment	-	-
6.4	The relevant portfolio holder has been briefed on the fraud risks and mitigation	Yes	The Resources portfolio holder is provided with all reports to Audit & Governance Committee, including the annual Counter Fraud report.	-	-
6.5	The audit committee supports counter fraud work and challenges the level of activity to ensure it is appropriate in terms of fraud risk and resources	Yes	The Audit & Governance Committee offer robust challenge to the quarterly report presented by Internal Audit and to the annual Counter Fraud report	-	-
6.6	There is a counter fraud and corruption strategy applying to all aspects of the local authority's business which has been communicated throughout the local authority and acknowledged by those charged with governance.	Yes	The Council has an Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy which is refreshed annually and presented to the Audit & Governance Committee for approval. This policy is applicable throughout the Council. Fraud awareness training is mandatory for all employees	-	-
6.7	The local authority has arrangements in place that are designed to promote and ensure probity and propriety in the conduct of its business.	Yes	The Council's Financial Regulations contain a scheme of delegation and direction about how procurement is to be carried out. There is also a Councillor code of conduct included within the Council Constitution. There are legacy officer codes of conducts in place.	-	-
6.8	The risks of fraud and corruption are specifically considered in the local authority's overall risk management process.	Partial	The fraud risk register is a part of the overall risk management process.	As 4.2 - The Fraud Risk Register presented to Audit & Governance Committee.	Head of Audit & Management Assurance March 2021

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – Action Plan

Ref	Statement	Status (Yes / No / Partial)	Evidence / Issue	Action	Responsible Officer & Date
175 6.9	Counter fraud staff are consulted to fraudproof new policies, strategies and initiatives across departments and this is reported upon to committee.	Partial	Internal Audit are sometimes consulted on new policies, strategies and initiatives for both a controls weaknesses and fraud proofing perspective.	Internal Audit will liaise with the Insight, Policy & Performance team to be added as a consultee on relevant policies. The annual report to Audit & Governance committee will include policies, strategies and initiatives that Internal Audit have consulted upon.	Head of Audit & Management Assurance Jan 2021
6.10	Successful cases of proven fraud/corruption are routinely publicised to raise awareness.	Yes	Any cases of successfully proven fraud / corruption are considered for publicising as appropriate	-	-
6.11	The local authority has put in place arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and a mechanism for ensuring that this is effective and is reported to committee.	Yes	The Council has an Anti-fraud & Corruption Policy and a separate Whistleblowing Policy. The results of these are tracked and reported annually to the Audit & Governance Committee	-	-
6.12	The local authority has put in place arrangements for monitoring compliance with standards of conduct across the local authority covering: – codes of conduct including behaviour for counter fraud, anti-bribery and corruption – register of interests – register of gifts and hospitality.	Partial	Internal Audit are in the process of agreeing assurance testing to be carried out across the Council which will cover interests, gifts & hospitality. Management are responsible for ensuring employee compliance with the code of conduct and for reporting this to HR,	Internal Audit will liaise with HR to strengthen corporate monitoring and reporting of breaches of the code of conduct.	Head of Audit & Management Assurance January 2021
6.13	The local authority undertakes recruitment vetting of staff prior to employment by risk assessing posts and undertaking the checks recommended in FFCL 2020 to prevent potentially dishonest employees from being appointed.	Yes	Recruitment vetting processes are in place, including checking documentation and confirming references and qualifications. Where the Council considers that employees need to have a DBS check, this is carried out.	-	-

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – Action Plan

Ref	Statement	Status (Yes / No / Partial)	Evidence / Issue	Action	Responsible Officer & Date
6.14	Members and staff are aware of the need to make appropriate disclosures of gifts, hospitality and business. This is checked by auditors and reported to committee.	Yes	The Council has a Gifts, Hospitality and Interests policy in place. An Internal Audit review is planned for 2020/21 and the results of this will be communicated to the Audit & Governance committee as part of normal reporting processes.	-	-
6.15	There is a programme of work to ensure a strong counter fraud culture across all departments and delivery agents led by counter fraud experts	Yes	There is mandatory counter-fraud training for all employees, along with a fraud newsletter and a statement in the Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy stating that fraud will not be tolerated. In addition, Internal Audit considers fraud risks across the authority as part of creating the annual Internal Audit plan and uses this to ensure that the counter fraud culture is in place.	-	-
6.16	There is an independent and up-to-date whistleblowing policy which is monitored for take-up and can show that suspicions have been acted upon without internal pressure.	Yes	A Whistleblowing policy is in place and is reviewed annually to ensure that it is fit for purpose and compliant with best practice	-	-
6.17	Contractors and third parties sign up to the whistleblowing policy and there is evidence of this. There should be no discrimination against whistleblowers	Yes	The Council's Whistleblowing policy states that "All organisations that carry out activities on behalf of the Council, for example providers of commissioned services, are expected to have appropriate and robust whistleblowing arrangements which are consistent with the requirements set out in legislation and in this policy". In addition the standard terms & conditions for provision of services for Council contracts states "The Contractor will ensure it maintains effective whistleblowing policies whereby the Contractor's employees may raise in confidence without fear of victimisation discrimination or disadvantage concerns about possible malpractice".	-	-
6.18	Fraud resources are assessed proportionately to the risk the local authority faces and are adequately resourced.	Yes	The annual audit plan covers fraud activity and resources are considered and appropriately allocated	-	-

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – Action Plan

Ref	Statement	Status (Yes / No / Partial)	Evidence / Issue	Action	Responsible Officer & Date
6.19	There is an annual fraud plan which is agreed by committee and reflects resources mapped to risks and arrangements for reporting outcomes. This plan covers all areas of the local authority's business and includes activities undertaken by contractors and third parties or voluntary sector activities.	Partial	The annual audit plan covers fraud activity and resources are considered and appropriately allocated; however the detailed fraud plan is not provided to A&G Committee	The Counter Fraud Work Programme will be reported to Audit & Governance Committee as part of the annual Internal Audit plan setting process.	Head of Audit & Management Assurance Jan 2021
6.20	Statistics are kept and reported by the fraud team which cover all areas of activity and outcomes.	Yes	Monthly statistics of corporate fraud activity are produced (RTB / housing tenancy / Blue Badge) and presented as part of the annual Counter Fraud report to Audit & Governance Committee Results of significant investigations are presented quarterly to the Audit & Governance Committee and all investigations, including outcomes, are reported annually	-	-
6.21	Fraud officers have unfettered access to premises and documents for the purposes of counter fraud investigation.	Yes	The Council's Financial Regulations explicitly state that Internal Audit (which Counter Fraud is a part of) has the right of access to all documentation and staff where required. Internal Audit staff have not experienced managers denying access to premises or documents during investigations	-	-
6.22	There is a programme to publicise fraud and corruption cases internally and externally which is positive and endorsed by the council's communications team.	Yes	Fraud newsletter does cover fraud & corruption cases. Any cases of successfully proven fraud / corruption will be considered for publicising as appropriate. <i>The Council's communications team support IA in publicising fraud and corruption awareness this includes using their skills to maximise impact through design and formatting and using the right message platform.</i>	-	-

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – Action Plan

Ref	Statement	Status (Yes / No / Partial)	Evidence / Issue	Action	Responsible Officer & Date
6.23	All allegations of fraud and corruption are risk assessed.	Partial	Allegations received are considered for suitability of investigation and action, however this is done on an undocumented basis	A formal documentation process will be implemented to demonstrate how each allegation has been risk assessed as part of a revision of the fraud investigation procedures	Head of Audit & Management Assurance March 2021
6.24	The fraud and corruption response plan covers all areas of counter fraud work: prevention; detection; investigation; sanctions; redress.	Yes	Internal Audit has a Counter Fraud Work Programme which is compiled to support the annual Internal Audit plan.	-	-
6.25	The fraud response plan is linked to the audit plan and is communicated to senior management and members.	Partial	The Counter Fraud Work Programme is linked to the annual Internal Audit plan, but is not explicitly reported to the Audit & Governance Committee	As 6.19 - The Counter Fraud Work Programme will be reported to Audit & Governance committee as part of the annual Internal Audit plan setting process.	Head of Audit & Management Assurance January 2021
6.26	Asset recovery and civil recovery are considered in all cases.	Yes	The Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy states that all possible action will be taken to recover losses from fraud & corruption.	-	-
6.27	There is a zero tolerance approach to fraud and corruption that is defined and monitored and which is always reported to committee.	Yes	The Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy has a statement in which states that fraud & corruption will not be tolerated within the Council. Furthermore, there is an annual report to the Audit & Governance Committee reporting fraud activity	-	-
6.28	There is a programme of proactive counter fraud work which covers risks identified in assessment.	Yes	A programme of proactive counter fraud work is incorporated into the annual audit plan	-	-

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – Action Plan

Ref	Statement	Status (Yes / No / Partial)	Evidence / Issue	Action	Responsible Officer & Date
6.29	The counter fraud team works jointly with other enforcement agencies and encourages a corporate approach and co-location of enforcement activity.	Yes	The Counter Fraud team liaises with enforcement agencies as required, including local police forces, HMRC and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau	-	-
6.30	The local authority shares data across its own departments and between other enforcement agencies.	Yes	The Council partakes in the NFI exercise which shares data across organisations for the purpose of detection of fraud.	-	-
6.31	Prevention measures and projects are undertaken using data analytics where possible.	Yes	Housing tenancy and RTB checks are undertaken using data analytics	-	-
6.32	The counter fraud team has registered with the Knowledge Hub so it has access to directories and other tools.	Yes	Counter Fraud team has registered with the Knowledge Hub.	-	-
6.33	The counter fraud team has access to the FFCL regional network.	Yes	Now part of new South West regional network.	-	-
6.34	There are professionally trained and accredited staff for counter fraud work. If auditors undertake counter fraud work they too must be trained in this area.	Yes	The Fraud Specialist within the Internal Audit team has PINS M ACFO accreditation. An Auditor has undertaken training for the CIPFA Counter Fraud Technician	-	-
6.35	The counter fraud team has adequate knowledge in all areas of the local authority or is trained in these areas.	Yes	All officers involved in counter fraud work have at least 10 years' experience of working with local government	-	-
6.36	The counter fraud team has access (through partnership/ other local authorities/or funds to buy in) to specialist staff for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – surveillance – computer forensics – asset recovery – financial investigations. 	Yes	Through liaising with other departments within the Council, the counter fraud team have access to a financial forensic investigator. Funds are available if required to buy in the specialist services for investigations	-	-
6.37	Weaknesses revealed by instances of proven fraud and corruption are scrutinised carefully and fed back to departments to fraud-proof systems.	Yes	Where investigations have been carried out, reports with recommendations for improvement are always provided	-	-

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