

## APPENDIX 4(a)

### Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020 Half-Year Review

Issue	Actions	Responsible Officer (s)	Target Date	Half-Year Progress
Code of Conduct and Behaviours	Consider the potential national changes to the Standards Framework and implement any changes identified as part of this.	Director of Governance and Partnerships	After mid-term review	<u><b>On Track</b></u> The Council's Standards Committee considered the latest position regarding national changes in December and adopted a new complaints procedure. A new model code of conduct has been produced by the LGA and this will be taken to the next Standards Committee for consideration.
	Develop a Local Code of Governance document which brings together and summarises the Council's overall approach to corporate governance.	Director of Governance and Partnerships	After mid-term review	<u><b>On Track</b></u> A draft code of governance is due to come to the 15th April Audit Committee meeting. This will be based on the framework used to undertake the self-assessment of the Annual Governance statement used by CIPFA/ SOLACE.
Commitment to Openness, Communication and Consultation	Continue to deliver the channel shift agenda to improve accessibility to residents and reduce demand on Council resources with a focus on helping with the recovery of Blackpool following the pandemic.	Director of Resources / Director of Communication and Regeneration	After mid-term review	<u><b>On Track</b></u> Whilst certain channel shift projects have been put on hold due to increased demand, services with existing online application forms have seen on average of a 10%

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				increase in usage compared to 2019. Development of online application forms has helped deliver some key responses to the pandemic including business grants, uniform grants and the winter grant scheme.
	Implement a Community Engagement Strategy and supported guidance to ensure a coordinate and robust approach is in place building on the learning gained during responding to the current pandemic.	Director of Public Health	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>This has been put on hold due to the impacts of the pandemic and changes in engagement taking place within communities. The strategy document will be reviewed and amended to reflect any necessary changes and ensure a more comprehensive approach.</p>
	Continue to deliver the web development plan ensuring that the Council adheres to the new accessibility requirements which are being introduced.	Director of Communication and Regeneration	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>The new requirements around accessibility are now law. Any new content or additions to the website are now accessible and departments are encouraged to ensure their content is also accessible.</p> <p>Any external website outside the corporate website must be approved by the corporate web team.</p>

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				iPool web accessibility training is being created and will be available soon.
	Explore ways in which to improve communication with ward councillors so that they are aware of major developments in their areas.	All Chief Officers	Before mid-term review	<p><b><u>Implemented</u></b></p> <p>This issue has been highlighted with all members of the Senior Leadership Team and each directorate is now asked to have as a standard item on their Directorate Management teams, 'Issues for Ward Members' which will hopefully assist in coordinating communication with ward Councillors from Directorates.</p>
	Further strengthen how we communicate to residents building on the findings of the Corporate Peer Review.	Director of Communication and Regeneration	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>The team continue to build on the recommendations of the LGA Peer Review of Communications and actively encourage other departments to take note of those recommendations too. Further work will be undertaken to implement the findings of the Corporate Peer review.</p>

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	Identify ways in which data relating to the use of our green and blue spaces can be collated to help inform future decisions in relation to development of these areas.	Director of Community and Environmental Services	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>A parks and green space improvement survey has been established and trailed on Anchorsholme Park in partnership with the Friends Group.</p> <p>Additional data sources are currently being explored and fed into Park Development Plans for each site.</p>
Developing, Communicating and Translating the Vision	Consider how to deliver a thank you to all employees for the work that they have undertaken during the pandemic.	Chief Executive	Before mid-term review	<p><b><u>Implemented</u></b></p> <p>The Big Thank You event was held in December 2020 which consisted of a half hour video presentation from the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council to thank all their staff for their hard work during the pandemic. In addition, all staff were given a day's extra annual leave to use on Christmas Eve or another date if they were required to work on Christmas Eve.</p>
	Complete the review of the Council Plan to ensure that the impact of the pandemic is captured and ensure that Council strategies	Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Strategy	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>Initial approach to the format and scope of the review has been determined. A post-pandemic</p>

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	are reviewed in light of the pandemic and amended accordingly.			directorate 2021/22 business planning exercise is planned for the Spring, and the Council plan will be refreshed on the basis of this work.
Performance Management	Ensure that the changes implemented as a result of the Ofsted Report on Children's Services are adequately embedded to drive performance improvements.	Director of Children's Services	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>The improvement journey is making significant progress albeit without having external inspectorate oversight given Covid.</p> <p>Our performance and quality assurance tells us that practice and performance continues to improve.</p> <p>Governance arrangements are embedded.</p>
	The suite of Council Plan headline KPIs will be reviewed so that some of the measures around post-COVID recovery can be incorporated into ongoing performance reporting. This review will also look to incorporate KPIs for a new corporate priority around organisational resilience, as recommended in the Corporate Governance Peer Review which took place in March 2020.	Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Strategy	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>Implemented</u></b></p> <p>Key Performance Indicators' (KPIs) have been developed with Scrutiny Committee involvement. Measures now include Covid monitoring and recovery KPI's. Suite of indicators includes new organisational resilience indicators.</p>

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	Implement the recommendations from the Corporate Peer Review once the report is received.	Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Strategy	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>Partially Implemented</u></b></p> <p>The three key themes arising from the Corporate Peer Review related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Climate Change</li> <li>- Medium Term Financial Sustainability</li> <li>- Communications</li> </ul> <p>Work is being progressed in each of these areas. In addition, the Internal Audit Plan 2021/22 includes reviews of the three identified areas to gain assurance that adequate progress is being made.</p>
Compliance with Relevant Laws, Regulations, Internal Policies and Procedures	Ensure that data protection training is rolled out to staff who do not have IT access, monitor and renew the Council's Information Asset Register and develop a programme of GDPR compliance audits to ensure continued compliance with GDPR.	Director of Governance and Partnerships	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>A retrospective exercise was completed prior to the pandemic to ensure data protection training material was distributed to non-IT users via line managers. Any employees who are still marked as outstanding will receive the information directly due to the pandemic before the end of March. HR hope to have this material</p>

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				<p>automatically embedded in their induction process soon after.</p> <p>Significant progress has been made in reviewing the Council's Information Asset Register and this is hoped to be completed by the 31st March 2021 in advance of the ICO inspection.</p> <p>A programme of GDPR compliance audits has been developed and rolled out with three completed in 2019/20 and further audits having taken place or scheduled in 2020/21.</p>
	Continue to explore procurement opportunities with local suppliers and look to provide training to local suppliers and elected members on procurement.	Director of Resources	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>Guidance released by Central Government in November 2020 gives some limited scope to focus more on local providers for below threshold tenders, only in relation to services contracts and where it is for economic growth purposes - we will explore our process and practice to determine if this may be built in.</p> <p>National Contractors are encouraged to use the local supply chain through the social value agenda which is</p>

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				<p>embedded into the procurement framework.</p> <p>Training and working with providers is carried out on a project by project basis as appropriate.</p>
Audit Arrangements	Continue to embed effective working relations with the Council's new external auditors.	Director of Resources	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>Partially Implemented</u></b></p> <p>Professional working relations have been maintained throughout what has been a difficult and challenging period. It is hoped that these will continue to develop during the next twelve months.</p>
	Appoint to the vacant independent Audit Committee member post.	Director of Governance and Partnerships	Before mid-term review	<p><b><u>Implemented</u></b></p> <p>A recruit exercise has taken place and two independent members appointed to the committee with their first meeting being the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021. They are currently going through their induction programme.</p>
	Opportunities to benchmark with other Audit Committees to continue to build on the success of the Committee will be explored.	Director of Governance and Partnerships	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>Not Yet Started</u></b></p> <p>Further work is required to seek appropriate opportunities for benchmarking and this will continue to be considered as part of the</p>



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				development of the Audit Committee.
Risk Management	The Audit Committee should seek assurance that systems of internal control have met the demands of the emergency response to Covid-19 and that where issues have been identified action has been taken to remedy these.	Director of Resources	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>Throughout 2020/21 the Audit Committee has received regular updates in relation to the impact of the pandemic as part of their detailed review of the strategic risk register. Areas considered to date include the pandemic response, impact on the economy and organisational resilience. This will be an ongoing exercise during the life of the pandemic and also the recovery phase.</p>
	Ensure that the Council has robust arrangements in place in preparation for the UK's exit from the European Union.	Director of Resources	Before mid-term review	<p><b><u>Implemented</u></b></p> <p>An EU Exit Task and Finish group met through the transition period to ensure that risks associated with EU exit have been addressed. Any outstanding risks are now embedded into service level risk registers and business continuity plans.</p>

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	Ensure that robust arrangements are in place to take effective action regarding the Climate Emergency.	Chief Executive	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>The Carbon Trust has been commissioned to undertake work mapping routes to achieve net-zero, due to conclude in early May 2021.</p> <p>Climate Assembly with Blackpool residents is underway and due to report in March 2021.</p> <p>Climate Emergency Delivery Officer recruitment underway.</p>
Learning and Developing	Continue the roll-out of Windows 10 incorporating training on how to work smarter using Office 365 and Microsoft Teams.	Director of Resources	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>The Windows10 rollout is nearly completed.</p> <p>There are 23 devices remaining requiring replacement out of the initial 2,500. The majority of these devices and connected to Chip and PIN machines and an upgrade is required from Civica to support Windows10, Civica have postponed the update several times due the pandemic.</p> <p>The adoption of Office 365 and use of Microsoft Teams has grown massively throughout the pandemic.</p>

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				There are 2,263 active users in Microsoft Teams.
	A process will be put in place to enable all elected members to attend the modular training delivered to specific Committees.  Where training is delivered virtually then consideration will be given to recording these sessions and make them available to all elected members.	Director of Governance and Partnership	Before mid-term review	<b><u>Implemented</u></b>  This has commenced as is undertaken via Microsoft Teams, there is also a monthly update to Members on Covid 19. Some training has been recorded and then made available. In some areas attendance at the training is preferred to ensure training needs are met.
	Undertake further work on succession planning to build on the Aspiring Leadership programme which has been developed.	Chief Executive	After mid-term review	<b><u>On Track</u></b>  Work has been undertaken to introduce a framework for succession planning and to identify with CLT which SLT posts have a succession plan in place and which do not. The further work needed to progress this has been impacted by capacity as a result of the pandemic.
Partnership and Joint Working	Consideration will be given to developing an overarching partnership governance framework document setting out partnership governance principles and	Director of Governance and Partnership	After mid-term review	<b><u>On Track</u></b>  A report is being brought to the 15th April Audit Committee meeting on the setting up of a partnership governance framework.

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	including a register of significant partnerships.			
	Continue to work in partnership with the Lancashire Resilience Forum to ensure a pan-Lancashire approach to dealing with the current pandemic including longer term impacts on economic, social and environmental sustainability.	Chief Executive	After mid-term review	<b><u>On Track</u></b> The Council continues to play a proactive role in the Lancashire Resilience Forum with a number of officers involved in a range of work streams including the response and also recovery.
	Continue to strengthen communication with and support for the business sector particularly in terms of recovery from the pandemic and seek to maximise the benefits from opportunities such as the Enterprise Zone.	Director of Communication and Regeneration	After mid-term review	<b><u>On Track</u></b> In the first round of business grants, the Council paid £32.5m to 3,250 businesses who were in receipt of small business rate relief. This was followed by a further £12.5m to 710 businesses as part of the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grants scheme. Since September a total of £23.88m has been paid to over 2,300 businesses either as part of the national schemes or the discretionary Blackpool Business Recovery Fund.

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				<p>The Business Support team and the blackpoolunlimited.com website have provided a 'COVID 19 Helpdesk' for businesses, giving local businesses quick access to information about the rapidly changing business support available. This has included information about grants provided through the Council and access to application forms for 'discretionary' grant schemes. The content was promoted through various email newsletters to the database of 4,500 local businesses and social media activity. The Covid 19 pages on blackpoolunlimited.com were viewed 42,000 times between March and December 2020.</p> <p>Work continues to progress the Enterprise Zone implementation strategy and identify procurement partners. In addition a delivery plan is in place and an exercise undertaken to recruit an external delivery manager to help move the scheme forward.</p>

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	Maximise the opportunity for digital literacy via the Fibre Blackpool project in order to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.	Director of Resources	After mid-term review	<p><b><u>On Track</u></b></p> <p>One of the Fibre Blackpool coop members has made significant investment in FY1 and FY2 and is now offering residential services via a new Blackpool based full fibre broadband provider.</p> <p>The number of free Wireless Blackpool WiFi access points has been increased at Tramstops.</p> <p>Conversations are taking place with BCH and BHC in regards to further investment from the coop Members to install fibre connectivity and offer full fibre broadband at a number of residential properties and developments.</p> <p>ICT Services has also been working closely with Adult Learning with the procurement and commissioning of 50+ tablets to support Adult Learning digital training courses.</p> <p>One of the Fibre Blackpool coop Members has also sponsored and developed a partnership with Innovate Her to support 60 girls to</p>

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				access a new digital skills programme.