

# Coventry City Council

Auditor's Annual Report  
Year ending 31 March 2025

11 November 2025



# Contents

1	Introduction and context	03
2	Executive summary	06
3	Opinion on the financial statements and use of auditor's powers	10
4	Value for Money commentary on arrangements	14
	Financial sustainability	16
	Governance	21
	Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness	25
5	Summary of Value for Money Recommendations raised in 2024/25	30
6	Follow up of previous Key Recommendations	34
	Appendices	36
A	Responsibilities of the Council	37
B	Value for Money Auditor responsibilities	38
C	Follow-up of previous improvement recommendations	39

The contents of this report relate only to those matters which came to our attention during the conduct of our normal audit procedures which are designed for the purpose of completing our work under the NAO Code and related guidance. Our audit is not designed to test all arrangements in respect of value for money. However, where, as part of our testing, we identify significant weaknesses, we will report these to you. In consequence, our work cannot be relied upon to disclose all irregularities, or to include all possible improvements in arrangements that a more extensive special examination might identify. We do not accept any responsibility for any loss occasioned to any third party acting, or refraining from acting, on the basis of the content of this report, as this report was not prepared for, nor intended for, any other purpose.

Grant Thornton UK LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales: No.OC307742. Registered office: 8 Finsbury Circus, London, EC2M 7EA. A list of members is available from our registered office. Grant Thornton UK LLP is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Grant Thornton UK LLP is a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd (GTIL). GTIL and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. Services are delivered by the member firms. GTIL and its member firms are not agents of, and do not obligate, one another and are not liable for one another's acts or omissions.

# 01 Introduction and context

# Introduction

This report brings together a summary of all the work we have undertaken for Coventry City Council during 2024/25 as the appointed external auditor. The core element of the report is the commentary on the value for money (VfM) arrangements. The responsibilities of the Council are set out in Appendix A. The Value for Money Auditor responsibilities are set out in Appendix B.

## Opinion on the financial statements

Auditors provide an opinion on the financial statements which confirms whether they:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2025 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

We also consider the Annual Governance Statement and undertake work relating to the Whole of Government Accounts consolidation exercise.

## Auditor's powers

Under Section 30 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the auditor of a local authority has a duty to consider whether there are any issues arising during their work that indicate possible or actual unlawful expenditure or action leading to a possible or actual loss or deficiency that should be referred to the Secretary of State. They may also issue:

- Statutory recommendations to the full Council which must be considered publicly
- A Public Interest Report (PIR).

## Value for money

Under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, we are required to be satisfied whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (referred to as Value for Money). The National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), requires us to assess arrangements under three areas:

- financial sustainability
- governance
- improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Our report is based on those matters which come to our attention during the conduct of our normal audit procedures, which are designed for the purpose of completing our work under the NAO Code and related guidance. Our audit is not designed to test all arrangements in respect of value for money. However, where, as part of our testing, we identify significant weaknesses, we will report these to you. In consequence, our work cannot be relied upon to disclose all irregularities, or to include all possible improvements in arrangements that a more extensive special examination might identify. The NAO has consulted on and updated the Code to align it to accounts backstop legislation. The new Code requires auditors to share a draft Auditor's Annual Report (AAR) with those charged with governance by a nationally set deadline each year, and for the audited body to publish the AAR thereafter. This new deadline requirement is introduced from November 2025.

# Local government – context

Local government has remained under significant pressure in 2024/25

## National

### Past



#### Funding Not Meeting Need

The sector has seen prolonged funding reductions whilst demand and demographic pressures for key statutory services has increased; and has managed a period of high inflation and economic uncertainty.



#### Workforce and Governance Challenges

Recruitment and retention challenges in many service areas have placed pressure on governance. Recent years have seen a rise in the instance of auditors issuing statutory recommendations.

### Present



#### Financial Sustainability

Many councils continue to face significant financial challenges, including housing revenue account pressures. There are an increasing number of councils in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support from the government.



#### External Audit Backlog

Councils, their auditors and other key stakeholders continue to manage and reset the backlog of annual accounts, to provide the necessary assurance on local government finances.

### Future



#### Funding Reform

The UK government plans to reform the system of funding for local government and introduce multi-annual settlements. The state of national public finances means that overall funding pressures are likely to continue for many councils.



#### Reorganisation and Devolution

Many councils in England will be impacted by reorganisation and / or devolution, creating capacity and other challenges in meeting business as usual service delivery.

## Local

Coventry City Council is driving an ambitious modernisation agenda through its 2024-25 Transformation Plan, focused on improving efficiency, enhancing service delivery, and embedding innovation. A key element of this strategy is investment in digital technology and AI, including a pilot to improve outcomes in children's services, demonstrating a commitment to technology-enabled transformation and long-term financial sustainability. However, the Council operates in a challenging environment with significant financial pressures, rising demand for services, and local risks such as an equal pay liability and uncertain funding settlements. These challenges, alongside inflationary pressures and ethical considerations around AI adoption, have emphasised the need for robust governance and strategic resilience. **It is within this context that we set out our commentary on the Council's value for money arrangements in 2024/25.**

# 02 Executive Summary

# Executive Summary – our assessment of value for money arrangements

Our overall summary of our Value for Money assessment of the Council's arrangements is set out below. Further detail can be found on the following pages. Since the last Value for Money assessment, the overall direction of travel from the Council has been positive, with the removal of a significant weakness.

Criteria	2023/24 Assessment of arrangements	2024/25 Risk assessment	2024/25 Assessment of arrangements
Financial sustainability	<b>A</b> No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified for 2023/24. Three improvement recommendations made to support the Council in improving financial sustainability.	No risks of significant weakness identified.	<b>A</b> No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified, but one improvement recommendation made to support the Council in improving arrangements for 2025/26 in terms of monitoring and reporting savings to ensure ongoing financial sustainability.
Governance	<b>R</b> The Council has caught up with reporting deadlines, however, in all cases the original due dates were missed. Timescales for accounts going forward will need to be complied with.	No risks of significant weakness identified.	<b>A</b> No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified, but two improvement recommendations made to support the Council in improving arrangements for 2025/26 in terms of governing company arrangements and following up on Internal Audit recommendations.
Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness	<b>A</b> No significant weaknesses identified for 2023/24, but one new improvement recommendation made to support the Council in improving arrangements for 2023/24.	No risks of significant weakness identified.	<b>A</b> No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified, but one improvement recommendation made to support the Council in improving arrangements around the implementation of procurement strategies and policies.



No significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations.



No significant weaknesses, improvement recommendation(s) made.



Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendation(s) made.



# Executive Summary

We set out below the key findings from our commentary on the Council's arrangements in respect of value for money.



## Financial sustainability

The Council delivered a positive financial result in 2024/25 with an overall underspend of £1.8m, which was helped by windfall income from two of the Council's investments.

The Council presented a forecast deficit of £7m at Q3, in large part due to under delivery of an ambitious savings target – with £22m of savings delivered of a target of £30m. As a result, and due to the underlying budget position, we have raised one improvement recommendation and include further detail on the following pages.

The Council ensures its financial plan is consistent with other plans and policies, and is diligent in identifying and managing risks to financial resilience. The Council plans to increase the use of demographic data in financial planning and has made progress in detailing assumptions behind financial plans.



## Governance

The Council has established strong governance arrangements to support informed decision-making and effective risk management, with sufficient detail reported to Members. The Council demonstrates good compliance with evolving legislative and regulatory requirements and has improved in the timeliness of accounts production, such that the prior year significant weakness has been lifted and no improvement recommendation is required.

The Council benefits from an effective Internal Audit (IA) function, which has received positive feedback from LGA reviews, but the implementation of IA recommendations could be improved. Additionally, there is further opportunity to improve governance relating to company arrangements and as such we have raised two improvement recommendations in these areas.



## Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness


The Council makes effective use of financial and performance information to evaluate service delivery and identify opportunities for improvement. Regular assessments of service performance, including KPI evaluation, are undertaken to ensure alignment with the One Coventry Plan and to drive continuous improvement.

The Council actively engages with key stakeholders and plays a constructive role within strategic partnerships, using feedback to assess its effectiveness in meeting shared goals. The procurement team have taken steps to improve through implementing training and around new procurement legislation, however there is still further work required to ensure there is alignment across the Council on the application of these to drive value from procurement processes.



# Executive summary – auditor’s other responsibilities

This page summarises our opinion on the Council’s financial statements and sets out whether we have used any of the other powers available to us as the Council’s auditors.

Auditor’s responsibility	2024/25 outcome	
Opinion on the Financial Statements	<p>Our audit of your financial statements is ongoing at this time.</p> <p>We anticipate issuing our audit opinion at the Audit Committee meeting during February 2026.</p>	
Use of auditor’s powers	<p>As of November 2025, we have not made written statutory recommendations under Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.</p> <p>As of November 2025, we have not made an application to the Court or issue any Advisory Notices under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.</p> <p>As of November 2025, we have not made an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.</p> <p>As of November 2025, we have not identified any issues that required us to issue a Public Interest Report (PIR) under Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.</p>	

# **03 Opinion on the financial statements and use of auditor's powers**

# Opinion on the financial statements

These pages set out the key findings from our audit of the Council's financial statements, and whether we have used any of the other powers available to us as the Council's auditors.

## Audit opinion on the financial statements

Our audit of your financial statements is ongoing at this time.

We anticipate issuing our audit opinion at the Audit Committee meeting during February 2026.

The full opinion will be included in the Council's Annual Report for 2024/25, which will be obtainable from the Council's website.

### Grant Thornton provides an independent opinion on whether the Council's financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2025 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We conducted our audit in accordance with: International Standards on Auditing (UK), the Code of Audit Practice (2025) published by the National Audit Office, and applicable law. We are independent of the Council in accordance with applicable ethical requirements, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard.

## Findings from the audit of the financial statements

Our audit of your financial statements is ongoing at this time.

### Audit Findings Report

We will report our findings from the audit of the financial statements at the earliest Finance and Audit Committee following our substantive fieldwork phase, which is expected to be the February 2026 Committee.

# Other reporting requirements

## Annual Governance Statement

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office we are required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit.

We are not required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement addresses all risks and controls or that risks are satisfactorily addressed by internal controls.

Our review of your Annual Governance Statement is on going at this time.



# Use of auditor's powers

## We bring the following matters to your attention:

### Statutory recommendations

Under Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, auditors can make written recommendations to the audited body. As of November 2025, we have not issued any statutory recommendations to the Council in 2024/25.

### Public Interest Report

Under Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, auditors have the power to make a report if they consider a matter is sufficiently important to be brought to the attention of the audited body or the public as a matter of urgency, including matters which may already be known to the public, but where it is in the public interest for the auditor to publish their independent view.

As of November 2025, we have not issued a report in the Public Interest with regard to arrangements at Coventry City Council for 2024/25.

# **04 Value for Money commentary on arrangements**

# Value for Money – commentary on arrangements

This page explains how we undertake the value for money assessment of arrangements and provide a commentary under three specified areas.

All Councils are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness from their resources. This includes taking properly informed decisions and managing key operational and financial risks so that they can deliver their objectives and safeguard public money. Council's report on their arrangements, and the effectiveness of these arrangements as part of their annual governance statement.

Under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, we are required to be satisfied whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), requires us to assess arrangements under three areas:



## Financial sustainability

Arrangements for ensuring the Council can continue to deliver services. This includes planning resources to ensure adequate finances and maintain sustainable levels of spending over the medium term (3-5 years).



## Governance

Arrangements for ensuring that the Council makes appropriate decisions in the right way. This includes arrangements for budget setting and budget management, risk management, and making decisions based on appropriate information.



## Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

Arrangements for improving the way the Council delivers its services. This includes arrangements for understanding costs and delivering efficiencies and improving outcomes for service users.



# Financial sustainability – commentary on arrangements

We considered how the Council: **Commentary on arrangements**

**Rating**

<p>identifies all the significant financial pressures that are relevant to its short and medium-term plans and builds these into them</p>	<p>The Council reported a £1.8m underspend for 2024/25, which was due to additional windfall on dividends received from commercial investment companies of £6.5m above the budgeted amounts. This was an improvement on a prior year overspend of £1.8m and represented a turnaround from a forecast overspend of £7m at Q3. There are underlying budget pressures moving into 2025/26 with respect to Adult and Children’s Social Care that the Council is aware of and has planned around. The Council has set a balance budget for 2025/26, although at Q1 2025/26, this forecast position reflects a deficit of £1.6m, recognising the financial pressures on the Council. The Council is also forecasting deficits for 2026/27 and 2027/28, having delivered a deficit in 2023/24. Reserves are of a sufficient level to cover overspends, with a reserves balance of £207m (of which £149.1m is earmarked). Whilst we do not consider there to be a significant weakness in arrangements for managing financial pressure at present, the Council should seek to put arrangements in place to deliver a consistently balanced budget position, without reliance on one-off windfall income. Without addressing ongoing budget gaps, the unallocated reserves balance would see a decline in coming years. This is reflected in the row below.</p> <p>Overall, the Council demonstrates strong financial planning arrangements in a challenging fiscal environment. The Council is increasingly seeking to utilise data to improve the identification of financial pressures and financial planning processes, and it is diligent in setting financial plans. Reporting arrangements on the budget and budgetary pressures are strong.</p>	<p><b>G</b></p>
<p>plans to bridge its funding gaps and identify achievable savings</p>	<p>Savings delivery remains a challenge, which is evidenced by the Council delivering £22m of savings against its target of £30m in 2024/25. For 2025/26, the Council has a savings target of £31m with forecast savings of £25.6m. Savings plans are discussed with the CEO and senior officers monthly and undelivered savings from previous years are tracked. The Council utilises learnings from the prior year to set prudent saving plans. Due to the underlying budget position, we have raised an improvement recommendation on page 19 to assist the Council in improving its arrangements around savings delivery.</p>	<p><b>A</b></p>

- G** No significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations.
- A** No significant weaknesses, improvement recommendations made.
- R** Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendation(s) made.

# Financial sustainability – commentary on arrangements

We considered how the Council: **Commentary on arrangements**

Rating

plans finances to support the sustainable delivery of services in accordance with strategic and statutory priorities	The Council’s Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) incorporates demand, income and cost assumptions. Scenario and sensitivity analysis was utilised when developing the strategy. The MTFS is critical to the delivery of the Council’s financial strategy, and the Council involves service line leaders in budget planning processes to assess the impact of savings on service delivery. Additional budget is allocated to service lines such as Adult and Children’s social care, where there are known cost pressures, indicating prudent budget planning. Through discussions with senior leaders, it is evident that service delivery is a key consideration in any savings plans.	G
--	--	---

- G** No significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations.
- A** No significant weaknesses, improvement recommendations made.
- R** Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendation(s) made.

# Financial sustainability – commentary on arrangements (continued)

We considered how the Council:	Commentary on arrangements	Rating
ensures its financial plan is consistent with other plans such as workforce, capital, investment and other operational planning which may include working with other local public bodies as part of a wider system	The Council's financial planning and investment decisions align to the corporate plan and other relevant policies and strategies. No inconsistencies have been uncovered as part of our fieldwork. The Executive was regularly engaged in the development of the Council's financial planning assumptions, including agreeing savings, before going to Full Council for the decision to agree the 2025/26 budget. The Council's transformation plan aligns directly with its medium-term financial planning estimates. The Council accepts that slippage in the capital programme will always remain a possibility, but the reasons for slippage are well understood by the Council and have not had a significant impact on service delivery. Wherever slippage occurs in the capital programme, reporting to Members is clear and accessible as part of quarterly financial reporting.	G
identifies and manages risk to financial resilience, e.g. unplanned changes in demand, including challenge of the assumptions in underlying plans	<p>The Council is actively addressing financial risks and has a well structured medium-term financial plan, including risks to delivery and assumptions. The Council has focused plans to address the funding gaps across the medium term and ensure ongoing medium-term financial sustainability.</p> <p>The Executive receives monthly reports on the revenue and capital position, including risks to delivery of planned savings. The Council has included discussion of wider contextual data such as inflation and social care needs in the area within the plan. This remains an area of improvement for the Council and ways to increase the use of demographic data in budget planning are being pursued, as evidenced by the appointment of a new director to lead planning and performance.</p>	G

- G** No significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations.
- A** No significant weaknesses, improvement recommendations made.
- R** Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendation(s) made.

# Financial sustainability (continued)

## Area for Improvement identified: identifying and delivering recurrent savings

**Key Finding:** In 2024/25, the Council set a savings target of £30.4 million but achieved £22.2 million, leaving a shortfall of £8.2 million – 27% below the target. In Quarter 3, the Council forecasted a deficit of £7 million; however, this was offset by an unexpected income windfall, resulting in a final underspend of £1.8 million. For comparison, the Council reported a deficit of approximately £1.8 million in 2023/24.

Delivering savings is a critical component of achieving a balanced budget, and the Council's monitoring and reporting in this area requires improvement.

**Evidence:** The delivery of savings significantly below target results in a deficit for the Council. Whilst savings are discussed with SLT on a monthly basis, this is not sufficiently tracked, with limited minutes (and actions) taken during these meetings. The monitoring of savings implementation could be strengthened by more active reporting to leadership beyond the current arrangements. This includes scrutinising where savings have been underdelivered and quantifying the impact on the budget where this is the case.

Per the Council's outturn savings tracker for 2024/25, 24 of the 75 savings programmes did not deliver against their target. However, 84% of the £8.2m gap in savings delivery was made up of just five programmes, demonstrating that this is not a widespread inability to achieve savings but instead driven by a handful of items that have a large impact on achievement of savings.

**Impact:** A lack of adequate savings planning and an inability to deliver planned savings that are recurrent puts the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) at risk, which would lead to a reduction in reserve balances.

## Improvement Recommendation 1

**IR1:** We recommend the Council strengthens its processes for monitoring and achieving the delivery of savings. This could include:

- building in additional headroom to the savings target as a buffer to better secure the Council's financial position;
- introducing more active scrutiny of savings plans by SLT as part of the regular reporting processes; and
- retrospectively assessing the reasons why large savings programmes have been unsuccessful, to ensure early warning signs are recognised more effectively in future.

# Grant Thornton insights – learning from others

The Council has the arrangements we would expect to see in respect of budget setting and financial planning, but could challenge itself to go further particularly regarding scenario planning, based on the best arrangements we see across the sector



## What the Council is already doing

- The Council include contextual data and narrative around assumptions to provide context to budget setting and financial strategy.
- The Council discusses a ‘baseline position’ and potential movement above and below this position, commenting on potential cost drivers that could impact the position.



## What others do well

- Develop comprehensive scenario planning to inform strategic decision-making and risk management by identifying critical cost drivers and stress-testing assumptions against external factors (e.g. demographic trends, policy changes, inflation).
- Integrate scenario planning into long-term financial resilience strategies by linking scenarios to contingency plans, investment priorities, and service delivery models, ensuring adaptability under different economic and policy conditions.



## The Council could consider

- Implementing best/worst case scenarios analysis on variables in key service areas which are subject to budget and cost pressures.
- Enhancing scenario planning by incorporating sensitivity analysis that includes data from council-owned companies and key partnerships, to better anticipate the impact of potential windfall income or financial shocks.

# Governance – commentary on arrangements

## We considered how the Council:

## Commentary on arrangements

## Rating

monitors and assesses risk and how the Council gains assurance over the effective operation of internal controls, including arrangements to prevent and detect fraud	The Council has a robust Risk Management Framework that is integrated into governance processes. Quarterly budget monitoring reports provide Cabinet with financial insights and highlight emerging risks, while the Annual Governance Statement summarises governance risks. The Audit Committee regularly reviews the Head of Audit's annual plan and tracks progress on agreed actions. In the year, the Internal Audit function received confirmation that it fully conforms with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Annual Internal Audit Recommendation Tracking Reports are taken to Audit Committee on an annual basis and of the 266 actions followed up in the latest report, 65% have been implemented. Due to this low implementation rate, we have raised an improvement recommendation to improve arrangements around implementation of internal audit recommendations.	A
approaches and carries out its annual budget setting process	The budget setting process includes adequate time for consultation with budget holders, elected members, the public and other appropriate external stakeholders. Budget plans are completed in a timely manner, and Members are provided with detailed briefings on the key trends impacting the budget. The annual budget is subject to a high degree of challenge and scrutiny from Cabinet before the budget is set. Medium term financial planning estimates for 2025/26 and 2026/27 were prepared by the Council and shared with Cabinet in February 2025.	G
ensures effective processes and systems are in place to ensure budgetary control; to communicate relevant, accurate and timely management information; supports its statutory financial reporting; and ensures corrective action is taken where needed, including in relation to significant partnerships	Budget monitoring data is shared with Cabinet regularly, with quarterly monitoring reports taken to Cabinet at the end of each quarter. Budget variances are shown in these reports and a clear position of in-year revenue is provided, broken down by service line. Quarterly reporting also includes treasury management updates including narrative on prudential indicators and any new arrangements that the Council has entered. Preparing and publishing accounts within statutory deadlines is an area where the Council has previously faced challenges. The Council was three years behind schedule for the accounts and audit timetable. However, the Council's finance team has worked hard to address the backlog and the 2024/25 unaudited accounts were published on time. The draft accounts have been of a good standard and the Council are now deemed to have sufficient resource to meet financial reporting deadlines moving forward. It remains an area of focus for the Council to ensure that the finance team continues to be sufficiently resourced to publish good quality annual accounts to statutory deadlines.	G

G

No significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations.

A

No significant weaknesses, improvement recommendations made.

R

Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendation(s) made.

# Governance – commentary on arrangements (continued)

We considered how the Council:	Commentary on arrangements	Rating
ensures it makes properly informed decisions, supported by appropriate evidence and allowing for challenge and transparency, including from audit committee	<p>The Council’s Constitution provides a framework that supports effective and efficient governance, ensuring decisions align with corporate objectives and priorities. Decision-making is subject to multiple layers of scrutiny, including oversight by the Senior Management Board and review through Scrutiny Committees. Where decisions are required, supporting documentation is comprehensive to allow an informed, evidence-backed decision. Leadership demonstrates an appropriate ‘tone from the top’, consistent with the standards expected of a well-managed authority. The Council continues to promote accountability through its focus on ‘owning and improving performance’ and is making greater use of data to drive evidence-based decisions. The Audit and Procurement Committee met eight times in the year in total and was also quorate with minimal absentees. The Committee is well attended and demonstrates engagement in healthy discussion with documentation via sufficient minuting.</p> <p>The Council currently requires more comprehensive governance arrangements to effectively oversee all subsidiary and commercial interests. This gap is most evident in Joint Ventures and minority shareholdings, where oversight is limited and inconsistent. As such, we have raised an improvement recommendation in the following pages.</p>	A
monitors and ensures appropriate standards, such as meeting legislative/regulatory requirements and standards in terms of staff and board member behaviour	<p>There are Member and Officer Codes of Conduct in place and the Council has arrangements for making declarations of interest and recording gifts and hospitality. The Council demonstrates compliance with these arrangements, with gifts, values, recipient and reason for gift all documented, and there were no significant weaknesses in arrangements identified from our work. Additionally, the Council has strong arrangements in place surrounding ethics and regulatory compliance and was well prepared for legal changes around procurement with all training completed and documentation updated prior to commencement of the act. Member and officer relationships at the Council are generally strong, characterised by mutual respect, clear roles, and a shared commitment to delivering the Council’s strategic priorities.</p>	G

- G** No significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations.
- A** No significant weaknesses, improvement recommendations made.
- R** Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendation(s) made.



# Governance (continued)

## Area for Improvement identified: Increasing the Implementation Rate for Internal Audit Recommendations

**Key Finding:** The Council has a relatively low level of implementation for Internal Audit recommendations, with an implementation rate of 65% based on the latest Internal Audit Recommendations Tracking report.

**Evidence:** The latest tracking report, shared with Audit Committee in March 2025, shows that of 266 recommendations, only 65% have been implemented (53% based on formal follow-up and 72% via self-assessment). Whilst this is an improvement from the prior year (53% implementation across 104 recommendations), it is still below best practice expectations. The Council have also acknowledged that the implementation rate has been lower than would be ideal since COVID pandemic. We note that the Council are aware of this issue, and trackers have now been put in place for each Director to aid in monitoring progress independently, with the aim of increasing the implementation rate.

**Impact:** Failure to implement agreed Internal Audit recommendations in a timely manner means that identified governance and control gaps remain unresolved, increasing the risk of financial misstatements, operational inefficiencies, and non-compliance with statutory requirements. This is particularly pertinent where high-risk recommendations are raised.

## Improvement Recommendation 2

**IR2:** The Council should ensure that due management consideration is given to recommendations raised by the Internal Audit function, and these are implemented where appropriate. Management should ensure that high-risk recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.



### Grant Thornton insight

#### Strengthening Recommendation Implementation

- The most efficient Councils ensure that high risk actions are implemented first and in a timely manner. High risk recommendations are held to mandated timelines whilst lower risk recommendations are given increased timelines if necessary.
- Where timelines cannot be complied with, adequate comment is given as to why this has not been implemented and the alternate governance arrangements that have been in place in the interim.

# Governance (continued)

## Area for Improvement identified: Governance over Commercial Arrangements

**Key Finding:** The Council currently requires more comprehensive governance arrangements to effectively oversee all subsidiary and commercial interests. This gap is most evident in Joint Ventures and minority shareholdings, where oversight is limited and inconsistent.

**Evidence:** The Council operates a Shareholder Committee that provides governance for some commercial arrangements. However, not all entities fall under this committee's remit, leaving some commercial arrangements, notably the Friargate Joint Venture, without adequate oversight. A Commercial Board was introduced last year, but its Terms of Reference indicate that it serves primarily as an advisory body rather than a governance authority, and the remit and powers of this Board are limited. The Council often appoints directors to subsidiary and JV boards, but without robust governance structures, these appointments can create conflicts of interest between directors' fiduciary duties to the entity and their responsibilities to the Council.

**Impact:** Insufficient governance reduces the Council's ability to exercise effective control over its commercial arrangements. This can lead to strategic misalignment, increased risk exposure, and potential conflicts of interest.

## Improvement Recommendation 3

**IR3:** All subsidiaries and commercial arrangements - including Joint Ventures and minority shareholdings - should have appropriate governance through a Shareholder Committee (or an equivalent level of governance).



### Grant Thornton insight

#### Strengthening Commercial Arrangements

Councils with strong governance frameworks ensure that all commercial arrangements report into the Shareholder Committee, providing consistent oversight and accountability.

Significant commitments, such as land contributions to Joint Ventures or loans to subsidiaries, are subject to the same governance standards as other commercial interests. Governance structures clearly define roles and responsibilities to prevent conflicts of interest and maintain transparency.

# Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness – commentary on arrangements

We considered how the Council:	Commentary on arrangements	Rating
uses financial and performance information to assess performance to identify areas for improvement	The Council has clear arrangements to use information to assess performance and identify improvement areas. This has been an area of focus for the Council and has been implemented from the top down. The Council utilise benchmarking (using LG Inform Plus) and other external governance reviews such as a Local Government Association Peer Review and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's reports. The Council reports information to the SLT and the Executive bi-annually for key corporate performance indicators and has recently introduced a live KPI dashboard. The performance report covers 73 metrics and highlights where metrics are underperforming against Council targets. Typically, where the Council has underperformed against its own target, it was still in line with national standards. The Council takes data quality seriously and has improved both the quality and the use of data across the Council over the past year.	G
evaluates the services it provides to assess performance and identify areas for improvement	The Council did not receive a new external inspection or review during the 2024/25 financial year, however it regularly participates in external reviews. The Council hired a Director of Planning and Performance in the year with the aim of implementing an improvement plan centred around the use of KPIs and underlying performance data. Where recommendations are raised, suitable plans for improvement are implemented. The Council regularly benchmarks its performance against other authorities in the region, utilising Local Government benchmarking data to inform areas for improvement.	G

- G** No significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations.
- A** No significant weaknesses, improvement recommendations made.
- R** Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendation(s) made.

# Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness – commentary on arrangements

We considered how the Council:	Commentary on arrangements	Rating
ensures it delivers its role within significant partnerships and engages with stakeholders it has identified, in order to assess whether it is meeting its objectives	<p>There are adequate arrangements in place for engagement with stakeholders and public engagement is something the Council regularly undertakes when implementing budgets or key service changes. The Council actively engages in partnership working and this is regularly reported through the Council’s Cabinet and Committees structure. Notably, the Council has a strategic partnership with EON which has created strong opportunities for public involvement in the city’s energy transition over the past few years.</p> <p>The Council also engages effectively with other public sector bodies, including the police through the Community Safety Partnership Plan, and NHS organisations through well-established collaborations in adult health and social care.</p> <p>Governance arrangements for group undertakings have been modernised and embedded over the past two years, for example with the introduction of a Shareholder Committee. The Council also undertook an Internal Audit exercise on the effectiveness of company arrangements which gave reasonable assurance of arrangements, although noted some improvement recommendations. We have raised an improvement recommendation relating to this under the Governance section of this report.</p>	G

- G** No significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations.
- A** No significant weaknesses, improvement recommendations made.
- R** Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendation(s) made.

# Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness – commentary on arrangements (continued)

We considered how the Council: **Commentary on arrangements**

Rating

<p>commissions or procures services, assessing whether it is realising the expected benefits</p>	<p>The Council have a contracts register which includes all contracts over £5,000. The contracts register has been updated in the past year to include KPIs (where applicable) on how contracts are performing. In the previous year, the Council implemented a Contracts Board which review contractual arrangements for revenue contracts and assess the risk of contracts. The Contracts Board undertake regular contract review meetings both to review how a contract is performing and to understand areas for efficiencies.</p> <p>Quarterly Financial Monitoring reports are presented to Cabinet, which include updates on the Capital Programme. The reporting of project status is sufficient and none of the delays appear to be significant, with movement typical by a quarter or two and where further, without impact on service delivery.</p> <p>In the past year, the Council have entered a strategic collaboration with Palantir to explore the use of AI across the Council, and there has been notable successful application of this in social services. This project reflects the Council's commitment to innovation and improved service outcomes. However, the collaboration with Palantir has been subject to public concern and the Council have responded to this by confirming that a review of its contract is under way.</p> <p>The Council have responded to previous improvement recommendations by increasing training for Officers with the view of reducing waivers and exemptions. Whilst this has seen waivers decrease on the previous year, this is a recent trend and therefore further work is required to ensure this trend continues. Within 2024/25, the Council has made progress with a new procurement strategy, contracts board, revised contract management framework and reduction in the number of tender waivers and exemptions. The Council has undertaken a large amount of change in the procurement department in the past year and have made progress against previous improvement recommendations. It is important to ensure that these various initiatives are joined up and align well with each other. Some arrangements surrounding the tracking of procurement strategy objectives and Member/Officer training had not been finalised at the time of review.</p>	<p><b>A</b></p>
--	---	-----------------

- G** No significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations.
- A** No significant weaknesses, improvement recommendations made.
- R** Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendation(s) made.

# Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

## Area for Improvement: Reducing waivers and exemptions in procurement

**Key Finding:** Within 2024/25 the Council has made progress on procurement strategy, contracts board, revised contract management framework and reducing the number of tender waivers and exemptions. However, at the time of review, the Council had limited arrangements in place for tracking the progress of items within the procurement strategy, or for implementing training with regards to the contract management framework.

**Evidence:** The Council has made significant progress in the procurement department in the past year, particularly in the context of Procurement Act 2023 implementation, and has made progress against previous improvement recommendations.

However, through discussions with senior officers, it was evident that some arrangements had not been consolidated into business as usual activity at the time of review, notably the implementation of tools to track the 15 objectives in the procurement strategy action plan and Officer/Member training around the revised contract management framework. It is pivotal that the Council ensures there is alignment with current processes and these new initiatives.

**Impact:** The Council currently risks not realising value for money from the delivery of its contracts if the application and management of strategies and policies is not embedded promptly.

## Improvement Recommendation 4

**IR4:** The Council should continue to implement training for Officers on the public procurement guidelines and the most efficient routes to procurement available in different scenarios. We recommend that when procurement documents are updated and revised, such as the procurement strategy and contract management framework, a suite of tools and training is made available at the same time to ensure effective usage and implementation by officers.

### Grant Thornton insight

#### Strengthening Contract Management and Procurement

Our national report on procurement and contract management sets out lessons learned from our VfM audits. Key findings include:

- Align contracts with priorities and the procurement strategy and include relevant performance indicators so that the corporate plan and procurement strategy can be measured and monitored.
- Maintain high level controls over the whole life of a contract, including supplier health checks and internal management resilience checks.
- Consider how contract management arrangements can protect against and identify potential fraud.

# Grant Thornton insights – learning from others

The Council has the arrangements we would expect to see in respect of data usage, but could challenge itself to go further, based on the best arrangements we see across the sector

## What the Council is already doing



- The Council use integrated performance dashboards to provide a holistic view of performance against One Coventry Plan goals.
- There is evidence of strong and effective leadership by the Executive and a drive to be a data-led Council, and data being embedded within the Council's culture.
- The Council have implemented AI usage and associated governance quickly and are using it to generate efficiencies and savings in areas with budgetary pressures (notably transcription for Social Workers in Children's Social Care).

## What others do well



- Implement predictive analytics and trend analysis to anticipate risks and opportunities, rather than relying solely on historical data.
- Ensure data quality and consistency through robust governance frameworks, so decision-making is based on accurate and timely information.

## The Council could consider



- Embedding data-driven scenario modelling to assess the impact of different performance outcomes on financial sustainability, particularly around demographic data and the changing demographics of Coventry residents.
- Establishing clear accountability for data governance and strengthening data-sharing arrangement across to Council to enable better, more complete performance data.



# **05 Summary of Value for Money Recommendations raised in 2024/25**

# Improvement recommendations raised in 2024/25 (1/2)

	Recommendation	Relates to	Management Actions
IR1	<p>We recommend the Council strengthens its processes for monitoring and achieving the delivery of savings. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• building in additional headroom to the savings target as a buffer to better secure the Council's financial position;</li> <li>• introducing more active scrutiny of savings plans by SLT as part of the regular reporting processes; and</li> <li>• retrospectively assessing the reasons why large savings programmes have been unsuccessful, to ensure early warning signs are recognised more effectively in future.</li> </ul>	Financial sustainability (pages 16-19)	<p><b>Actions:</b> The Council agrees the need to deliver savings in full and on time and is acutely aware of its importance regarding the setting of a balanced budget. For this reason, a dedicated tracker report has been produced monthly and periodically reported to Leadership Board for some time. To further increase delivery performance and resilience, this tracker report will in future be presented to Leadership Board each month as part of a wider performance management agenda. Underperformance will be challenged and require an explanation from the owner, including actions and any decisions required.</p> <p>In addition, learning will be taken from those areas where under delivery has been experienced to understand the reasons for slippage. In the setting of future years budgets, we will endeavour to reflect a realistic profile of the expected delivery timescale.</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b> Barry Hastie</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> March 2026</p>

# Improvement recommendations raised in 2024/25 (1/2)

	Recommendation	Relates to	Management Actions
IR2	The Council should ensure that due management consideration is given to recommendations raised by the Internal Audit function, and these are implemented where appropriate. Management should ensure that high-risk recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.	Governance (pages 21-24)	<p><b>Actions:</b> The recommendation is accepted. When internal audit recommendations are agreed, a defined date for implementation for each recommendation is documented within the final report and as such all recommendations have mandated timelines. Agreed dates take account of the risk level assigned to the recommendation, alongside practical considerations for implementation. We will amend the follow up template to ensure that reasons for non-implementation are fully captured and the alternative arrangements that have been in place (including where risks have been accepted in the interim.) The Council's planned leadership dashboard also includes a KPI linked to improving implementation rates. We will look at strengthening Directorate reporting where high risk actions have not been implemented by the agreed timeline.</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b> Karen Tyler</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> July 2026</p>
IR3	All subsidiaries and commercial arrangements - including Joint Ventures and minority shareholdings - should have appropriate governance through a Shareholder Committee (or an equivalent level of governance).	Governance (pages 21-24)	<p><b>Actions:</b> The recommendation is accepted. Arrangements have been put in place for Shareholder Committee to provide oversight over all of the Council's portfolio of companies as per the existing governance calendar. Whilst it was originally intended that this would commence in October 2025 with performance reporting to Shareholder Committee / Scrutiny, it is now planned that this will commence in March 2026 when both business plans and performance updates will be presented</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b> Julie Newman</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> March 2026</p>

# Improvement recommendations raised in 2024/25 (2/2)

Recommendation	Relates to	Management Actions
<p><b>IR4</b></p> <p>The Council should continue to implement training for Officers on the public procurement guidelines and the most efficient routes to procurement available in different scenarios. We recommend that when procurement documents are updated and revised, such as the procurement strategy and contract management framework, a suite of tools and training is made available at the same time to ensure effective usage and implementation by officers.</p>	<p>Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness (pages 25-28)</p>	<p><b>Actions:</b> The recommendation is accepted. Launch of the Contract Management Framework is targeted for December 2025 with both an Intranet article and ‘Vlog’, with a rollout of training to follow in the subsequent months up to March 2026. Training will be targeted to identify Contract Managers and Contract Users in the first instance, before wider Council rollout. This training will be provided in addition to the training provided on an ad-hoc basis in relation to the use of the Council’s e-tendering system and KPI module, which has been delivered to over 160 officers to date.</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b> Rob Amor / Oluremi Aremu</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> March 2026</p>

# **06 Follow up of previous Key Recommendations**

# Follow up of 2023/24 Key recommendations

	Prior Recommendation	Raised	Progress	Current status	Further action
KR1	<p>For 2024/25, the Council will need strong arrangements in place to ensure that it publishes unaudited accounts by 30 June 2025 and to support the external audit processes that allow for publication of audited accounts by 27th February 2026.</p> <p>The Council will need to be mindful that 30 June will remain the deadline for publishing unaudited accounts until the end of 2027/28, but that the deadline will then move forward to 31 May.</p> <p>The deadline for publishing audited accounts will move progressively forward. For 2025/26, the deadline will be 31 January 2027. For 2026/27 and the years thereafter, the deadline will be 30 November.</p> <p>All local authorities will be required to comply with the new arrangements, which will require planning to prepare for.</p>	2023/24	<p>The Council has resolved the backlog of unaudited accounts and published unaudited 2024/25 accounts in a timely manner.</p> <p>Whilst reporting deadlines for 2024/25 have been met, the Council maintain that resource within the finance team is an ongoing challenge and is having to be monitored moving forwards.</p>	Complete	<p>Continue to monitor resource within the finance team to ensure that all future reporting deadlines continue to be achieved.</p> <p>This key recommendation has been lifted in 2024/25 due to the significant progress that the Council has made, and the quality of accounts provided warrants that an improvement recommendation is not required either.</p>

# 07 Appendices



# Appendix A: Responsibilities of the Council

Public bodies spending taxpayers' money are accountable for their stewardship of the resources entrusted to them. They should account properly for their use of resources and manage themselves well so that the public can be confident.

Financial statements are the main way in which local public bodies account for how they use their resources. Local public bodies are required to prepare and publish financial statements setting out their financial performance for the year. To do this, bodies need to maintain proper accounting records and ensure they have effective systems of internal control.

All local public bodies are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness from their resources. This includes taking properly informed decisions and managing key operational and financial risks so that they can deliver their objectives and safeguard public money. Local public bodies report on their arrangements, and the effectiveness with which the arrangements are operating, as part of their annual governance statement.

The Council's Chief Finance Officer is responsible for preparing the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Chief Finance Officer is required to comply with CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom. In preparing the financial statements, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern and use the going concern basis of accounting unless there is an intention by government that the services provided by the Council will no longer be provided.

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.



# Appendix B: Value for Money Auditor responsibilities

Our work is risk-based and focused on providing a commentary assessment of the Council’s Value for Money arrangements

## Phase 1 – Planning and initial risk assessment


As part of our planning, we assess our knowledge of the Council’s arrangements and whether we consider there are any indications of risks of significant weakness. This is done against each of the reporting criteria and continues throughout the reporting period.

## Phase 2 – Additional risk-based procedures and evaluation

Where we identify risks of significant weakness in arrangements, we will undertake further work to understand whether there are significant weaknesses. We use auditor’s professional judgement in assessing whether there is a significant weakness in arrangements and ensure that we consider any further guidance issued by the NAO.

## Phase 3 – Reporting our commentary and recommendations

The Code requires us to provide a commentary on your arrangements which is detailed within this report. Where we identify weaknesses in arrangements we raise recommendations.

**A range of different recommendations can be raised by the Council’s auditors as follows:**

**Statutory recommendations** – recommendations to the Council under Section 24 (Schedule 7) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

**Key recommendations** – the actions which should be taken by the Council where significant weaknesses are identified within arrangements.

**Improvement recommendations** – actions which are not a result of us identifying significant weaknesses in the Council’s arrangements, but which if not addressed could increase the risk of a significant weakness in the future.

## Information that informs our ongoing risk assessment

Cumulative knowledge of arrangements from the prior year	Key performance and risk management information reported to the Executive or full Council
Interviews and discussions with key stakeholders	External review such as by the LGA, CIPFA, or Local Government Ombudsman
Progress with implementing recommendations	Regulatory inspections such as from Ofsted and CQC
Findings from our opinion audit	Annual Governance Statement including the Head of Internal Audit annual opinion

# Appendix C: Follow up of 2023/24 improvement recommendations

	Prior Recommendation	Raised	Progress	Current position	Further action
IR1	<p>The Council should turn its focus to the skills and capacity supporting transformation plans. As plans for 2025/26 and 2026/27 rely on high value savings and still anticipate budget gaps, the Council will need to be in a robust position for managing challenge. To protect reserves going forward, the Council will need to focus on achieving the transformational changes planned around placements, services and digital connectivity.</p> <p>Future financial modelling within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy should disclose the full impact and risk of any possible changes in assumptions around demographic change, inflation, and policy on issues such as real living wage. Possible changes to income from commercial investment properties should also be included.</p> <p>This is an improvement recommendation at present but could become a key recommendation in future years if financial performance does not improve.</p>	2023/24	<p>The Council included discussion of demographic factors and economic factors within the medium term-financial strategy. It is clear that this has formed part of thinking during budget setting periods but there is limited evidence of modelling. The Council have acknowledged that it is has been a difficult budgetary setting environment in recent years but do well to discuss policy issues and changes within the financial strategy. The Council display prudence in budgeting when it comes to commercial investments.</p>	In progress	<p>To go further, the Council should demonstrate specifically how demographic data is included within the medium-term financial strategy. Specific examples of this could include population growth, age distribution changes, net migration or poverty rates. These factors impact Council services and should be reflected clearly in the financial strategy.</p>

# Appendix C: Follow up of 2023/24 improvement recommendations

	Prior Recommendation	Raised	Progress	Current position	Further action
IR2	Budget setting should anticipate the impact of children with special educational needs and disability growing up and entering the adult sector whilst still having support needs. The Council should develop appropriate forecasting tools so that it can anticipate how and when current spending on children will need to be replaced with spending on adults.	2023/24	Through discussions with the Council, this is something that the Council are considering and have acknowledged. The Council is focussed on delivering savings in both the Adult and Children's Social Care service line.	In progress	The Council should develop appropriate forecasting tools so that it can anticipate how and when current spending on children will need to be replaced with spending on adults.
IR3	The Council should explore formal reporting to the Leadership Board on savings progress against target for those elements of planned savings not covered by the Transformation arrangements. In total, technical and service savings of £30.3 million were absorbed into the budget for 2024/25. Transformation Plan highlight reports cover some £12.2 million. Other savings are regularly discussed and reviewed at Leadership Board but minutes of this are not taking.	2023/24	The Council do not take detailed minutes at Leadership Boards, however have provided agendas and summaries of actions (alongside savings trackers) that demonstrate that savings is a key point of discussion at Leadership Board meetings	Superseded	Per IR1 – Provide more detail around savings tracking and progress towards target. Continue to minute leadership boards and ensure outcomes are documented effectively.
IR4	In addition to training around use of the procurement portal, the Council should continue training and awareness around legal and regulatory requirements for procurement. To demonstrate best value, the Council needs to reduce the number and value of tender waiver requirements. Increased awareness of legal and regulatory requirements may help to achieve this reduction.	2023/24	Tender waivers have fallen on prior year. Council recognise that there are always reasons for waivers but have been working to reduce them as much as possible. Training on procurement regulations and the best route to procurement has been increased in the previous year.	Complete	Continue to closely monitor tender waivers to ensure that the reduction in number and value is sustained.

# Appendix C: Follow up of improvement recommendations

Please note that from this point forwards, only improvement recommendations marked as 'In progress' or 'No' in the 2023/24 report have been included.

	Prior Recommendation	Raised	Progress	Current position	Further action
IR1	The Council should continue to address the weaknesses in the preparation of its financial statements, as addressed in our financial statements audit work, that have caused delays to the publication of accounts.	2022/23	The Council have resolved backlog of financial statements and met the deadline for 2024/25 accounts.	Complete	N/A
IR3	When corporate key performance indicator reporting is re-introduced to Cabinet, the Council should consider an increase in the frequency of reporting in addition to embedding the changes already planned.	2022/23	The Council report performance on a quarterly basis and have implemented a live KPI dashboard	Complete	N/A
IR4	The Council should review training arrangements for service line staff who are responsible for monitoring contracts.	2022/23	The Council have implemented additional training.	Superseded	Further training based on IR3 2024/25.
IR7	An independent assurance review of the revised governance structure for the Council's subsidiaries should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.	2021/22	The Council have completed the review.	Complete	Carry out the IR's raised in the internal audit of Council's subsidiaries.
IR8	The Council should consider how to further avoid high placement costs and ensure the investment in its own children's home delivers the anticipated savings in placement costs.	2021/22	The Council have consider options for savings with respect to Social Care and have formed specific task groups for Children's.	Complete	Continue to seek savings in this area, noting the challenging environment.
IR9	Procurement Tender Waivers should be reported to the Audit and Procurement Committee on a quarterly basis. The Council should ensure that the new Procurement Strategy is aligned to the Council's Digital Transformation Strategy.	2021/22	Alignment between the two strategies and regular reporting of tender waivers.	Complete	N/A



© 2025 Grant Thornton UK LLP. All rights reserved.

'Grant Thornton' refers to the brand under which the Grant Thornton member firms provide assurance, tax and advisory services to their clients and/or refers to one or more member firms, as the context requires. Grant Thornton UK LLP is a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd (GTIL). GTIL and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. GTIL and each member firm is a separate legal entity. Services are delivered by the member firms. GTIL does not provide services to clients. GTIL and its member firms are not agents of, and do not obligate, one another and are not liable for one another's acts or omissions.