

## **1. Scope of responsibility**

- 1.1 Coventry City Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively. Coventry City Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, Coventry City Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3 Coventry City Council has an approved Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles reflected in the Chartered Institute of Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) / SOLACE framework and guidance “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016)”. A copy of the Code is available on our website at: [Local Code of Corporate Governance 2025-26 - Appendix 1.pdf](#)
- 1.4 The Annual Governance Statement explains how Coventry City Council has complied with the Code and also meets the requirements of Regulation 6(1) (b) of The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an Annual Governance Statement and the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

## **2. The purpose of the governance framework**

- 2.1 The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture, and values by which the authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads the community. It enables the authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money.
- 2.2 The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Coventry City Council policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.
- 2.3 The governance framework has been in place at Coventry City Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 and up to the date of approval of the Statement of Accounts.

### 3. The governance framework

The key principles, approach and review processes that comprise the authority's governance arrangements are set out in the City Council's Code of Corporate Governance. Key elements include the following:

- 3.1 There is a governance / internal control environment that supports the Council in establishing, implementing, and monitoring its policies and objectives. The Council's overarching objectives are contained in published policy documents including the One Coventry Plan. These high-level plans are supported by a range of thematic policies, strategies and delivery plans, service plans, and detailed work programmes.
- 3.2 The One Coventry Plan 2022-2030 was formally adopted by the Council in March 2023 following a period of extensive engagement. To deliver the Council's long term vision of working together to improve the city and the lives of those who live, work and study in Coventry, the One Coventry Plan sets out the priorities of increasing the economic prosperity of the city and region, improving outcomes and tackling inequalities within our communities and tackling the causes and consequences of climate change, through continued financial sustainability and the Council's role as a partner, enabler, and leader. The delivery of the One Coventry Plan is supported by a range of policies and strategies and a performance management framework. A copy of the One Coventry Plan is available on our website at: [www.coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/draft-one-coventry-plan/9](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/draft-one-coventry-plan/9) and the performance management framework is at: [Managing performance and measuring progress against our plans – Coventry City Council](#)
- 3.3 Throughout this process, clear channels of communication exist with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, to ensure the Council considers local needs and communicates both expected and actual outcomes for citizens and service users. This is evidenced through the Council's formal decision-making and performance management processes.
- 3.4 In October 2015, Coventry City Council agreed to join the West Midlands Combined Authority, which is a model of governance for local authorities to act together to drive economic prosperity for the area. A Combined Authority is a statutory body in its own right supported by a devolution agreement with the Government and a constitution which sets out the terms of their funding and powers.
- 3.5 The control environment to ensure delivery of the Council's objectives is laid down in the Council's Constitution and performance management framework. The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, including:
  - Roles and responsibilities of both Councillors and officers, including the Head of Paid Services, Monitoring Officer, and Chief Financial Officer.
  - How decisions are made and the procedures in place to ensure that these are efficient, transparent, and accountable to local citizens. The Constitution includes the Council's senior management structure and a scheme of delegation which sets out the principles for decision making and responsibility for functions. The Council facilitates policy and decision making via a Cabinet structure with Cabinet Member portfolios. There are scrutiny boards covering

all portfolios and an overarching Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee. The Member decision making, advisory and scrutiny bodies are shown at <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/howthecouncilworks>

- 3.6 Coventry City Council has developed a comprehensive set of policies and procedures, including those relating to the standards expected of Members and officers. These are subject to regular review to ensure the Council continues to enhance and strengthen its internal control environment. Systems exist to ensure compliance with policies and procedures, including statute and regulations. Internal Audit, through its annual risk-based plan assesses compliance with key procedures and policies.
- 3.7 The Council has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commitment which is available on our website at: [Equality, diversity and inclusion commitment – Coventry City Council](#). This sets out the Council's commitment to meeting all areas of the public sector equality duty and to ensure equality of opportunity, both as a provider and commissioner of services and as a large employer. The commitment is implemented through setting equality objectives linked to the One Coventry Plan. In 2025, a new set of equality objectives were approved and are available on our website at: [www.coventry.gov.uk/diversity-inclusion/equality-objectives-2022-25](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/diversity-inclusion/equality-objectives-2022-25). Progress is monitored and reported to the Cabinet Member (Policing & Equalities) and an annual report of completed Equality Impact Assessments is available at: [www.coventry.gov.uk/diversity-inclusion/equality-impact-assessments](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/diversity-inclusion/equality-impact-assessments)
- 3.8 The Council's Risk Management Policy and Strategy defines processes for identifying, assessing, managing, and monitoring financial and operational risks. The Strategy recognises the need for risk registers at service, directorate and corporate level which are updated and reviewed regularly. The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed quarterly by Leadership Board and is reported to the Audit and Procurement Committee on a six-monthly basis.
- 3.9 The Council, through its Whistleblowing and Complaints Procedures, has documented processes in place to deal with concerns raised by both employees and members of the public. These policies have been widely communicated and are subject to regular review to ensure they are working effectively. In addition, the Council's Fraud and Corruption Strategy reinforces the Council's commitment to creating an anti-fraud culture, whilst having effective arrangements in place in responding to allegations of fraud and corruption.
- 3.10 An Audit and Procurement Committee provides independent assurance to the Council on various issues, including risk management and control and the effectiveness of the arrangements the Council has for these matters. The Committee's terms of reference were developed in conjunction with CIPFA guidance, and the Committee carries out a periodic self-assessment to measure its effectiveness, based on recommended CIPFA practice.
- 3.11 For the financial year 2025-26, the Director of Finance and Resources was the nominated Section 151 Officer, with the delegated responsibility for ensuring there are arrangements in place for proper administration of financial affairs. The Council last carried out an assessment of the role of the Section 151 Officer against the requirements stated in the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016) in April 2026. This assessment

concluded that the Authority meets the five principles laid out in the CIPFA statement, namely:

- The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in a local authority is a key member of the Leadership Team, helping it to develop and implement strategy and to resource and deliver the authority's strategic objectives sustainably and in the public interest.
- The CFO in a local authority must be actively involved in, and able to bring influence to bear on, all material business decisions to ensure immediate and longer-term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered, and alignment with the authority's overall financial strategy.
- The CFO in a local authority must lead the promotion and delivery by the whole authority of good financial management so that public money is safeguarded at all times and used appropriately, economically, efficiently, and effectively.
- The CFO in a local authority must lead and direct a finance function that is resourced to be fit for purpose.
- The CFO in a local authority must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced.

The Director of Finance and Resources is a key member of the Council's Leadership Board with a critical role in strategic planning for the organisation. The Board also includes the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer (the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities), who, along with the Director of Finance and Resources, collectively have leadership responsibility for good governance as principal statutory officers. There remains a wider leadership structure in place which is critical to the overall senior leadership function.

3.12 The Annual Governance Statement also includes a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control within group activities, where the Council is in a relationship with another entity to undertake significant activities. The following describes the group activities for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026:

- In November 2021, the Council incorporated Coventry Municipal Holdings Limited (CMH) to manage most of its wholly owned companies and strengthen the governance arrangements for these investments. In setting up these arrangements, the Council took account of lessons learnt from issues encountered by other local authorities and the recommendations made in Public Interest Reports issued by Grant Thornton on such matters. A Group Governance Agreement is in place which sets out the governance structure and training has been provided by the Council's legal advisors to those officers appointed as directors. The CMH group comprises of the following subsidiaries:
  - Tom White Waste Limited (and its subsidiaries A & M Metals Limited and Tom White Waste (LACO) Limited)

- Coombe Abbey Park Limited (and its subsidiaries No Ordinary Hospitality Management Limited and Coombe Abbey Park (LACO) Limited)
- No Ordinary Hotels Limited (dormant)
- Coventry Technical Resources Limited
- Coventry Regeneration Limited

In accordance with the Group Governance Agreement, the subsidiaries are required to produce annual business plans and in addition, CMH produce an annual performance report covering all of group's performance. A Shareholder Committee is in place which oversees the group's performance.

- The Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company Limited was incorporated on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1992 and is owned jointly by Coventry City Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Warwickshire County Council and Leicestershire County Council.
- The UK Battery Industrialisation Centre Limited was incorporated on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018 and the Council is currently the sole shareholder with one share which has a nominal value of £1. The purpose of the company is to run the National Battery Development Facility.
- The Friargate Joint Venture Project Limited was incorporated on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018. This is a 50/50 joint venture with Friargate Holdings 2 Limited, established to develop new buildings within the Friargate district of the city.
- Sherbourne Recycling Limited (SRL) was incorporated on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and Coventry City Council along with seven other local authorities acquired shares in the company on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. The purpose of the company is to operate the material recycling facility (MRF), which sorts the dry mixed recyclable waste received from the eight local authorities and other commercial customers. Sherbourne Recycling Trading Limited is a trading subsidiary of Sherbourne Recycling Limited who own 100% of the shares in this entity. All commercial contracts will be secured through this entity with the waste being processed by SRL on an arm's length transaction.
- The Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub Limited was incorporated on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and was previously owned by the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership Limited. Following the closure of the Local Enterprise Partnership, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023, Coventry City Council and Warwickshire County Council acquired ownership of the Company as joint shareholders. The purpose of the company is to provide a central co-ordination point for publicly funded business support. Due to funding changes, during 2026-27, the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub will transition to the West Midlands Growth Hub, which will be a subsidiary of the West Midlands Growth Company Ltd.

## **4. Review of effectiveness**

4.1 Processes are in place to assess key elements of the governance framework throughout the year, for example, through the work of Internal Audit and the Council's Audit and Procurement Committee. A review of the effectiveness of the governance framework is also undertaken annually as part of the production of the Annual Governance Statement. This is informed by the work of senior managers within the authority, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Chief Internal Auditor's conclusion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of Coventry City Council's risk management, internal control, and governance arrangements, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

4.2 Arrangements to assess the effectiveness of the governance framework include:

- Regular and detailed monitoring of the Council's performance, by both Leadership Board and Members against targets and objectives set out in the One Coventry Plan. In 2024-25, the Council established a new Directorate to co-ordinate activity and further strengthen the Council's performance management arrangements. This includes the development of a corporate leadership dashboard and service plan metrics which are reported on quarterly.
- Regular meetings of the Council's Governance Group to consider on-going and emerging governance issues and co-ordinate actions required. Updates on this work are provided to Leadership Board.
- Consideration of ethical governance matters by the Ethics Committee, including reflecting on national governance failings to identify if there are any lessons learnt for the Council to take forward.
- On-going reviews of the Council's Constitution, overseen by the Constitution Advisory Panel and subject to approval by Full Council. These reviews include areas such as standing orders, financial procedures, and the scheme of delegation.
- Regular reviews of the Council's strategies and procedures to ensure they continue to reflect the needs of the Council.
- An annual review and update of the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance which is subject to approval by the Audit and Procurement Committee.

4.3 The review of effectiveness has also been informed by:

- Reports from the external auditors and other inspection agencies.
- The Council's Corporate Risk Register.
- Directors' Statements of Assurance. An annual assessment of the adequacy of governance arrangements / internal controls in relation to their service areas by each Director.

- An assessment of the Council’s compliance with the principles and standards of the CIPFA Financial Management Code, which supports good practice in financial management and demonstrating financial sustainability. The assessment was last formally updated in November 2025 and concluded that in overall terms, the Council is able to demonstrate compliance with the Code, with only two improvement actions highlighted to build on the arrangements already in place and demonstrate delivery in full.
- The work of the Internal Audit Service during 2025-26. The Service works to a risk-based audit plan, which is approved annually by the Council's Audit and Procurement Committee. An annual report is also produced and presented to the Committee, which includes the Annual Internal Audit Conclusion. For 2025-26, the Chief Internal Auditor concluded that reasonable assurance could be provided that there is generally an effective and adequate framework of governance, risk management and internal control in place designed to meet the Council’s objectives. The report also identifies those issues, which in the opinion of the Chief Internal Auditor, should be considered when producing the Annual Governance Statement.

4.4 We have been advised on the implications of the result of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework by the Audit and Procurement Committee and can provide reasonable assurance that the Council’s governance arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework and that a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

**5. Significant governance issues**

5.1 Table one below provides an update on the governance issues that were raised in the 2024-25 Annual Governance Statement.

**Table one**

<b>No</b>	<b>Governance issues identified in 2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26 update</b>
1	Integrate and sustain improvement in Children and Education Services	<p>The <b>Children’s and Education Service Plan</b> for 2025/26 was completed in July 2025 integrating the priorities for Children’s and Education Services in one overarching plan. The plan focuses on six key areas of focus aligned with Children’s and Education Services vision. Progress against the Performance measures are monitored quarterly. The Service Plan is an annual plan and will be refreshed in May 2026 for 2026/7.</p> <p>During the last 12 months, a key priority has been the delivery and implementation of the national social care reforms establishing Families First Partnership Programme working closely with partners to develop a Family Help model and the design of a Multi-Agency Child Protection Team.</p>

		<p>The service has made measurable progress in reducing numbers of children subject to child protection plans and children in care, alongside a significant reduction in agency staffing. Quality Assurance activity evidences purposeful, strength-based practice.</p> <p>Investment in local sufficiency, including expansion of children’s homes and the use of needs-led decision-making tools, is improving placement stability and value for money.</p> <p>The service demonstrates a strong commitment to learning, inclusion and anti-racist practice, supported by a developing workforce offer and effective partnerships.</p> <p>Children’s Services was awarded an “outstanding” rating by Ofsted following an inspection in March 2026.</p> <p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) pressures and sufficiency challenges remain, and there is clear and credible trajectory of improvement, with well-defined priorities in place to further strengthen outcomes for children and families over the next year.</p> <p><b>The Children’s Services Workforce Strategy 2025-2028</b> was developed in June 2025. The strategy sets out the key priorities for ensuring that the workforce support Coventry families to achieve their aspirations and enable children and young people to achieve their desired outcomes.</p> <p>The strategy focuses on three key priorities (Achieving a stable workforce, an effective wellbeing offer and comprehensive effective learning and development opportunities, including promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>A workforce action plan is refreshed each year and progress monitored and reviewed through the Workforce Development board, chaired by the Director of People Services. All actions in 2025/26 have been implemented. A new action plan for 2026/27 is currently being developed.</p> <p>During the last 12 months; leaders have further strengthened the workforce. Highlights include retention of social workers, reduced reliance on agency workers; implemented progression pathways; stronger integration of residential workforce and payment of market supplement for</p>
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		residential managers; expanded in house training provision; provided more accessibility to wellbeing activities; continued to promote flexible working; relaunched clinical supervision offer; leaders have embraced diversity and inclusion and adopted a clear anti-racist position, practice and attitudes are tangibly changing as a result.
2	Ensuring delivery of the Council's vision and corporate objectives, in line with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy	<p>The 2025-26 financial outturn position was a £3.2m underspend which was contributed to corporate reserves. Following forecast outturn overspends throughout the financial year (£1.6m overspend at Q3) this underspend position was achieved by proactive management actions throughout the year.</p> <p>The activities relating to savings plans identified to set the 2025/26 budget continue to be monitored by Leadership Board.</p> <p>The Council approved a balanced budget for 2026/27 in February 2026, and due to a favourable settlement announced in February 2026 on the back of the Governments new Fair Funding was not required to identify any new savings, instead investing surplus in areas identified as key priorities for the city.</p>
3	Management of increasing demand in relation to homelessness and the associated costs of housing families in temporary accommodation	<p>An update on actions planned for 2024/25 is below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both Supported Temporary Accommodation buildings for single people are opened and fully operational</li> <li>• Ribbon Court is opened and fully operational providing flats for small families</li> <li>• BEAM have delivered 38 Private Sector Rented (PRS) properties in the first 10 months of the contract</li> <li>• The proposed Spring Housing project is no longer being delivered due to circumstances outside of our control</li> <li>• Consultation with PRS landlords to relaunch Lets Rent Coventry and source additional homes has been completed and the scheme is delivering an increased number of properties</li> <li>• Faseman development has commenced on site</li> <li>• Work to minimise voids with contracted providers and meet occupancy rates have been achieved</li> <li>• Housing Network contract to provide 200 bed spaces for single people has been delivered and has achieved the anticipated savings</li> <li>• There have been no families in Bed and Breakfast since Sept 2024</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A report regarding options to secure additional permanent properties was presented to Leadership board on 16<sup>th</sup> April</li> <li>• Staff have been recruited for the new prevention team and commenced work on the 5<sup>th</sup> May</li> <li>• New housing related support contracts went live on the 1<sup>st</sup> April following a full procurement process</li> <li>• Single Homeless Accommodation Project was delayed but went live on the 20<sup>th</sup> April</li> </ul>
4	Governance over the programme of capital projects	The Commercialisation Board is producing a capital project delivery protocol which will set out a Council wide best practice approach for the delivery of capital projects. This will be rolled out across the Council during 2026/27. It anticipates that the Commercialisation Board retains oversight for mayor capital projects.
5	City of Culture legacy	<p>The Charity Commission's Compliance Case into the Coventry City of Culture Trust remains open.</p> <p>The Council has reconfirmed (in January 2026) that it continues to cooperate with the Charity Commission's investigations and awaits their findings.</p>
6	Further development of the Council's IT disaster recovery plans and processes	<p>Testing of High Availability (failover and resilience) capabilities happens regularly as 'natural testing' throughout the year when performing maintenance.</p> <p>Successfully tested automatic failover of internet connectivity from our primary to secondary connection in January 2026</p> <p>Significantly contributed to the final Draft Cyber Incident Response plan for the Council.</p> <p>Digital Services are now attending business continuity forum meetings.</p> <p>Ongoing Cyber Security Awareness campaigns have taken place, with a focus on the importance of business continuity planning</p> <p>Took part in a Council wide Cyber Incident response exercise in January 2026 facilitated by Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire (CSW) Resilience.</p> <p>Concluded a restructure that establishes Business Relationship Partners for service areas to support them with business continuity planning when a Cyber event occurs.</p>
7	To further strengthen	Performed service area specific and Council wide

	the Council's arrangements and internal control environment around IT / Cyber Security	<p>attack simulations (phishing tests) to raise awareness.</p> <p>Regular and consistent staff communication to increase cyber vigilance</p> <p>Continued progress towards meeting the emerging Local Authority baseline derived from the National Cyber Security Centre's Cyber Assessment Framework.</p> <p>Continued business as usual activity to reduce known vulnerabilities via regularly patching, auditing and security assessments. Including decommissioning and/or isolation of legacy systems or infrastructure.</p>
<b>8</b>	Embedding new methods of consultation and engagement	As part of the proposed restructure of the Policy and Communications function, the effectiveness of the Council's approach to consultation and engagement has been reviewed to identify areas where it can be strengthened, including methodologies, forward planning and feedback. A new engagement framework is still being developed which will outline the importance of undertaking good consultation and engagement and so improve the standard of this function across the Council. This also links to the new equality objective "To increase opportunities for residents in Coventry, from a diverse range of backgrounds, to influence the Council's decision-making processes."
<b>9</b>	Employees Code of Conduct	<p>The Code of Conduct, including the Nolan Principles, is part of induction and managers induction.</p> <p>Trained on the Code is part of the disciplinary process</p> <p>The planned shorter version of the Code is being worked on during this summer</p>
<b>10</b>	Health Check / Assurance Framework for the Council's group of companies	The agreed actions have been followed up and whilst the majority of actions have been implemented, four actions were assessed as being outstanding. A further follow up exercise is due to be undertaken in April 2026. Once all actions have been implemented, the assurance framework will be defined and documented.
<b>11</b>	Transparency Code	Considerable further work has been undertaken to ensure the Council has effective arrangements in place to comply with the Code including an annual review of published information overseen by the Corporate Governance Group. A follow up Internal Audit in December 2025 gave reasonable assurance

		that data is being reported in accordance with the Local Government Transparency Code. This is now business as usual and as a result will not be carried forward to the 2026/27 action plan.
12	Production of Statement of Accounts for 2024/25 in line with the Government backstop deadlines to address the audit back log.	<p>Actions were delivered in line with the planned timescales:</p> <p>The 2024-25 Draft Statement of Accounts was published for public scrutiny on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025.</p> <p>The 2024-25 Final Statement of Accounts was presented to Audit &amp; Procurement Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026 alongside the Grant Thornton Audit Findings Report and the letter of opinion, followed by publication on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026 ahead of the statutory deadline.</p>
13	Management compliance with key HR policies and procedures.	<p><b>Process and compliance:</b> Strengthened right to work and sponsorship compliance through the implementation of a clear process for Skilled Worker supplementary employment, revised visa eligibility rules for applicants, improved right to work pre-screening within Tribepad and introduction of a Certificate of Sponsorship checklist for skilled worker visa applicants. Right to work renewals centralised in the Employment Relations Team to enhance oversight and provide assurance of timely follow-up in cases where ongoing checks were not in place.</p> <p><b>Guidance, assurance and training:</b> Developed a comprehensive right to work guidance document for the recruitment team and delivered targeted training and communications to recruitment teams, managers, and the Job Shop, ensuring consistent understanding of visa requirements, roles and responsibilities, and document annotation standards.</p>
14	Peer Challenge action plan	<p>A review of progress against all Peer Challenge report recommendations was complied, reviewed and discussed at Change Board in February 2026.</p> <p>The majority of actions have now been satisfactorily implemented and incorporated as business as usual but there are a small number that still require work. It was agreed that we will monitor and review again in twelve months.</p> <p>On diversity of workforce, the Diversity and Inclusion Board receives regular updates on position and progress. The overall workforce is now broadly representative of the city ethnicity profile but despite some progress the profile of staffing at Grade 10 and above is not yet representative.</p>

		Senior Leadership Network membership has increased in diversity.
<b>15</b>	Performance Management	<p>A central performance team is now in place with a senior manager leading the work.</p> <p>A new corporate leadership dashboard has been developed and monthly leadership board sessions focus on performance.</p> <p>A revised One Coventry report has been introduced and approved by the Leader. A six-monthly update report has also been introduced. The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee completed a deep dive into One Coventry indicators that were not yet meeting target.</p>
<b>16</b>	Internal Audit professional standards	<p>Work has been undertaken to address some of the new requirements, including development of an Internal Audit strategy, and discussion of the essential conditions for the governance of Internal Audit with the Audit and Procurement Committee. However, further activity is still required to fully align with the new standards.</p>
<b>17</b>	Risk Management	<p>Action on this has been delayed due to resourcing issues. However, the corporate risk register is regularly reviewed by Leadership Board and the Audit and Procurement Committee and risks are also considered as part of the quarterly statutory officer meetings.</p>
<b>18</b>	Embedding leadership behaviours	<p>Owning and Driving Performance (ODP) has been extended down to grade 8 managers with approximately 604 employees having now completed the training. This has been supplemented by 'SWARM' sessions, an ODP teams channel for sharing the learning. Further advance coaches have been established to support the programme and its on-going work.</p> <p>The new behaviour framework for senior leaders is now included in the increment process which is now completed using an online form. The process actively references behaviour, appraisal outcomes and on-going professional development.</p> <p>ODP is a culture change and sits alongside the coaching apprenticeship and Coaching Culture platform. To maintain momentum a further 2 year programme has been developed using the tools and advanced coaches.</p>

- 5.2 The Council is seeking to continuously enhance its management arrangements to improve service delivery, efficiency, and value for money, whilst achieving its objectives. The review of effectiveness has informed identification of the following key challenges for 2026-27 (Table Two), along with the actions planned to address these matters to further enhance our governance arrangements.

Table Two

Ref	Governance issue	Planned actions 2026-27	Responsible officer	Timescale
1	Integrate and sustain improvement in Children and Education Services	<p>Deliver an integrated Children and Education Service Plan for implementation 2026/27, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a test and learn pilot of the end to end pathway from Family Help to Multi Agency Child Protection in the East locality to test and evaluate and refine the model safely and to inform roll out in readiness for full integration of social care reforms in 2027.</li> <li>Developing a local SEND reform plan in response to the Schools White paper</li> </ul> <p>Deliver an integrated Workforce Development Strategy and plan for 2026/27 for Children and Education Services</p>	Director of Children and Education Services	<p>May 2026 – March 2027</p> <p>September 2026 – March 2027</p>
2	Ensuring delivery of the Council's vision and corporate objectives, in line with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy	<p>The 2026-27 budgetary control position will be closely monitored to ensure that the key financial pressures being experienced by the Council can be mitigated and/or managed.</p> <p>Savings and cost reductions that were identified in both 2024-25 and 2025-26 across both years will continue to be presented to Leadership Board monthly reporting progress against savings targets</p>	Director of Finance and Resources / Head of Finance	March 2027

		<p>and where risk of non-delivery exists, actions will be sought to manage any shortfalls in the overall savings delivery plans.</p> <p>Assessment will continue of the Council's One Coventry Plan and how the Council's financial plans align to the objectives of the Plan.</p>		
<b>3</b>	<p>Management of demand in relation to homelessness and the associated costs of housing families in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>The homelessness service is demand led and experienced significant increase in demand during 2022-23 to 2024-25. Although Temporary Accommodation demand reduced during 2025-26 there are still a number of actions being taken to reduce this further:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BEAM to deliver a minimum of 30 additional PRS properties in 2026-27</li> <li>• Continue to develop Lets Rent Coventry and source additional permanent homes.</li> <li>• Continue to ensure that voids within contracted providers are minimised and meet target of 90% occupancy.</li> <li>• Monitor the newly commissioned supported accommodation contracts.</li> <li>• Continue to eliminate the use of B&amp;B accommodation for families unless in an emergency.</li> <li>• Continue to eliminate the use of nightly accommodation, reducing costs and maximising income</li> <li>• Seek to reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation using the baseline of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026</li> <li>• Progress the report regarding housing vehicles and implement/develop a recommendation for the</li> </ul>	<p>Head of Housing and Homelessness</p>	<p>March 2027</p>

		<p>Council to increase the number of permanent properties available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch and embed the newly revamped prevention service to maximise early prevention and increase successes. Monitor the service and make tweaks where appropriate</li> <li>• Develop a supported housing strategy and delivery plan for the city in line with legislation, government guidance and best practice</li> <li>• Launch SHAP accommodation for complex single people working with a 3rd sector partner.</li> <li>• Commission new supported housing utilising the West Midlands Combined Authority/Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government Funding</li> <li>• To maintain or increase the percentage proportion of successful outcomes for both prevention and relief duties.</li> <li>• To work with Citizen Housing to free up 20 large family homes and move existing occupants who are currently under-occupying into more suitable sized accommodation</li> <li>• To develop a plan with communications colleagues to engage with residents to promote early prevention of homelessness and assist internal staff in identifying risk to prevent crisis</li> </ul>		
<b>4</b>	Governance over the programme of capital projects	Completion and implementation of the capital project delivery protocol by the Commercialisation Board setting out a Council wide best practice approach for the delivery of capital projects.	Director of Property Services and Development / Director of Finance and Resources	March 2027
<b>5</b>	City of Culture	Where requested, the Council will work to support the Charity Commission's Compliance Case into the	Strategic Lead – Culture and Events	March 2027

		Coventry City of Culture Trust whilst the investigation remains open.		
<b>6</b>	Further development of the Council's IT disaster recovery plans and processes	Support the work of the business continuity planning across the organisation, ensuring that ICT disaster recovery processes are enhanced, with supporting documents formalised and testing arrangements agreed. The scope of this activity includes supporting resilience planning at a city level in particular in relation to connectivity and digital infrastructure across the city	Director of Digital Services	March 2027
<b>7</b>	To further strengthen the Council's arrangements and internal control environment around IT / Cyber Security	Implementation of the cyber security activities listed in the Digital Service Plan	Director of Digital Services	March 2027
<b>8</b>	Embedding new methods of consultation and engagement	Develop a new engagement framework outlining the importance of undertaking good consultation and engagement and so improve the standard of this function across the Council. This also links to the new equality objective "To increase opportunities for residents in Coventry, from a diverse range of backgrounds, to influence the Council's decision-making processes."	Director of Policy and Communications	July 2026
<b>9</b>	Continued Communication of the Employee Code of Conduct	Ascertain if it can be included in the annual appraisal Set up a new starter alert so the code of conduct is shared. A shorter handbook to be created	Head of Employee Relations	12 months
<b>10</b>	Health Check / Assurance Framework for the Council's group of companies	The remaining agreed actions from the Internal Audit Review will be followed up to ensure they have been implemented. Following this, work will be undertaken to define and document the assurance framework.	Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities / Chief Internal Auditor	September 2026

11	Production of Statement of Accounts for 2025/26 in line with the Government backstop deadlines to address the audit backlog	<p>Maintain the level of resource required to deliver the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidation of 2025-26 draft Statement of Accounts and publication on our website for public scrutiny by 30th June 2026.</li> <li>• To support Grant Thornton in the audit on 2025-26 Statement of Accounts, in order to meet the Statutory deadlines for publishing 2025-26 audited accounts of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2027.</li> <li>• Continuing to work with External Auditors to address the regaining assurance work resulting from the audit backlog.</li> </ul>	Director of Finance and Resources	February 2027
12	Management compliance with HR policies and procedures	<p>Process, Systems and Compliance Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening visa compliance through targeted audits of employee records, improved accuracy of visa expiry data, and clearer identification of sponsored workers.</li> <li>• Reviewing and enhancing controls for restricted visa types, including student visas and supplementary employment, to ensure compliance.</li> <li>• Improving system data quality and reporting by refining visa classifications, correcting miscategorisation, and documenting the sponsorship process and review of work locations for sponsored workers.</li> <li>• Introducing additional management controls, including manager declarations.</li> <li>• Review and audit of sponsorship arrangements against Appendix D requirements to ensure ongoing compliance and readiness for external audit.</li> </ul>	Director of People and Facilities Management	April 2027

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhancing monitoring and assurance arrangements through improved reporting, automated alerts, and strengthened oversight of sponsorship reporting responsibilities.</li> </ul>		
<b>13</b>	Peer Challenge action plan	To implement the action plan arising from the Peer Challenge report, including taking further steps to improve diversity across the organisation at all levels.	Leadership Board	March 2027
<b>14</b>	Internal Audit Professional Standards	To ensure the Internal Audit Service complies with the new Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector.	Chief Internal Auditor	March 2027
<b>15</b>	Risk Management	To consider the Council's formal risk management approach and identify opportunities to strengthen arrangements.	Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities / Chief Internal Auditor / Insurance Manager	March 2027
<b>16</b>	Embedding Leadership behaviours	Work to continue embedding the performance approach we have developed along with the new senior manager behaviours to continue on our journey of being a high support high challenge organisation	Director of People and Facilities Management	March 2027
<b>17</b>	Maintaining effective Governance and Decision-making	<p>Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to support the outcome of the all-out elections in May 2026 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective induction, training, development and support arrangements for new and returning councillors</li> <li>Ensure Governance Services is resourced to support Members effectively</li> </ul>	Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities	September 2027

18	Artificial Intelligence - Governance and Management	<p>Ensure that the Council continues to develop appropriate governance and management arrangements in relation to AI including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen risk management by establishing a subgroup of the Information Management Strategy Group</li> <li>• Continue to develop the Council's Generative AI Policy, guidance and resources to ensure organisational needs are met, opportunities maximised and appropriate safeguards are in place</li> <li>• Strengthen measures to support data sensitivity and data loss prevention</li> </ul>	Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities / Director of Digital Services	March 2027
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5.3 We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review, and we will monitor their implementation and operation, as part of our next annual review.

**Cllr George Duggins**  
Leader of Coventry City Council

**Dr Julie Nugent**  
Chief Executive of Coventry City Council