

WESTMORLAND AND FURNESS COUNCIL

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2023/24 PROGRESS ON ACTIONS

2023/24 Annual Governance Statement – Action Plan for 2024/25

The following table highlights significant governance issues as identified by the Council as part of the Action Plan for 2024/25.

An assessment of progress is outlined below with green highlighting the actions completed in accordance with the target dates agreed.

Those which are not green will be carried into the Action Plan for 2025/2026 many having dates in this period.

Ref	Action Required	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Current Position / Action Planned	Present position
Principle A – Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respective the rule of law					
A1	Produce an updated Local Code of Governance to reflect how the Council had developed since September 2023. The updated Code should be presented to the February 2025 Audit Committee for approval.	Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer	28 February 2025	An updated Local Code of Governance was considered by the 25 February 2025 Audit Committee for approval and Standards & Governance on 10 March 2025.	Audit Committee – Tuesday, 25 February 2025 – Item 12 Standards and Governance Committee – Monday, 10 March 2025 – Item 8
A2	Good Governance to be embedded across all Directorates	Corporate Management	January 2025 ongoing until March 2026	Governance issues will be reviewed and discussed / assessed at the recurring Good Governance Group meetings and actioned accordingly. Agendas will be structure against the 7 Principles.	Whilst the Good Governance Group is working well embedding of good governance is continuing.

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	monitored and progress regularly reported and assessed. Development of an assessment tool.	Team		Good Governance Group meetings have met regularly in 2024/25	And the date is to be updated to March 2026.
A3	Continue to improve and embed good decision making.	Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer and CMT	January 2025 ongoing until March 2026	<p>Reviewing and updating decision making pathways for Cabinet and delegated decisions (including updating templates and guidance).</p> <p>Further officer training on refreshed decision making pathways and report writing, to ensure well written, structured reports which are compliant with legislation and best practice standards.</p> <p>Launch of a dedicated decision-making intranet page for officers.</p> <p>Continue to embed a culture of forward planning as part of the focus on corporate effectiveness so decisions are made in a timely, controlled and considered way.</p>	<p>Templates updated March 2024</p> <p>Officer training delivered on 31st March, 3rd April and 10th April 2025.</p> <p><u>Governance Sharepoint</u> page is now live and decision record templates and report writing guidance is now available on these pages</p> <p>Golden Triangle are considering the Communication Plan. The date is to be updated to March 2026.</p>
A4	Compliance with the Transparency Legislation.	Corporate Management Team	January 2025 ongoing until March 2026	<p>While compliance is good, the Council is reviewing all compliance in 2024/25 and an action plan will be developed, identifying any gaps and omissions and any requirements in the Inter Authority Agreement.</p> <p>Publication of Officer Decision Records (ODR) / Officer Key Decision Records (OKDR) and compliance with transparency requirements will continue to be monitored.</p>	In year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025 82 ODR and 50 OKDR were published. These figures were reported to Good Governance Group in April 2025. Training has taken place in April and May 2025 to introduce the use of ModGov report writing system for the use of all ODR & OKDR.

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A5	<p>Respect for the Councils processes and systems of Governance including financial, legal and professional advice is required to be understood and respected by the Corporate Management Team as the Officer Leadership cohort of the Council.</p> <p>In the event of any areas of conflict Escalation Processes will be agreed with the Chief Executive.</p>	Golden Triangle	March 2025	Work just commencing with external support.	<p>Escalation process now in place with lessons learned reports to Golden Triangle, if required.</p> <p>Suggest new date of September 2025.</p>
A6	Work will be undertaken on the clarity and improved understanding of professional responsibilities and accountabilities including the separate roles of the	Golden Triangle	March 2025	Work just commencing with external support	A series of Governance training slides/videos are being developed to improve understanding, e.g. of MO and statutory roles and will be made available on the Governance Sharepoint page.

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	three corporate statutory roles and wider CMT colleagues to strengthen the Council's overall governance position.				CMT & SLT session to be held in June 2025
A7	Development and Introduction of a Governance Induction training package	Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer	April 2025	Governance Induction Training to be completed.	8 training sessions have been prepared and are available on Sharepoint page for Governance
A8	The Golden triangle of Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer have agreed to adopt the recently published Code of Practice for Statutory Officers.	Golden Triangle via Standards and Governance Committee	January 2025	Adoption of Code for Statutory Officers	Standards & Governance Committee – Tuesday, 14th January 2025 – Minute 42 Budget Council – Thursday, 27th February 2025 – Minute 100 A copy of the Code has also been published on our external website for information and is located alongside the Constitution and other key governance documents on the website.
Principle B – Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement					

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B1	Continue to monitor the response rate for Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests to ensure that as a minimum the Council processes at least 90% FOI and EIR request within the 20 day statutory deadline.	Director of Enabler Services	March 2025	Significant improvement has been achieved and in November 2024, the ICO confirmed that the Practice Improvement Notice actions had been met in full, with significantly improved performance being reported. The Council included this in the Q3 Performance report to Cabinet and the SIRO will continue to oversee monitoring on a monthly basis to ensure improvement is sustained.	Single month data for April 2024 was 44% FOI completed on time and that led to a poor start to the 24/25 year statistics. Since the action plan was implemented FOI and EIR performance has improved significantly and full 2024/25 Year end was 79.53% performance (1397 out of 1427 on time). Q4 performance alone was 93.93% (372 out of 396 in time)
B2	Develop a register of strategic / key partnerships which includes key information in terms of key objectives, any funding provided to or from the partnership, who attends from the Council, meeting frequency, consideration of any potential financial or other risks for the Council and exit strategy.	Assistant Chief Executive	July 2025	Subject to successful additional resourcing bid for Strategy, Data & Insight team, a review will be carried out and monitored through CMT.	Revised deadline (from July to November) due to lack of team capacity to deliver by original timeline. Team has started to work with Member support to first assess the 'Outside Bodies' Members attend, purpose of meeting and officer support provided.

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B3	As a new Council we have identified a need to review existing Company / Partnership and Trust Governance.	CMT	April 2025	To carry out a review ensuring training and development arrangements are in place and Governance up to date.	Ongoing Report on charitable trusts due to go to CMT Work has been undertaken regarding Barrow Forward Limited, designating shareholder rep The revised date will be September 2025.
Principle C – Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable, economic, social and environmental benefits					
C1	Continue to develop Strategies, Policies and Procedures for Westmorland and Furness Council to replace those of the previous legacy councils.	Senior Management Team members in their capacity as policy owners	Rolling Programme	Remaining policies will be addressed in 2024/25. Service Assistant Directors are each working to consolidate former legacy policies, procedures, and processes to move to a single suite for W&F Council. Progress is being made and where required formal consultation with recognised Trade Unions and the workforce.	There are policies that will be agreed in 2025/26. There is an issue with the publication of agreed strategies/policies/plans on the Council's Key strategies, policies and plans webpage due to the accessibility of documents created. There is currently a backlog of documents that need to be made accessible.
C2	Ongoing review of capacity to deliver the Council's Change Programme alongside business as usual service delivery	Corporate Management Team (CMT)	Monthly Ongoing	Programme Sponsors are responsible for ensuring appropriate resource is in place to deliver the agreed scope of each programme. Issues regarding resources are escalated to the Corporate Management Team for resolution. Elected Members of the Programme Assurance Board will also receive updates and provide challenge and Cabinet level support if changes to	Ongoing review of capacity to deliver the Council's 2025/26 Delivery Programme alongside business as usual service delivery demands. CMT are looking to use the change

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	demands.			resources are required.	resource to address some resource constraints. 2025/26 Council Plan Delivery Plan subjected to a capacity and delivery workshop in April 2025, that has led to each programme scoping a Programme Brief which has detail of capacity needed to deliver. The Programme Briefs have been reported to CMT Programme Board with an assessment of resources required including bids to the dedicated Change Reserve.
C3	The Council's developing 'Benefits Realisation' approach will be used to identify savings and benefits (financial and non-financial) from its Change Programme to support the Council's overall financial sustainability.	Assistant Chief Executive	April 2025	Each Senior Responsible Officer within the Change Programme will be responsible for identifying benefits to be delivered through the change programme. These will be managed through the Corporate Programme Management Office and into CMT and Programme Assurance Board to ensure connections with the wider programmes and the Council Financial Sustainability programme for example.	Each Senior Responsible Officer within the Delivery Programme is responsible for identifying benefits to be delivered. These will be managed through the Corporate Programme Management Office and into CMT and Programme Assurance Board to ensure connections with the wider programmes and the Council Financial Sustainability programme for example.
C4	Monitor progress on the delivery of the Procurement Strategy Implementation Plan,	Assistant Director – Commissioning and Procurement	Ongoing	The strategy and the implementation plan cover a 3 year period (Until March 2027). The work is therefore ongoing, but with the introduction of new procurement legislation in February 2025, there has been a focus in developing a robust and	The Council prepared well for the new legislation (24 th Feb 2025) and has developed policy and procedures to support

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	implementation of the changes required by the Procurement Act 2023, updating the contracts register and improving the pipeline to support forward planning.			comprehensive Contracts Register. This informs the pipeline and forward planning, including the preparation for the changes in legislation.	implementation. Since 1 st April 2023, the number of contracts on the Contracts Register has gone from circa 350 to over 700, and continues to develop and grow, with new contracts being added. Procurement Act 23 Pipeline notices for estimated values of more than £2m are now in place and published in time of the 26 May 2025 deadline.
C5	Monitor progress on the delivery of the Commissioning Strategy Implementation Plan across different service areas.	Assistant Director – Commissioning and Procurement	Ongoing	The strategy and the implementation plan cover a 3 year period (Until March 2027). The work is therefore ongoing – however for 24/25 the priority has been to develop the capacity and the skills of the Commissioning Team and supporting the Procurement team in ensuring the Contracts Register is up to date and developing a commissioning timeline to support.	The Service has completed a period of onboarding and staff development. Since 1 st April 2023, the number of contracts on the Contracts Register has gone from circa 350 to over 700, and continues to develop and grow, with new contracts being added, which is being supported by clear commissioning timelines for agreed priorities. Even with the additional capacity, there is limited scope to increase the breath of support from commissioning to other services, which was the vision.

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					Commissioning will continue to focus on People services.
C6	Develop a Consultation and Engagement Strategy to provide valuable advice and guidance to ensure that high quality co-ordinated approach is taken to consultation.	Assistant Chief Executive	30 April 2025	Work is underway and a final document is due for approval at Cabinet in April.	Following early engagement with a range of stakeholders including all elected members, a new date for Cabinet consideration is September 2025 as that will allow further co-production and scrutiny of the Strategy.
Principle D – Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes					
D1	Service plans of varying levels created across the Council, some more detailed than others.	Corporate Management Team	April 2025	Where appropriate, Annual service planning cycle to be linked to budget planning. Policy & Performance team to support and help embed the annual service planning cycle across the Council.	This is underway, with the aim of having a revised and agreed process by early summer 2025. Formal Strategies have annual Delivery Plans, and aligned to major programme briefs form the majority of service plans in some services to avoid duplication.
D2	Identify what benchmarking of services the Council currently uses, what regional, national, and statistical neighbours comparators are used and what needs to be	Assistant Chief Executive	June 2025	Directorate Support Managers will be engaged to support collation of this information from Directorates, alongside a review of corporately available information by the Strategy, Data & Insight team. Value for money considerations are contingent on financial information being available which may require a longer timeframe.	Currently engaging with DMTs on the process, ready for the Q1 2025-26 performance report.

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	developed to support our approach to demonstrating value of money.				
D3	The Council will ensure its new People Plan is fully costed to reflect future skills requirements.	Assistant Director – OD / HR Assistant Director of Finance	June 2025	<p>The existing investment in our people, their skills, and development, together with any future requirements to deliver our People Plan will be assessed by Finance and HR/OD.</p> <p>Enabler Services Directorate regularly review Foundational Strategies and the capacity to deliver. Where there are capacity challenges, prioritisation takes place, or requests submitted for additional capacity to deliver.</p>	<p>OD Business Partners work with each Directorate/Service to determine the training needs, which form our annual 'One Plan' summary which is fully costed to determine training needs against our corporate learning and development budget.</p> <p>The existing investment in our people, their skills, and development, together with any future requirements to deliver our People Plan will continue to be assessed by Finance and HR/OD and shared with CMT.</p> <p>Enabler Services Directorate regularly review Foundational Strategies and the capacity to deliver. Where there are capacity challenges, prioritisation takes place, or requests submitted for additional capacity to deliver.</p>
D4	Publish social value key performance indicators for	Assistant Director – Commissioning and Procurement	30 April 2025	Report to be published in April 2025 of those social value measures assessed and determined in the tender evaluation	The report will be completed in early 2025/26.

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	2024/25.			process and any contract performance information available to support.	
Principle E – Developing the entity’s capacity and capability including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it					
E1	Ensure the Computer Aided Facilities Management (CAFM) database, “Concerto”, is fully populated as soon as possible to ensure all data is available to support future assessments of the suitability of the Council’s estate.	Assistant Director - Corporate Assets, Fleet & Capital Programme	31 December 2024	The service has conducted a gap analysis of outstanding data to populate the ‘Concerto’ system and a deadline of December 2024 set to complete this task.	Gap analysis has now been concluded and all legacy councils are progressing onboarding across a number of modules. Legacy drives will be decommissioned in Q1 25/26 to foster use of the CAFM system as a single system going forward.
E2	The Council needs to enhance capacity to deliver its capital programme in future years.	Assistant Director - Corporate Assets, Fleet & Capital Programme	April 2025	Additional capacity is being recruited and although it is a challenging market the team has successfully recruited some additional project and portfolio managers and will continue to review capacity levels as the capital programme continues to grow.	TBC
E3	Additional Resources will be required to deliver the full disaggregation of the former County Council ICT estate to each separate Unitary Council	Director of Enabler Services	31 March 2025	Financial resources were secured in 2024/25 MTFP and W&F Phase 1 Recruitment to additional Manager posts completed in October 2024. Phase 2 recruitment took place in Q3 and a 30% growth in W&F ICT team now in post. Additional capacity was also required in the ICT Hosted Service led by Cumberland colleagues and the Director Enabler Services approved a W&F contribution to additional capacity paid through an enhanced contribution to the ICT IAA for the temporary additional	W&F core ICT team has grown by 30% in 2024/25 with recruitment completed and a number of new posts in place and working well. 3 additional FTE were also partly funded by W&F Council to the Hosted ICT Service managed by Cumberland for a Senior Manager

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				<p>resources.</p> <p>As a result of transitioning from seven former Councils and Cumbria Fire & Rescue Services into two new Unitary Councils and a separate Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service, there is a significant ICT programme of work for the disaggregation and aggregation of ICT systems. ahead for 2025/25 with 58 systems still to disaggregate and the Hosted Service (former County Council) ICT workforce still to disaggregate.</p> <p>This programme of work requires extra ICT staffing resources to ensure its successful delivery in addition to maintaining business as usual. For example, where the former County Council had a single system for services such as Adults and Children Social Care, Education, Asset Management, Legal, each Unitary requires its own system and this has created cost increases and additional resources to ensure longer term safe and legal provision. Additional ICT staffing is now also required to deliver the ICT transformation to support the ambitions of Westmorland & Furness Council in its use of ICT.</p>	<p>Hosted ICT, Disaggregation Programme Manager and Disaggregation Project manager.</p> <p>This additional capacity is now in place and working well to inform the Joint Hosted ICT Disaggregation Board that W&F AD ICT and Director Enabler Services attend.</p> <p>On 22 May 2025, it was identified that 3 additional posts are required to manage the remaining 58 systems to disaggregate and this funding contribution from W&F was presented to CMT Programme Board 28 May 2025 and supported in principle.</p>
E4	Continue to improve the recruitment process and undertaking reviews at key elements of the recruitment process.	Assistant Director HR / OD	31 Dec 2024	<p>Audit Committee to receive a detailed presentation in November 2024 summarising the programme of work to improve recruitment process. Key actions have included a dedicated section of the People Plan Delivery Plan, investment in HR Resourcing Team, streamlining the recruitment process, ensuring compliance with DBS regulations, attracting candidates utilising digital platforms and brand development, market supplements, flexible and remote working, apprentices and early careers programmes, workforce planning and talent management, service specific approaches, use of temporary and agency workers, employee benefits, international recruitment scoping and continuing person centred policies and practices. A further presentation to the Audit Committee is planned for June 2025. This is an ongoing programme of continual improvement</p>	<p>Audit Committee received a detailed presentation in November 2024 summarising the programme of work to improve recruitment process. A further presentation to the Audit Committee is planned for June 2025.</p>

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				however we can confirm key actions such as investing in Resourcing Team, DBS improvements, workforce planning, apprentices, review of agency and temporary workforce are in place as per the target date of 31 Dec 2024.	
Principle F – Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management					
F1	Embed the new Scrutiny Executive protocol and Scrutiny development plan and ensure scrutiny makes the most impact and fulfils its 'critical friend' role.	Cabinet All Scrutiny Chairs and Members CMT, SLT, Officers	Ongoing through 2025/26	Working with Members to deliver the ambitions of the Scrutiny Executive protocol and the projects and actions within the Scrutiny Development Plan.	Still working with Members to deliver the ambitions of the Scrutiny Executive protocol and the projects and actions within the Scrutiny Development Plan.
F2	Improve risk management arrangements as outlined in the Grant Thornton Annual Audit and VFM report for 2023/24. This would include:	Assistant Director of Finance Senior Risk Officer (SRO)	September 2025	<p>-SRO (Second Line) will educate Directorates on the required changes and check that these changes have been implemented after a suitable period of 3 and 6 months. (from Sept 2025) .</p> <p>-It is the role of Directors/ AD's/HOS (First Line) to ensure compliance with these recommended changes.</p> <p>SRO to educate all Directorates/ Directorate Support Managers about the need to clarify risk, cause and impact when defining risks at a Directorate & Operational Level.</p> <p>After a period of time, SRO to seek assurance that current risks have been amended and new risks have adopted standard format</p>	<p>We are currently in the process of reviewing and refreshing the Risk Management Framework with support from Cabinet members. This document will be updated and signed off by Sept 2025 and training sessions will begin thereafter.</p> <p>SRO in process of setting up Risk Management training session with DSM's in Q2.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separating out risk, cause and impact Integrating strategic risks and scores into relevant committee reports Integrating risk, performance and financial reporting and report quarterly to Cabinet 			<p>SRO to educate all Directorates/ Directorate Support Managers about the need to clarify risk, cause and impact when defining risks at a Directorate & Operational Level.</p> <p>After a period of time, SRO to seek assurance that current risks have been amended and new risks have adopted standard format</p> <p>This action is complete.</p> <p>A5. From 2024/25 Quarter 2, the Risk Report & Risk Register will be reported to Cabinet alongside the Budget and Performance reports.</p> <p>- A further Risk Assurance Report will be produced for Audit Committee twice a year, starting March 2025</p> <p>From Q2 2024/25, the Strategic Risk Reports have been reported to Cabinet alongside the Budget and Performance reports. This action is complete.</p>	<p>SRO to meet with Legal officer in Q1 to discuss this requirement.</p> <p>Complete</p>

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F3	Improve overall fraud awareness and prevention work.	Assistant Director of Finance Group Audit Manager (Head of Internal Audit)	30 June 2025	An Annual Fraud Report will be produced, the first one will be for 2023/24 and this will be presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting in March 2025. For 2025/26 Internal Audit will produce a separate Fraud Audit Plan outlining specific fraud work that they will undertake in 2025/26.	The 2023/24 Annual Fraud Report and Fraud Plan for 2025/26 agreed by the Audit Committee on the 11 March 2025.
F4	Produced an annual fraud report and presented it to the Audit Committee.	Assistant Director of Finance Group Audit Manager (Head of Internal Audit)	11 March 2025	The Council's Annual Fraud Report for 2023/24 will be presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting in March 2025.	Complete
F5	Improve controls relating to the main accounting systems to ensure that all bank reconciliations should be completed, balanced, undertaken on a timely basis and subject to independent review.	Assistant Director of Finance	31 March 2025	An Internal Audit review of the Main Accounting System will be undertaken as part of the 2024/25 audit plan.	The Banking & Income function disaggregated on 31 December 2024 and a specific post was added during 2024 that has effectively reviewed the income and banking reconciliations, keeping those up-to-date for 2024/25. The status of the action will be informed by the planned Internal Audit review. Awaiting Audit Review and validation
F6	Improve internal control relating to the accounts receivable system to ensure that income is posted on a timely basis and supports	Assistant Director of Finance	31 March 2025	An Internal Audit review of Accounts Receivable is being undertaken as part of the 2024/25 audit plan.	The Banking & Income function disaggregated on 31 December 2024 and a specific post was added during 2024 that has effectively reviewed the income and banking reconciliations, keeping those up-to-date for

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	effective debt recovery.				2024/25. The status of the action will be informed by the planned Internal Audit review. Awaiting Audit Review and validation.
F7	Develop an Internal Audit Manual for the Westmorland and Furness Council Internal Audit Service.	Group Audit Manager (Head of Internal Audit)	31 March 2025	The development of a new Internal Audit Manual was included in the 2024/25 audit plan. Work is ongoing and the new manual will be based around the new Global Internal Audit Standards which will be applied to the public sector from 1 April 2025.	Work is ongoing and the new manual as is based around the new Global Internal Audit Standards. Early working draft produce in March 2025 but progress delayed due to the need to focus on work needed for the 2024/25 Head of Internal Audit Opinion. Carry Forward to 2024/25 Action Plan with target date of 30 September 2025.
F8	Develop an action plan to include the improvement areas identified in the Audit Committee Annual Report and Review of Effectiveness for 2023/24. Use this to monitor progress on addressing the improvement areas.	Assistant Director of Finance	28 February 2025	The Audit Committee Effectiveness Action Plan will be presented to the Audit Committee on a regular basis.	These actions are part of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Action Plan and progress is reported Audit Committee. The 2024/25 Audit Committee Effectiveness review is to be presented to the meeting of the 9 June 2025, plus an update of the AGS Action Plan progress.

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F9	The Council will enhance its financial reporting in terms of reporting of savings, reporting of the capital programme and by aligning financial performance and risk reporting.	Assistant Director of Finance Assistant Chief Executive		The Strategic Risk Register, Corporate Performance, and Budget Monitoring reports are aligned to come to Cabinet quarterly from December 2024. The financial implications of each Cabinet report include any budget savings, pressures, or other financial implications. Budget savings generally flow through the budget setting process now and as part of the Change Programme, the Resource Optimisation programme aims to establish an ongoing budget cycle where savings are generated and realised throughout the year. Savings will be supported by consistent evidence through data capture, ensuring savings can be finitely measure against robust baselines.	Completed prior to AGS Action Plan being published.
F10	Monitor progress on delivering the roadmap set out in the Data & Intelligence Strategy.	Assistant Chief Executive	Ongoing	Delivery of the Data & Intelligence Strategy action plan is underway and will be reported through the CMT Priority Programme.	Progress on implementation of the Data and Intelligence Strategy is delayed.
F11	Undertake the additional work required to improve the Council Information Asset Register and Information Records Management.	SIRO, Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer, Data Protection Officer Members and Officers Assistant Chief Executive and All Assistant Directors	April 2025 and Ongoing	Information Asset Register improvements to be led by Data Protection Officer supported by Senior Leadership Team. This is a large and complex review following LGR so will require significant focus and resources, so will likely span the 2024/25 and 2025/25 years to fully complete. Each of the former Councils had its own information asset register, and these now require review, aggregation and asset owners re-established to align to the new Unitary Structure and key officers responsible for the information assets. The Council will embed and communicate its approach to information records management.	A Joint Information Asset Register Working Group has been setup to review existing assets and agree next steps to develop a new IAR. This includes testing of a new Asset Register module in the Information Sharing Gateway, released end of February 2025. Stakeholder review is underway - includes DPOs, Cyber-Security Leads and Senior Manager - Records Management (Hosted). Recruitment is now in advanced stages for a Senior Information

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					Governance and Records Officer, and it is anticipated that they will contribute to the development of the WAFC IAR. Additional resource may be required to deliver this project at pace.
F12	Undertaking a self-assessment against the CIPFA Financial Management Code and develop an action plan to address and improve areas identified.	Assistant Director of Finance	September 2025		Not due yet
Principle G – Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability					
G1	Further work is required to further strengthen the availability and timeliness of publishing spend data on the Council website.	AD – Commissioning and Procurement AD Customer & Digital	31 March 2025	Website platform has been improved and able to receive the required data to be published as part of the wider programme of website enhancements.	Work continues and as is part of the implementation of the changes to the transparency of contract spend through Procurement Act 2024
Ongoing impact of Local Government Reorganisation					
LGR1	The Council needs to prioritise the harmonisation of the legacy financial	Assistant Director of Finance Director Enabler	Ongoing	The Council HR and Payroll and Finance Systems are both priority projects within the 2024/25 and 2025/26 ICT Programme of Works. Regular updates will be provided to CMT, Programme Assurance Board and Scrutiny Committees given the strategic	Financial Systems Board established, dedicated ICT programme management support in place and documented

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	systems.	Services		importance and impact of change.	commitment from system supplier, and ICT hosted service in place with project plan progressing for clarity of intended harmonisation dates (there are several systems).
LGR2	Monitor the delivery of the ICT programme for 2024/25. This forms part of the 5-7 year strategy to aggregate former district ICT and disaggregate former county council ICT networks and systems to create a single ICT environment for Westmorland and Furness Council.	Director Enabler Services	2024/25 programme of works by 31 March 2025	<p>Continued progress is being made on a prioritised basis. Examples of dedicated W&F systems now include single W&F instances of Children's and Adult Social Care, Controcc (payments), Education Management, Fleet, and Asset Management ICT systems.</p> <p>In parallel, major ICT infrastructure and technical improvements progress 'behind the scenes' to ensure appropriate technical foundations and strengthened security arrangements are in place.</p> <p>Additional dedicated W&F ICT resources now in post and working well with additional resourcing plan being scoped to ensure delivery of 2025/6 ICT priorities.</p>	<p>AD ICT regularly attends W&F design assurance group briefs Cabinet and Shadow Portfolio Holders on progress.</p> <p>Director Enabler Services presents to CMT Programme Board and Cabinet on progress relating to the voluminous and complex ICT programme of change.</p> <p>All staff and member communications plan in pace to increase visibility of programme and progress during 2025.</p>
LGR3	Develop a Corporate ICT Disaster Recovery Plan that is documented and approved by CMT.	Director Enabler Services	April 2025	2 x new ICT and Cyber Security Manager and ICT Service Manager now in place to lead this work during 2025 with advanced draft presented to Corporate Business Continuity Board for co-production in April 2025. Additional workshop planned 29 May 2025 to finalise the sequencing of critical application restoration to finalise the document..	Good progress made and final version on track to be presented to Director Enabler Services for SIRO approval by end June 2025.

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LGR4	Monitor the delivery of the Council's Dedicated Schools Grant management Plan in terms of controlling in-year pressures on the high needs block.	Director of Children's Services	April 2025 and ongoing	We have, working with DfE, put in place a Dedicated Schools Grant plan that has been agreed by the department that meets their expectations as part of the DBV plan, with a desired outcome from April 2025 and ongoing. The details are in the plan.	