

Cannock Chase District Council - Governance Improvement Plan for 2026-27

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale
1	Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
1.1	Behaving with Integrity - Code of Conduct for Employees and Values to be rolled out across the Council and awareness training provided	Head of Business Support & Assurance	Rollout in Quarter 1 Training in Quarter 2
1.2	Ethical Values - Update the Anti-Fraud and Bribery Framework and the Confidential Reporting Framework (External Audit - Significant Recommendation 3)	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Completed April 2026
1.3	Ethical Values - Develop a fraud risk register (Outstanding action from 25/26)	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 2
1.4	Ethical Values – declaration of conflict of interests – awareness to be raise and annual review to be built into Employee Review process	Head of Business Support & Assurance / HR Manager	Quarter 1 – awareness raising Quarter 2 – Employee Review process
1.5	Respecting the rule of law – managers checks on compliance with the law and local policies/guidance needs to be evidenced. Guidance on this to be issued	Head of Business Support & Assurance / Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 3
2	Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement		
2.1	Openness – Checklist to be introduced to ensure that Legal, Financial and HR implications in committee reports are completed and signed off by the relevant professional officers	Head of Law & Governance	Quarter 2
2.2	Reports which are not coming to Leadership Team for consideration prior to going to Cabinet, Council etc must be identified and agreement reached in advance – to be embedded into sign-off checklist (action above)	Leadership Team	Quarter 2
2.3	Engaging with Stakeholders – plan of key consultation for next 2 years to be developed	Communications Manager	Quarter 2 – dependent on Leadership Team completing work plans

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3.	Defining the vision and outcomes for the local area and determining the actions necessary to achieve the intended outcomes		
3.1	Ensuring VFM - Put in place a formal SLA with Staffs County Council re the shared procurement arrangements. Due to the advent of LGR, this is not deemed a priority. Working practices have been in place for several years and this will continue for the foreseeable future. Should LGR be delayed then this will be revisited. External Audit - Other Recommendation 3)	Head of Business Support & Assurance	No further action
3.2	Ensuring VFM - Provide regular reports to Members on single tender waivers. Waivers to be reported on to the Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee quarterly. External Audit - Other Recommendation 3)	Head of Law & Governance	Quarter 1 onwards
3.3	Ensuring VFM - Update the contracts register and ensure it is compliant with transparency requirements – to be updated as part of the preparations for LGR. This will also include the development of a plan of those contracts which need to be re-tendered in the next 2 years. External Audit - Other Recommendation 3)	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 1 Quarter 2
3.4	Fair access to services – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy, Equality Impact Assessment Template and guidance to be updated and training provided.	Head of Business Support & Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 2
4.	Determining the interventions necessary to achieve the intended outcomes		
4.1	Performance Management - Develop a data quality policy or similar process for providing assurance on KPIS as part of performance management reporting Whilst it is acknowledged that it would be useful to have a data quality policy, in light of limited capacity and LGR it has been agreed not to implement this recommendation. It would take several months to develop the policy and would at best have 18 months of use, assuming that LGR proceeds to the current timetable. (External Audit - Other Recommendation 2)	Head of Business Support & Assurance	No further action
4.2	Develop work plans for all Heads of Service for the next 2 years to manage the lead up to LGR. To include the development of a performance reporting framework for Leadership Team (<i>Outstanding action from 25/26</i>)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Deputy Chief Executive (Place)	Quarter 1

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4.3	Review of service delivery information (KPIs) and approach to service improvements to identify what information is being collected and to assess and fill any key gaps.	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 3
4.4	Facilitated session with Leadership Team to progress developing a culture of ownership and accountability.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 3
4.5	Provide training for key officers (LT, Service Managers and relevant Principal Officers/Team Leaders) on project management. (Outstanding action from 25/26)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 2
5.	Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it		
5.1	Statutory Officer (Golden Triangle) meetings to be formally established with an agenda designed to cover governance issues	Deputy Chief Executive – Resources	Quarter 1
5.2	Employee induction process to be refreshed	HR Manager	Quarter 3
5.3	Employee review process to be refreshed and relaunched	HR Manager	Quarter 2
5.4	Complete review of hybrid working and develop a hybrid working policy. (Outstanding action from 25/26)	Head of Business Support & Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 2
6.	Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management		
6.4	Risk Management - Put in place directorate/departmental risk registers for all service areas - Risk registers to be subject to regular review to ensure mitigating actions are being taken - to be done quarterly - Process to be put in place to escalate risks to the strategic risk register where appropriate – any significant risks identified from the quarterly reviews will be reported to Leadership Team for inclusion in the Strategic Risk Register (External Audit – Significant Recommendation 2)	Head of Business Support & Assurance, Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager and Leadership Team	Quarter 2

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6.5	Deliver the health & safety action plan which aims to embed a pro-active Health & Safety culture. The key actions include: • Update the overarching Health & Safety Policy • Deliver targeted training to Leadership Team and Managers • Determine a programme for reviewing and updating H&S policies	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 2 Quarter 2 Quarter 3
6.1	Financial Management - Ensure adequate capacity in the Finance Team - efforts will continue to recruit to vacancies in the Finance Team and/ or to continue to use agency staff where appropriate. Ensure that budget holders receive formal financial monitoring reports – it is unlikely that the resourcing situation will improve sufficiently to increase reporting from half yearly to quarterly. Produce draft financial statements in line with statutory requirements and work with external auditors to deliver the audits effectively (External Audit – Significant Recommendation 1)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Quarter 2 - End of Summer 2026
6.2	Financial Management - Review the need to implement further savings ahead of LGR given the potential funding gaps identified in 26/27 and 27/28 as a result of changes to the financial settlement after the MTFS and 26/27 budgets were approved in January 26. Due to the high uncertainty around the settlement and the previous late interventions by central government to ensure no decrease in core funding, a savings programme is not deemed appropriate for 2026/27 at this stage. There are sufficient reserves in place to be able to prudently adopt this approach should central government not change the current settlement amounts. (External Audit – Other Recommendation 1)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	No further action
6.3	Review of Financial Regulations and training for managers (Outstanding action from 2025/26)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 2

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6.6	Develop a structured approach / framework to the management of corporate assets	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets and Corporate Asset Manager	Quarter 4
6.7	Assurance & Scrutiny - Development of Assurance Model, to include: • Annual Assurance Report for Health & Safety • Annual Assurance Report for Technology • Heads of Service Assurance Statements (Outstanding action from 2025/26)	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	• Quarter 2 • Quarter 1 • Quarter 1
6.9	Data and IT Security – AI policy to be developed	Technology Manager	Quarter 2
6.10	Data and IT Security – Ensure that annual refresher training is undertaken	Technology Manager / Data Protection Officer	Quarter 4
7.	Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability		
7.1	Develop a lessons learnt approach eg from projects and complaints. Initial discussion to be held with Leadership Team to establish any current best practice and build on this	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 3
8.	General / Other		
8.1	Training and reminders for managers on good governance and key components of the framework (Outstanding action from 2025/26)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Head of Business Support & Assurance and Head of Law & Governance	Quarter 2