Appendix 1: Governance Issues 2013/14

Governance Issue Identified (as per AGS 2013-14)	Lead Officer	Progress and Planned Activity (as per AGS 2013-14)	Latest Progress Update
Internal Audit identified during 2013-14 that the Council's overarching business continuity arrangements are not robust and that business resilience may be susceptible due to not having in place: i) up to date and effective ICT business continuity plans, and ii) ICT disaster recovery plans which reflect the business critical service requirements as documented in Corporate, Departmental and/or Service business continuity plans.	Chief Information Officer/ Director of Resources Assistant Chief Executive/ Head of Universal and Infrastructure Services/ Senior Manager – Health, Safety and Resilience	The Council has enhanced its capacity to address this governance issue and has taken action to resolve the immediate issues that have impacted on the Council's ICT business continuity arrangements. Significant IT infrastructural work has been undertaken to strengthen the robustness of the IT disaster recovery plan. Further work is planned to improve the underlying IT business continuity, and ensure that it supports business priorities.	i) A Business Continuity Policy has been produced and publicised on the Council's Intranet. This accompanies a business continuity planning template which is in the process of being completed for all those services deemed to be "critical" by SLT in December 2014. The aim is to have the plans completed by the end of March 2015. The content of the plans will be used to inform the work plans for the IT service in the event of data loss of one or a number of systems. Training on business continuity is also being provided to key staff members within the Health, Safety and Resilience Team. ii) A number of projects are underway to improve the resilience of the Council's IT systems - these include the refresh of hardware and software and developing a more resilient Wide Area Network. An options appraisal is being undertaken to review possible options for the physical or virtual relocation of the data centre(s). During March 2015, a paper presenting the preferred option and recommendations will be presented to SLT.
Internal Audit identified during 2013-14 that the Council has significant weaknesses in relation to its corporate procurement arrangements including the process required to ensure all formal tender	Strategic Director – Transformation and Resources Head of Legal/Member Services Head of Procurement	Arrangements, including training for key Legal staff members, are in place with regards to the use of the Council's CHEST system as the Council's Central Contracts Register. This will enable more robust arrangements to be established for the drafting,	A review of the Contract Procedure Rules is underway as part of the review of the Constitution, and will be reported to Cabinet in March 2015. This will include the adoption of the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The commencement date for the Regulations is split over three key dates, namely 26 February 2015, 18 April 2017 and 18 October 2018. The capacity issues within the Corporate Procurement Team are being addressed with a view to including category management and supporting 'no purchase order, no pay'. It

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exercises are promptly progressed to completion with a formal contract drawn up and signed/sealed accordingly.		agreement and execution of contracts. The Council is taking the following actions to address this governance issue: ▪ Review the contract procedure rules and ensure they are fully embedded across the organisation ▪ Fully implement a disciplined and corporate approach to procurement through category management, reducing manual invoicing and rationalising procurement activity ▪ Identify an effective approach to achieve maximum advantage from a centralised approach and move towards "no purchase order, no pay".	is expected that both will be completed by April 2015. Training for key Legal staff members is to be arranged with regards to the use of the Council's CHEST system as the Council's Central Contracts Register. This will enable more robust arrangements to be established for the drafting, agreement and execution of contracts. A Protocol is also being developed to further strengthen and affirm the respective roles, responsibilities and working arrangements between Legal Services and the Corporate Procurement Unit.
The Annual Governance Statement 2012/13 identified that absence monitoring statistics have revealed a calculated	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	The introduction of a new performance report has improved the targeting of resources and management action and support. The target for 2013/14 is	The Council's absence levels show an improvement in performance compared to previous years. There has been significant development in management information available, that has enabled trends and areas of concern to be identified and has facilitated more targeted support and interventions. Line managers have desktop access to latest

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year end figure of 10.28 days against a target of 9.5 days. This remained a high position in comparison with other Councils and additional short term resources have been added within Human Resources to review all long-term cases and to work with managers to ensure there is an action plan in place and that cases are managed appropriately in accordance with policy.		10.5 days. The projected position is currently 9.49 days. This is an improvement, on previous year's performance of 10.3 days, however there remains further work to do to improve this position.	absence figures for teams and individuals. There is also increased awareness at strategic and senior management level of absence as a performance issue. Absence issues are a regular item at Directorate Management Team meetings, with HR Business Partners working with departments to identify and address issues of concern. The absence figures to the end of November 2014 had shown a projected year-end absence figure of 9.72 days, compared to a target of 9.75. However, the improvement in the absence figures has changed, with a year-on-year increase in December 2014. This has increased the projected forecast to 10.20 days. Until the January figure is finalised, the trend cannot be confirmed.
The Annual Governance Statement 2012/13 identified that Asset Management was in a position of constant change of policy and priorities during the 2012/2013 year. It is important in order to obtain maximum benefit from its property assets that the Council focuses on a clear policy and strategy, fees and	Assistant Chief Executive/ Head of Universal & Infrastructure Services	A new, draft Asset Management Plan has been produced, consulted on within the council and will be presented to Cabinet in June 2014. Following approval of this document, work will progress on a suite of sub-documents in relation to specific asset issues and policies. A new form of consultation with the community and partners in relation to asset matters is being trialled in	The Strategic Asset Management Plan was approved by Cabinet on 19 June 2014. Implementation of the new asset management system is underway. Full implementation across the Asset Management function is due to complete by the end of March 2015, with schools and other stakeholders to follow. Work continues in terms of the disposal of surplus assets, with a total of £2.8m having been raised so far in 2014/15. The sites identified in the original review of vacant land and buildings are nearly exhausted, but a number of additional assets have been identified for disposal in the coming year. The Council's appointed property consultant has commenced the marketing for the Acre Lane Centre. Work towards the disposal of the other two major sites also continues.

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charges are regularly reviewed, updated and income monitored, and a clear separation of duties and evidence trail exists regarding valuations.		Moreton. The intention is to secure greater involvement and improve communications with regard to asset issues. The trial will be evaluated and a decision taken on whether to extend to other areas. Work is proceeding in terms of disposal of surplus assets and a total of £2.5m was raised through disposals in 13/14, ahead of the target figure. Work is proceeding on the disposal of the first of three major sites, the Acre Lane Centre, with staff re-location underway. The office rationalisation project, which will continue over the next two years, has begun with staff being re-located within Wallasey Town Hall, Cheshire Lines and Birkenhead Town Hall, starting a process of having more staff in fewer locations, to generate savings. Appropriate desking to support replacement IT and telephone equipment is being implemented on a phased basis.	A list of fees and charges related to the surveying function has been compiled and submitted for incorporation into the updated Fees and Charges Register to be presented to Cabinet in February 2015. The Council website is to be updated to reflect the charges in respect of venues for hire, to include those transferred via the Community Asset Transfer, in order to make it clear which properties are managed independently.

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		A specialist company has been appointed to deal with the disposal of the large sites identified in a report to Cabinet in November 2013 which will provide the Council with substantial Capital receipts which will form part of the Council's Capital Programme.	
The Annual Governance Statement 2012/13 identified that essential training across the Council has proved difficult to monitor and control. It is important that any training requirements deemed to be mandatory, such as Equalities and Diversity, should be communicated to and undertaken by all employees, including officers who do not have computer access.	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	A reporting process is in place to monitor the completion of essential programmes. Steps have been taken to improve the ability to monitor and ensure training (essential and statutory) is undertaken. It is expected that completion of the key aspects of the training will have reached an acceptable level by Summer 2014.	There is a process in place to monitor levels of completion of essential training delivered as e-learning. SLT is informed of the figures resulting from this monitoring and takes action to encourage completion.

The latest figure on the Information Governance mandatory e-learning training stands at 87%. A new Dignity at Work, Whistleblowing and Grievance mandatory e-learning module was launched in late 2014.

The Senior Leadership Team is reviewing the essential training requirements so as to reduce the number of workshops and increase e–learning, so as to ensure ongoing take-up. |