

**Financial Management Code Action Plan**

Standard	Description	Current RAG Rating	Action(s) Required	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
A	The leadership team is able to demonstrate that the services provided by the authority provide value for money.	AMBER	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Ofsted rating requires improving to “Good” or Outstanding” from “the current “Requires Improvement to be Good”.</li> <li>2. Achieving and maintaining an unqualified Value for Money judgement from the Council’s External Auditors.</li> </ol>	<p>Executive Director Children’s Services</p> <p>Director of Finance</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2024</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2024</p>
B	The authority complies with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government.	GREEN			
C	The leadership team demonstrates in its actions and behaviours responsibility for governance and internal control.	GREEN			
D	The authority applies the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016).	AMBER	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Achieving and maintaining an unqualified opinion in respect of putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources from the Council’s External Auditors in the 2019/20 and 2020/21 Statement of Accounts.</li> </ol>	Director of Finance	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024
E	The financial management style of the authority supports financial sustainability.	GREEN			

F	The authority has carried out a credible and transparent financial resilience assessment.	GREEN			
G	The authority understands its prospects for financial sustainability in the longer term and has reported this clearly to members.	AMBER	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a robust savings delivery plan to close the current forecast budget gap in future years that arises primarily from the forecast impact of the Business Rates Retention Scheme Reset (currently forecast to affect 2025/26 onwards).</li> <li>2. Expand the period covered by the Capital Strategy &amp; Capital Programme to ensure a longer term view of the Council's financial sustainability is understood.</li> </ol>	Director of Finance  Director of Finance	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024  28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
H	The authority complies with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.	GREEN			
I	The authority has a rolling multi-year medium-term financial plan consistent with sustainable service plans.	AMBER	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve the linkages between Service Plans, the Corporate Plan and the MTFS.</li> </ol>	Corporate Management Team	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
J	The authority complies with its statutory obligations in respect of the budget setting process.	GREEN			
K	The budget report includes a statement by the chief finance officer on the robustness of the estimates and a statement on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.	GREEN			
L	The authority has engaged where appropriate with key stakeholders	AMBER	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consider utilisation of more interactive consultation tools that</li> </ol>	Director of Finance	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024

	in developing its long-term financial strategy, medium-term financial plan and annual budget.		encourage a higher level of engagement.  2. Expand the period covered by the Capital Strategy & Capital Programme to ensure a longer term view of the Council's financial sustainability is understood.	Director of Finance	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
M	The authority uses an appropriate documented option appraisal methodology to demonstrate the value for money of its decisions.	AMBER	1. Review the matrix used to assess individual capital business cases and improve how the matrix scores are used in the decision making process.  2. Improve the quality of revenue and capital business cases.  3. Determine a preferred best practice methodology for assessing investment option appraisals, and document and communicate to all relevant stakeholders to ensure a consistent and common approach for both revenue and capital investment decisions.	Capital Programme Board  Corporate Management Team  Capital Programme Board	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024  28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024  28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
N	The leadership team takes action using reports enabling it to identify and correct emerging risks to its budget strategy and financial sustainability.	GREEN			
O	The leadership team monitors the elements of its balance sheet that pose a significant risk to its financial sustainability.	AMBER	1. Develop and implement new reporting arrangements to the Council's leadership team to include but not limited to:	Director of Finance	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2023

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly revenue and capital budget monitoring forecasts</li> <li>• The CIPFA Resilience Index</li> <li>• Reserve assessments</li> <li>• Outstanding debt levels</li> <li>• Treasury Management Prudential Indicators</li> <li>• Commercial Investments</li> <li>• Loans to the Council's wholly owned companies</li> </ul>		
P	The chief finance officer has personal and statutory responsibility for ensuring that the statement of accounts produced by the local authority complies with the reporting requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.	AMBER	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Achieve and maintain an unqualified opinion on the Council's annual Statement of Accounts from the external auditors.</li> <li>2. Produce draft accounts by the statutory deadlines in line with proper accounting practice.</li> </ol>	Director of Finance	Ongoing
				Director of Finance	Ongoing
Q	The presentation of the final outturn figures and variations from budget allows the leadership team to make strategic financial decisions.	AMBER	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Catch up on the Statement of Accounts audit process so that the annual Outturn Report and Statement of Accounts are aligned and prepared and presented in a timely manner to enable timely strategic financial decisions to be made.</li> </ol>	Director of Finance	Ongoing