

DRAFT: for the consideration of Executive Board on 16 July 2024

Nottingham City Council Improvement Plan

Our Plan to become a financially sustainable and well-run
Council with a clear direction and purpose



Nottingham
City Council

Foreword from the Leader and Deputy Leader

Nottingham City Council will always work hard for the people it serves. Our ambition for our citizens will never change. We will strive to provide the best services, protect those most in need, and ensure the City can continue to thrive.

In recent years, this has become increasingly challenging. We no longer have the money to deliver the services people need or to support them in the way we would like; demand is overwhelming us; and the landscape in which we operate is changing and we have sometimes been slow to adapt to deliver services in different ways or by working with partners.

We are now at a critical moment in our Council's history.

We are clear that we must change – and accept that we must do this quickly. Put simply, the next three years will make or break the Council. That is why we have drawn up our Improvement Plan, a roadmap that recognises the urgency of the task ahead and sets out how we can move from crisis to stability, to get back on track to deliver for the people Nottingham.

This won't be easy. There are services we currently provide that we will have to reduce; there are other services that must change to be more efficient; and there are some things we will simply have to stop doing and look at new ways of working with our partners to deliver them.

We serve a diverse City with significant deprivation, so it is important that our commitment to equality, inclusivity and protecting our most vulnerable people remains steadfast.

However, following our issuing of a Section 114(3) Report and the appointment of Government Commissioners, we know that the Council must restore and rebuild trust with the people of Nottingham. We are committed to making this happen and will not shy away from the challenge ahead of us.

Our Improvement Plan recognises that we must learn from the mistakes of the past and overcome the barriers that have slowed our improvement progress. This includes:

- **Having fewer, clearer priorities:** while much of the Council's role is legally defined, we will consider different options for delivering services by partnering with others.
- **Making quicker decisions:** officers and Councillors will work more effectively together, ensuring our decisions are based on evidence, along with better monitoring of our performance.

- **Reducing our costs:** we will make the most of our income and maximise the value of every penny of taxpayers' money. The biggest cost to the Council is supporting vulnerable children and adults, and so significant innovation will be needed here.
- **Making the most of our people:** our biggest resource is our hard-working and dedicated officers and Councillors. We will continue to build our training and development programmes to drive forward the changes we need.

As the new Leaders of the City Council, we are committed to an Improvement Plan that looks at the whole Council rather than just changing small parts of it. We are confident in our ability to implement the actions in this plan with the necessary urgency and pace. We believe that we can build a sustainable and resilient Council and work towards a brighter future for Nottingham.



**Cllr Neghat Khan
Leader of the Council**



**Cllr Ethan Radford
Deputy Leader of the Council**

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Section 1: Introduction

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Purpose of this Plan

This Improvement Plan sets out how Nottingham City Council will respond to the significant governance and financial challenges that have led to intervention by the Government. It responds to the statutory Intervention Directions issued under Section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999 which require the Council to develop and agree a Council Improvement Plan with Commissioners.

The Plan provides the basis for the improvement required over the period of the statutory intervention. It has been developed in liaison with Commissioners and delivering it will demonstrate the improvement necessary to support their exit from the Council.

The Improvement Plan is the overarching framework that holds our improvement activity together. It addresses the challenges we face while setting out the aims we will work towards to achieve longer term change and become a Council that has a clear purpose and direction, is financially sustainable and is well run. The future Council will need to be leaner and focused on getting the basics right while responding more effectively to the evolving needs of the City.

Delivering the Improvement Plan will provide assurance to citizens, Councillors, officers, partners and Commissioners that we are improving the way we operate so as a Council we deliver, enable, and influence better outcomes for the City in the most effective, efficient and economical way.

The need for improvement and change

To ensure we are fit for the future, Nottingham City Council (NCC) must change. We will become a smaller and more efficient organisation that delivers outcomes for the City and citizens differently.

The Council must become an organisation that consistently delivers services our citizens can trust and rely on. We are committed to achieving this through the delivery of our Improvement Plan.

The Council understands the implications of statutory intervention and the need for further improvement and change. After issuing a Section 114(3) Report (under the Local Government Finance Act 1988) in late 2023 and the appointment of Commissioners in February 2024, the Council recognises that it has reached a point of crisis.

The context for intervention

Over the last decade, new libraries, tram lines, a new leisure centre and investment in public spaces have brought positive changes to the City. We have continued to take bold decisions to improve Nottingham's neighbourhoods and the City Centre.

But the level of financial risk has not always been considered systematically and governance of some schemes has not always been robust enough.

Nottingham is a City with huge potential and the Council must continue to improve to play a full and active role in supporting the City's continued prosperity and to tackle existing inequalities.

That will require difficult decisions, including the need to consider how income from all sources such as grant funding, fees, charges and Council Tax can be applied to ensure the Council's future sustainability. We will need to deliver transformation, change and improvement at a pace quicker than we have previously.

A series of events, reviews and judgements highlight the financial and governance challenges we must address:

- In September 2015, the Council established Robin Hood Energy, a not-for-profit provider of gas and electricity, with the aim of tackling fuel poverty and providing affordable energy to customers. The company failed to turn a profit and accumulated losses exceeding £34 million by 2019, leading to its closure in 2020. A Public Interest Report by Grant Thornton in August 2020 criticised the management of Robin Hood Energy and the Council's risk management and governance.
- In response, a rapid review led by (Government appointed) Max Caller identified the issues facing the Council and made recommendations for action. The recommendations included the establishment of an Improvement and Assurance Board (IAB) to oversee the implementation of reforms and submit quarterly reports to the Government on progress made.

- The *Together for Nottingham Plan* formed the heart of the Council's response. Approved in 2021 and refreshed in 2022, it sought to address the 67 changes and improvements required by the IAB.
- In December 2021, a serious issue was brought to light, involving the misappropriation of £15.86 million from the Council's Housing Revenue Account, which had been incorrectly credited to the General Fund since 2014/15. In response, the IAB was placed on a statutory footing.
- The IAB's quarterly reports highlighted some noteworthy improvements particularly in the Council's control of its various companies. However, the substantial breaches of Housing Revenue Account regulations were described as a significant setback and the pace of improvement at the Council was deemed to be lacking.
- In November 2023, a Section 114(3) Report was issued by the Council's Chief Finance Officer on the basis that the expenditure of the Council exceeded resources available to meet that expenditure.
- In February 2024, Commissioners were appointed by the Government under Section 15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999 to oversee the Council's recovery and improvement over the next two years.

The intervention comes with a set of Directions, including the requirement to produce an Improvement Plan to the satisfaction of Commissioners. The Council has been working closely and cooperatively with Commissioners, including in the production of this Plan.

Our improvement journey

Our improvement journey as a Council is already underway. It does not start with this Improvement Plan. Responses to the IAB's statement of requirements and statutory Instructions have resulted in several of the programmes, projects and initiatives contained within the *Together for Nottingham Plan*.

This Plan builds on and enhances this existing work, as well as initiating new projects and programmes in response to the Intervention Directions. It supersedes the *Together for Nottingham Plan* and the IAB's Instructions. It sets out how the Council will improve and develop at a greater pace, while putting citizens, communities and partners first.

The Plan will be regularly reviewed and refreshed. It will continue to evolve as our improvement journey progresses, activity is delivered, and the Commissioners' requirements are met. It will be updated to reflect engagement and consultation, and any changes in priorities and new requirements.

Our improvement needs to be about both immediate recovery and building a Council that is resilient and able to respond to future changes in ambitions and priorities.

Delivery of this Improvement Plan will provide a basis for the Council to demonstrate its improvement to Commissioners, Councillors, citizens and other stakeholders, providing assurance that change is happening.

Relationships with other plans

This Improvement Plan sits alongside other plans (see Figure 1) to provide an overall framework for the continued improvement and evolution of the Council:

- The *Improvement Plan* sets out the key improvement activity which responds to the issues cited in the Intervention Directions, while supporting the development of the Council to realise its vision for its future role and purpose.
- The related *Budget Strategy* provides a framework for developing proposals that will deliver further savings, efficiencies or income to achieve financial sustainability.
- The *Strategic Council Plan* sets out the Council's strategic policy priorities for the City and citizens, which guide delivery; align resources, delivery plans, strategies, operational activity and partnership working with these priorities.
- The *Medium-Term Financial Plan* summarises the Council's financial income and expenditure for 2024/25 to 2028/29 and how the Council intends to manage and deploy its financial resources to deliver priorities and improvement activity.

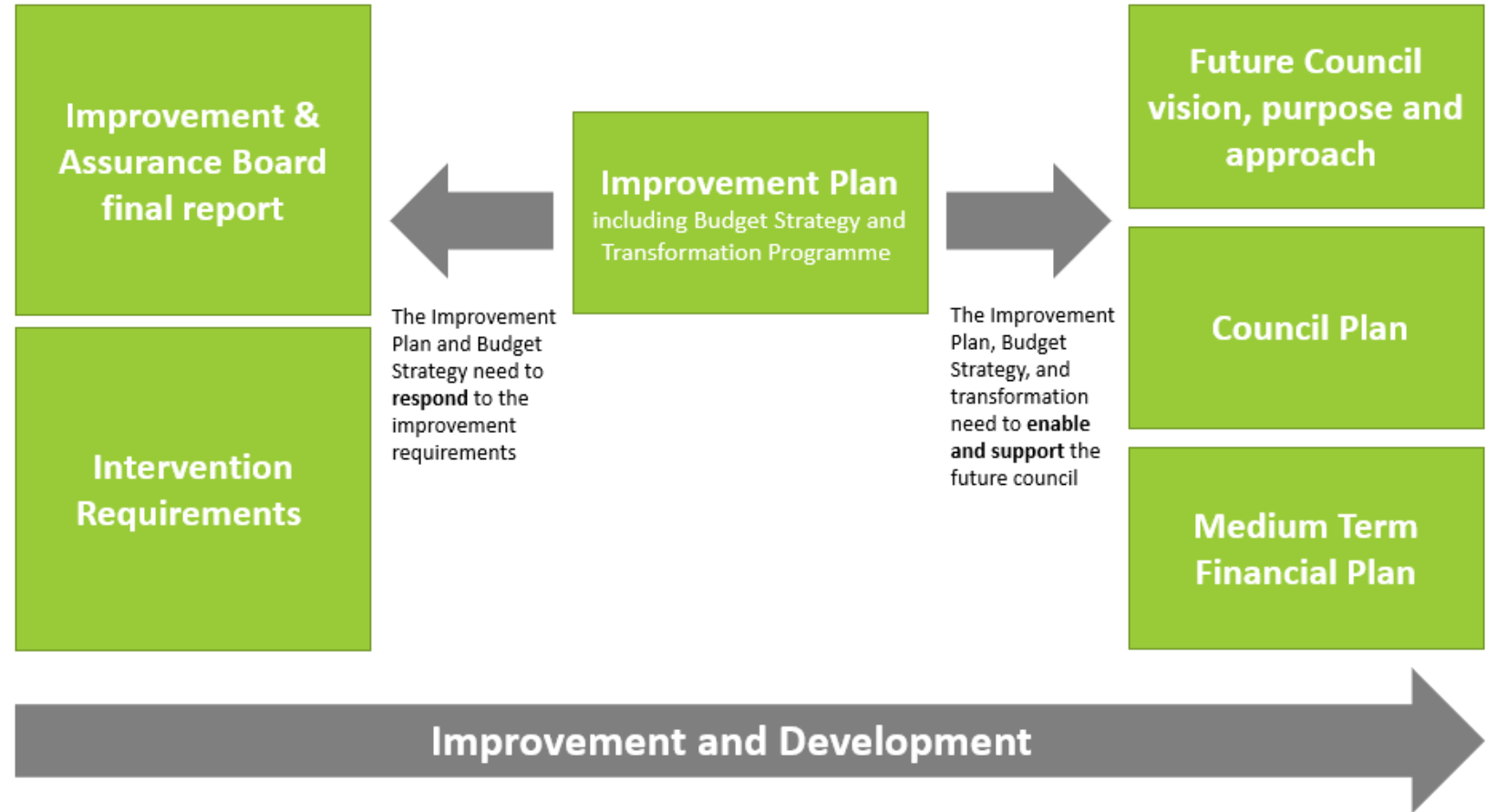


Figure 1: Relationship between key plans

Section 2: Our Future Council

Section 2: Our Future Council

The Council will look, feel and operate differently in the future.

Our Strategic Council Plan sets out the commitments made to our People, Neighbourhoods and City. Our Improvement Plan will ensure the Council plays its role in achieving those as effectively and productively as possible. This will require significant change and transformation, including our support for vulnerable children and adults where we spend a large proportion of our budget.

We need to become a resilient organisation that is operationally efficient and effective, able to support and enable the delivery of policy and delivery priorities as they change over time.

As the Council prioritises its resources for the benefit of citizens, some of our services will transform, some will reduce in size, and some may cease completely.

We will continue to have a realistic conversation with citizens and partners about our shared ambitions for the future, ensuring our priorities are informed by what is most important to them. We will learn from other councils about how they have improved and what they do differently.

Role and purpose

We need to be honest about the role and purpose of the Council in achieving priorities – being clear on our offer, and where we will deliver services, commission providers, or look to enable, support or influence others to deliver services.

This will help achieve best value and utilise our resources in the most productive way. The potential for increased community and neighbourhood working, early intervention and demand prevention and co-production and collaboration will be key considerations.

We will listen to what our customers want from us. We will better define what we can achieve (our 'core offer') so that citizens and partners understand the role and responsibilities of the Council, our service standards and customer expectations. We are likely to commission and procure some services on behalf of citizens rather than deliver them ourselves.

Whether it is delivering, enabling, or influencing outcomes, the Council will:

- Provide a consistent and positive experience, delivering the basics well and providing the right support at the right time.
- Deliver value for money through continuous improvement and effective financial control mechanisms.
- Ensure our workforce is offered support and development, flexibility and care, enabling the attraction and retention of talented and dedicated staff.
- Adopt a clear 'One Council' approach to our role, prioritising joined up partnership working.

Whole Council change

Achieving whole Council change will require both changes in organisational culture and improvements in policy and practice.

A consistent and positive culture, with clear roles, responsibilities and expectations of Councillors and staff, will be vital to the Council being Councillor-led, officer-run and citizen focused.

To support culture change, we will improve performance management, programme delivery, technological systems and processes so we operate more efficiently and effectively.

These are reflected in several of the Improvement Plan priority programmes that focus on being a Well-Run Council, including:

- An engaged, effective and empowered workforce
- Improving enabling and support systems and processes
- Managing and monitoring our delivery
- Improving governance

Clear direction

It is critical that the Council has a clear direction for its future. A key aim of the Improvement Plan is to ensure the Council has a clear vision for its further transformation, budget strategy and future delivery and policy priorities.

This Plan proposes a key programme of work that will further develop the vision and purpose of the future Council (see Figure 2), and ensures this is translated into how the Council operates and behaves – including:

- Development of a ‘Future Council’ approach and framework for how services are led, managed and delivered by the Council.
- Development of a new model for engagement with the City and its partners and citizens, ensuring there is citizen and partner input to the Council’s strategic thinking and how we work together effectively.

We will review, refresh and re-position our transformation programme so it aligns with our vision for the future and is driven by our budget strategy.



Figure 2: Future Council vision, role & purpose, with the levers for change and delivery

Section 3: Improvement aims, outcomes and priorities

Section 3: Improvement aims, outcomes and priorities

Our Improvement Plan sets out clearly what we will achieve to address immediate challenges, such as delivery of budget savings, while ensuring a focus on the future and how the Council will need to operate to best serve the needs of the City and its citizens.

Our improvement aims

To achieve this, our three overall aims are to be:

- 1. A Council that delivers for Nottingham with clear direction and purpose:** through enabling and influencing others and delivering Council services that reflect priorities and resources, are affordable, represent value for money, have clear standards and are continuously improved so they are designed around, or alongside, their customers and citizens.
- 2. A Council that is financially sustainable:** through the achievement of a balanced budget which will be attained through credible savings plans, robust financial management, improved commercial practice and a programme of capital assets disposal.
- 3. A Council that is well-run with effective people, processes and systems:** improved productivity and operational efficiency, stronger and clearer governance and the development of the organisation's culture so there is an engaged, effective and empowered workforce, and further clarity on roles and responsibilities.

Improvement priorities and programmes

To achieve these aims, the Improvement Plan is focused on an initial set of 11 Priority Programmes of Action (see Figure 3). These build on the progress we have made under the oversight of the Improvement and Assurance Board (IAB) and delivery of our *Together for Nottingham* Plan.

Some of the programmes are in place already and are fully formed and resourced. These will continue to be delivered (e.g. Assets Sales Programme and Review of Companies). Some programmes (e.g. Improving governance) are being initiated to ensure we are responding to the issues referenced in the Intervention Directions and the requirements and expectations of Commissioners. They will need to be further developed in terms of scope, activity and resources required to support delivery of them.

It is likely that these programmes and projects will change over time. There will be further programmes arising from some. For example, the review and refresh of the transformation programme will result in new programmes that are driven by our budget strategy and future Council vision.

Although programmes and projects are primarily aligned to a single Improvement Plan aim, most are interdependent, and the outcomes will be cross-cutting and contribute to all three Improvement Plan aims. All programmes aim to drive behavioural change, continuous improvement and the ambition to seize the opportunity to deliver better outcomes at lower costs.

List of Improvement Programmes:

1. Future Council: Vision, purpose and approach
2. Review and develop the Transformation Programme
3. Manage and monitor our delivery
4. Continuous financial sustainability
5. Strengthen financial management
6. Corporate landlord and assets sales
7. Council companies and traded services
8. Improve governance
9. An engaged, effective and empowered workforce
10. Strengthen internal controls and assurance
11. Improve enabling processes and systems

Figure 3: List of Improvement Programmes

Aim 1: A Council that delivers for Nottingham with clear direction and purpose

The Council needs to look, feel and operate differently. It needs a clear vision and purpose that guides the transformation of the organisation, its budget strategy, workforce development and future priorities for the City and its citizens, and clearly explains how the Council will deliver, enable and influence others to achieve those priorities.

The focus of this aim is:

Creating and communicating the future role and purpose of the Council, so it can work more effectively, efficiently and economically to achieve priorities and be clear on how the organisation needs to change and transform to do that.

Outcomes (the things that tell us we have achieved our aim) are:

- A clear vision, purpose and priorities that guide how the Council operates
- A clear, consistent and effective customer experience and improved satisfaction
- Clear service offer and standards
- A transformation programme aligned to the future vision and purpose

The key programmes of activity that will deliver this improvement and change are:

Programme	Description and Purpose
1. Future Council: Vision, purpose and approach	This programme will create a shared vision for the future of the Council to help everyone understand the Council's future role and purpose. It will consider the relationship with the City's communities, the role of partners and the role of the Council in the delivery of strategic priorities and outcomes. The vision and purpose will direct which services we prioritise, be translated into a framework that embeds good practice characteristics and principles into how services are led, managed and delivered, and develops a new model of engagement that meets the needs of Nottingham's diverse communities. These will be key elements of a new operating model for the Council.
2. Review and develop the Transformation Programme	This programme will review the Council's current Transformation Programme to ensure it is aligned with the future direction and need to deliver savings, through fundamentally enhancing services, systems, processes and technology across the Council, to achieve measurable improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and priority outcomes for residents within our reduced financial resources.
3. Manage and monitor our delivery	This programme will strengthen the Council's ability to monitor and manage the delivery of its priorities. It will focus on the development and implementation of a corporate performance management framework and approach that will ensure regular reporting of performance and delivery against Council priorities, transformation and budget savings, proactively identifying risks and the mitigations needed. The continued strengthening of the Corporate Programme Management Office (CPMO) and alignment of it to a refreshed Transformation Plan/Programme will also be a component of the programme. Alongside the programmes designed to 'Strengthen financial management' and 'Strengthen internal controls and assurance' it will ensure the Council has a tighter grip on its delivery, performance and risk management.

Aim 2: A Council that is financially sustainable

The Council needs to 'live within its means' and be able to deliver a balanced budget and sustainable financial plan. This will be attained through the delivery of credible savings plans, robust financial management, improved commercial practice, and a programme of capital assets disposal.

The focus of this aim is:

Strengthening financial management, the delivery of savings and other activity to improve the current financial position of the Council and its longer-term sustainability

Outcomes (the things that tell us we have achieved our aim) are:

- Delivery of a balanced budget and sustainable medium-term financial plan
- Robust and credible savings plans delivered
- Robust financial monitoring, management and accountability
- A prioritised capital assets programme

The key programmes of activity that will deliver this improvement and change are:

Programme	Description and Purpose
4. Continuous financial sustainability	The programme focusses on the delivery of budget savings in 2024/25 and the development of further credible and approved budget savings proposals to be delivered in 2025/26 and beyond. It will ensure the Council sets a legally balanced budget annually and help enable the Council to live within its means over the longer term.
5. Strengthen financial management	The programme will ensure there is consistent financial compliance across the organisation by continuing to implement the Finance Improvement Plan which will strengthen practice and approaches to monitoring, compliance and forecasting.
6. Council companies and traded services	The programme will simplify and streamline the Council's portfolio of owned or affiliated companies, aiming for a sustainable, well-governed and viable set of Council Owned Entities (COEs).
7. Corporate landlord and assets sales	The Programme will centralise property management for the Council's operational, commercial and community properties to reduce duplication, ensure safety compliance and deliver cost-efficient services, supporting a leaner, more efficient organisation. It will identify opportunities for asset disposal, which will feed into an Asset Sales Programme that is reviewing all capital assets to identify opportunities for generating capital receipts to help balance the near-term budget while maintaining acceptable income levels and ensuring the Council's property estate meets current and future needs.

Aim 3: A Council that is well run with effective people, processes and systems

The Council needs to continue to modernise how it operates and improve its productivity and operational efficiency so it can deliver to the best of its ability. This includes strengthening governance, making sure roles and responsibilities are clearly understood and looking at how service delivery is supported and enabled by business processes and systems.

The focus of this aim is:

Improving how the Council is run, so it can become more efficient and productive, supported by good governance, good business processes and an organisation with an engaged, effective and empowered workforce.

Outcomes (the things that tell us we have achieved our aim) are:

- An engaged, effective and confident workforce that feels empowered
- Effective governance that enables timely and transparent decision making
- Effective management of performance and risk
- Clear roles and responsibilities and effective working relationships including inter-directorate working
- Efficient and effective systems and processes

The key programmes of activity that will deliver this improvement and change are:

Programme	Description and Purpose
8. Improve governance	<p>The programme will lead to better governance, clearer accountability, stronger working relationships and improved decision-making, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review and refresh of the scheme of delegation, standing orders, financial regulations, Elected Member/Officer protocol. • A review and evaluation of the informal processes that support our formal decision-making. <p>The programme will also develop and deliver activities to improve understanding between Members and officers, strengthen our culture of collaboration and ensure effective teamwork and relationships across the Council. It will include a Member and Officer development programme focusing on respective roles and responsibilities in leadership, decision-making, scrutiny, audit, regulatory roles, partnerships and engaging with local communities.</p>
9. An engaged, effective and empowered workforce	<p>The programme aims to improve the officer structures, workforce culture and the management of employee performance to deliver the Council's priorities in an efficient, effective and economical way. It will focus on organisational culture, structures, performance management and employee engagement, including an all-staff survey to inform baselining and programme activity.</p>
10. Strengthen internal controls and assurance	<p>The programme will strengthen key elements of the Council's internal controls – focussing on an assessment and improvement of the Council's risk management approach and a review of the Internal Audit function to identify and deliver appropriate improvement actions. Alongside the programmes focussing on 'Strengthening financial management' and 'Managing and monitoring delivery' it will ensure the Council has a tighter grip on its delivery, performance and risk management.</p>
11. Improve our enabling and support systems and processes	<p>The programme builds on the Council's digital transformation journey, ensuring business processes and systems are designed with and for the customer, both internally and externally. It will start with an organisation wide process review to identify the systems and processes most in need of improvement.</p>

Section 4: Ensuring and enabling delivery

Ensuring delivery: Principles and approach

Clear governance, monitoring and assurance reporting arrangements will be put in place to ensure the Improvement Plan is delivered. The following principles and arrangements will be adopted and used to guide our approach (Figure 4).

The Corporate Programme Management Office

A Corporate Programme Management Office (CPMO) was established in April 2024 to oversee transformation and budget savings activities. Its remit is anticipated to incorporate the monitoring and reporting on the Improvement Plan delivery.

The CPMO’s functions fall into two broad categories:

- 1. Monitoring and assurance:** the CPMO ensure that monitoring happens, reviews, and challenges the outputs from each monitoring round and provides the papers and analysis required by Transformation and Change Oversight Board (TCOB) to allow it to function effectively.
- 2. Supporting delivery:** the CPMO includes a ‘Change Academy’ which manages and deploys corporate project management, business analyst and change consultant capability to support the delivery of the Council’s transformation activity.

Taken together these two functions provide a rounded assurance and delivery vehicle that will support the Council in the achievement of the Improvement Plan.

Principle	Arrangements
Accountability and Responsibility for delivery	<p>Senior Accountable Officer (SAO): Corporate Directors will act as the accountable officer for the delivery of Improvement Plan programmes assigned to them. They are ultimately accountable for ensuring that the outcomes of the programmes are met, whilst making sure that there is timely engagement with key stakeholders including elected Members.</p> <p>Responsible Delivery Lead (RDL): Whilst Corporate Directors are accountable for delivery, they may assign the overall responsibility for the day-to-day delivery of this work to a colleague, in the capacity of a delivery lead. This activity is likely to include putting project teams in place, checking and managing process and escalating any key risks and / or blockages where these can’t be dealt with at a project level.</p>
Governance structures	<p>To ensure timely and accurate reporting and decision making the <i>Transformation and Change Oversight Board (TCOB)</i> will act at the top of the governance structure and meet monthly. This Board is made up of senior officers (Chief Executive and Corporate Directors), the Deputy Leader and the Transformation Commissioner. It will hold Corporate Directors to account for delivery and also act as a forum through which escalations are made, significant changes to projects agreed and additional resources provisionally allocated.</p> <p>Corporate Directors, as Senior Accountable Officers, will determine their own governance arrangements below this Board, in the context of the transformation and savings activities they are accountable for.</p>
Monitoring and Assurance	<p>Reporting against the activity in the Improvement Plan will take place in a standardised form monthly to ensure that there is a timely, consistent and accurate picture against delivery of the Plan. Reporting will be supplemented, as appropriate, by periodic reviews on delivery to give assurance that activity is well scoped, resourced and on track for to be delivered</p>
Transparency	<p>Assurance reporting will operate a ‘one version of the truth’ approach that is understood by key stakeholders to provide them with confidence that progress is being made. Progress will be reported monthly through the <i>Corporate Programme Management Office (CPMO)</i> on a consistent basis to the <i>Transformation and Change Oversight Board (TCOB)</i>.</p>
Member Scrutiny	<p>Executive Members will be briefed regularly on the delivery against relevant Improvement Plan programmes within their portfolios. The Improvement Plan will be periodically reviewed by the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees, whilst Audit Committee will also be involved in ensuring that there is appropriate risk management and controls within the improvement programme.</p>

Figure 4: Governance and assurance principles and arrangements

Section 4: Ensuring and enabling delivery

Figure 5 below summarises the governance arrangements and reporting

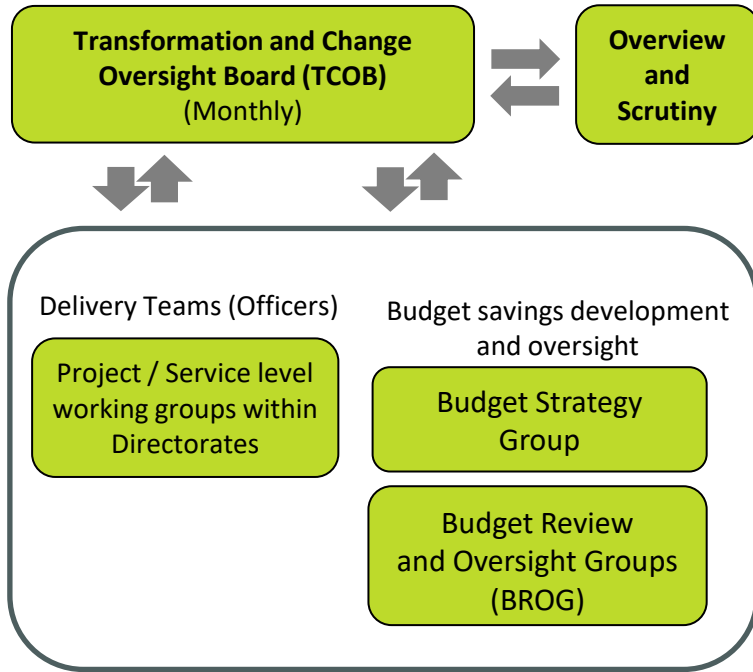


Figure 5: Improvement Plan governance

Resourcing the Plan

For existing programmes, such as the Asset Sales Programme and Review of Companies, there is already resource secured, deployed and in place to support delivery that is well underway.

For other programmes, resource requirements will be defined as the programme is fully scoped. SAOs and RDLs are responsible for considering how business-as-usual capacity can be re-prioritised and redeployed, and assessing additional resource requirements.

There will also be exploration with various partners and providers about how they can support programmes, e.g. Local Government Association (LGA) and Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS).

The Corporate Portfolio Management Office (CPMO) will provide an overview of the whole Council’s requirements for transformation and will inform decisions about the deployment of resources.

Figure 6 summarises the resourcing strategy and approach.

Component	Approach
Internal Council resource	A refocussing of internal resources (e.g. Change Academy) to support the development and delivery of transformation and budget savings proposals. Identification of capacity from across the organisation that can potentially be redirected and/or deployed to support Improvement Plan delivery.
Interim external capacity	Short-term capacity and technical expertise to support development and delivery of budget and transformation proposals. Support from agencies such as the LGA (as the sector’s membership body and improvement agency) to some elements of the Plan, including the Improve Governance programme.
Transformation partners	Engagement of external partners where necessary to support the delivery of transformation programmes and budget savings initiatives. This may include specialist capability to support improvement in specific areas.

Figure 6: Resourcing approach

Improvement Plan Performance Framework

Each aim of the Improvement Plan is broken down into a series of outcomes. To demonstrate progress towards, and achievement of, these outcomes, a small set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are proposed. Appendix 2 provides a more detailed summary of this, listing the KPIs.

Engagement and involvement

Engagement has taken place at different levels and through different forums throughout the process of developing the Improvement Plan. This has ensured that it has been developed collaboratively and that plans have been continuously iterated using peer review, challenge and feedback. As the Council's improvement journey continues, we will continue to engage and communicate on our plans and progress to our citizens, Members, staff, partners, businesses and stakeholders. Listening to and learning from them and adjusting and updating the plan in line with new and emerging priorities.

Risks to the delivery of the Plan

Alongside the risks and dependencies identified within individual improvement programmes and projects, there are several key overarching risks and dependencies to delivery of the Improvement Plan which need to be considered and mitigated against. These are set out in the tables in Appendix A3. This table is not an exhaustive list, and the risks and mitigations will be kept under review.

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Appendix A1: Priority programme activity summaries

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A Council that is well run with effective people, processes and systems	8. Improve governance	31
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	10. Strengthen internal controls and assurance	35
	11. Improve enabling and support systems and processes	36



Programme 1	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
<p>Future Council: Vision, purpose and approach</p>	<p>The purpose of this programme is to ensure the Council has a clear direction for its further organisational development, transformation and future delivery and policy priorities. It will create a shared vision for the future of the Council to help everyone understand the Council's role and purpose.</p>	<p>SAO: Corporate Director (Growth & City Development)</p>	<p>1.1 Strategic statement of intent: Develop and present a clear statement of intent that summarises key priorities for the future Council and how the organisation needs to change including a greater commissioning and procurement role, and informs a new Strategic Council Plan</p>	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>August 2024</p>
	<p>The programme will consider the Council's relationship with the City's communities and residents and the role of partners in the delivery of strategic priorities and shared outcomes so the Council is clearer on its role and can operate in a financially sustainable way, focus on essential services, protecting vulnerable groups and being responsive to local needs.</p>	<p>RDL: Assistant Chief Executive</p>	<p>1.2 Define a set of 'Future Council' operating principles that underpin the way we will work as a Council and guide improvement and transformation, informed by engagement with Members and senior officers and other stakeholders – including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Leaders Forum (Directors and Heads of Service) • Executive Member workshops 	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p>
		<p>Lead Member: Leader of the Council</p>	<p>1.3 Develop a 'Future Council' framework for service delivery to translate the future Council vision and operating principles into good practice and best value practice and characteristics of service management and delivery, including:</p>	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Nov 2024</p>
			<p>a) Establish a steering group of Directors and Heads of Service to provide leadership, challenge and input</p>	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>July 2024</p>
			<p>b) Co-production of a framework through steering group and reality checking via a sounding board of staff</p>	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Nov 2024</p>
			<p>c) Embed the vision, operating principles and Future Council framework into service planning guidance</p>	<p>Oct 2024</p>	<p>Nov 2024</p>
		<p>d) Develop proposals for embedding the framework as a basis for wider improvement activity including service reviews, self-assessments, manager training, etc</p>	<p>Nov 2024</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p>	
		<p>e) Build organisational capacity, guidance, support for each of the elements of the Future Council framework</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p>	<p>Dec 2025</p>	

Programme 1 continued	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
			<p>1.4 Develop an approach and programme to engage stakeholders – including residents, workforce and partners about priorities and shape of the Future Council</p> <p>a) Evaluate recent engagement: To identify strengths and areas for improvement.</p> <p>b) Partnerships and stakeholder mapping: To identify key networks and gaps especially in harder-to-reach communities.</p> <p>c) Development of a Consultation and Engagement Framework: based on using customer insight, data and lived experience research proportionate to service complexity</p> <p>d) Trial and roll-out of a partner and community perception tracker to monitor the perceptions of NCC and our progress in changing how the Council operates as a system leader and partner.</p> <p>e) Develop proposal and implement a programme of listening exercises and events including residents, workforce and partners</p>	<p>July 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p>	<p>Jan 2025</p> <p>August 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024</p>
			<p>1.5 Refresh Strategic Council Plan - driven by the strategic statement of intent (1.1) to reflect new priorities and context, ways of working, aligned with the budget and medium-term financial plan and informed by stakeholder engagement, elected Member priorities and statutory requirements</p>	<p>August 2024</p>	<p>March 2025</p>

Programme 2	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
<p>Review and develop the Transformation Programme</p> <p>The programme will review the current Transformation Programme (including Childrens and Adults) to ensure transformation activities have better alignment with the future direction and the need to deliver savings and achieve financial sustainability, helping to deliver and enable priority outcomes for residents within reduced financial resources.</p> <p>This includes ensuring there are clear benefits articulated at the outset, including cost reductions, impacts and outcomes on service users and residents and ensuring that practice from other local authorities informs our thinking</p> <p>The programme will review current transformation and change activity, agree new programmes (which will be informed by the budget strategy) and ensure there are robust programme management and support arrangements in place.</p>		<p>SAO: Chief Executive</p> <p>RDL: Assistant Chief Executive</p> <p>Lead Member: Deputy Leader</p>	<p>2.1 Develop, resource and deliver a new 'Future Council' fully costed corporate transformation plan - including:</p>	June 2024	Oct 2024
			<p>2.2 A rapid review of existing activity</p> <p>a) Conduct initial assurance reviews on selected transformation projects including Childrens and Adults which are the biggest areas of spend for the Council</p> <p>b) Perform in-depth reviews on metrics, benchmarking and deliverability, ensuring financial targets are achievable.</p> <p>c) Address under-delivery with business cases reviewed by Finance and CPMO.</p>	June 2024	August 2024
			<p>2.3 Develop and agree new transformation proposals, informed by the budget strategy and other improvement priorities and through engagement with senior managers and Executive Members – including CLT, TCOB and Executive Panel.</p>	June 2024	Sept 2024
			<p>2.4 Development of robust business cases and programme plans for transformation programmes, so that proposals (where relevant) can be included as part of budget setting for 2025/26</p>	July 2024	Ongoing
			<p>2.5 Introduce a co-ordinated approach to learning from other local authorities - including practice visits and learning conversations</p>	July 2024	Oct 2024
			<p>2.6. Embed Integrated Delivery Plans (IDPs) to maintain oversight of Directorates' improvement and change activity:</p> <p>a) Develop integrated delivery plans (savings, transformation and improvement) for each Directorate</p> <p>b) Plans approved and integrated into automated dashboards.</p> <p>c) Regular review and update plans</p>	June 2024	Ongoing

Programme 3	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
<p data-bbox="0 97 326 235">Manage and monitor our delivery</p> <p data-bbox="0 235 326 399">(Programme and Performance Management)</p>	<p data-bbox="326 97 1065 399">This programme will strengthen the Council’s ability to monitor and manage the delivery of its priorities. It will focus on the development and implementation of a corporate performance management framework. Key Performance Indicators will be benchmarked against other local authorities to proactively compare our performance and drive continuous improvement.</p> <p data-bbox="326 399 1065 592">The approach will ensure regular reporting of performance and delivery against Council priorities, transformation and budget savings, proactively identifying risks and mitigations needed.</p> <p data-bbox="326 592 1065 899">The continued strengthening of the Corporate Programme Management Office (CPMO) and alignment of it to a refreshed Transformation Plan/Programme will also be a component of the programme. Alongside the programmes designed to ‘Strengthen financial management’ and ‘Strengthen internal controls and assurance’ it will ensure the Council has a tighter grip on its delivery, performance and risk management.</p>	<p data-bbox="1065 97 1304 207">SAO: Chief Executive</p> <p data-bbox="1065 207 1304 349">RDL: Assistant Chief Executive</p> <p data-bbox="1065 349 1304 449">Lead Member: Deputy Leader</p>	<p data-bbox="1304 97 2142 164">3.1 Develop a refreshed Council performance framework – including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1304 164 2142 278">a) A hierarchy of strategic plans so there is a 'golden thread' between the Council Plan, Improvement Plan, Transformation Programme and Medium-Term Financial Plan <li data-bbox="1304 278 2142 421">b) A set of KPIs aligned to the Council priorities covering service delivery, improvement and organisational health, (benchmarked and including cost of service information where possible) and supported by 'real-time' data where relevant and available <li data-bbox="1304 421 2142 521">c) Specific objectives for the delivery of the Council's Purpose and Intent that guides business/service planning across the Council to ensure proportionate ambitions within available resources. <li data-bbox="1304 521 2142 692">d) A clear and concise reporting cycle and products for performance monitoring, enabling CLT, Executive and Scrutiny to review performance against objectives and others, to identify areas of underperformance, risk (reputational, compliance and financial) and opportunities for improvement. <li data-bbox="1304 692 2142 835">e) Develop and implement a standard approach to Directorate performance informed by consistent Directorate performance dashboards and supported by Directorate Business and Performance Managers <p data-bbox="1304 863 2142 935">3.2 Further embed the arrangements for oversight of transformation, improvement and change – including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1304 935 2142 1006">a) Implementation of a new Monitoring Framework with quality assurance by the CPMO and reports to TCOB <li data-bbox="1304 1006 2142 1078">b) Automate monitoring and integrate into dashboards for all transformation, change and savings <li data-bbox="1304 1078 2142 1149">c) Implement a rolling programme of reviews to identify areas for improvement in the next planning cycle <p data-bbox="1304 1178 2142 1220">3.3. Further strengthen the CPMO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1304 1220 2142 1292">a) Finalise temporary recruitment into the CPMO and ensure new programmes are resourced. <li data-bbox="1304 1292 2142 1392">b) Review ongoing CPMO activity in light of transformation programme and agree future resourcing model beyond March 2025. 	<p data-bbox="2142 97 2328 164">June 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 164 2328 235">July 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 235 2328 307">July 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 307 2328 378">July 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 378 2328 449">Sept 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 449 2328 521">Sept 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 521 2328 592">June 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 592 2328 664">July 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 664 2328 735">Sept 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 735 2328 806">May 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2142 806 2328 878">July 2024</p>	<p data-bbox="2328 97 2540 164">Oct 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2328 164 2540 235">August 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2328 235 2540 307">August 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2328 307 2540 378">Oct 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2328 378 2540 449">Oct 2024 (and ongoing)</p> <p data-bbox="2328 449 2540 521">Oct 2024 (and ongoing)</p> <p data-bbox="2328 521 2540 592">Ongoing</p> <p data-bbox="2328 592 2540 664">August 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2328 664 2540 735">March 2025</p> <p data-bbox="2328 735 2540 806">August 2024</p> <p data-bbox="2328 806 2540 878">Nov 2024</p>

Programme 4	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
Continuous financial sustainability	<p>The programme focusses on the delivery of budget savings in 2024/25 and the development of further credible and approved budget savings proposals to be delivered in 2025/26 and beyond. It will ensure the Council sets a legally balanced budget annually and help enable the Council to live within its means over the longer term.</p>	<p>SAO: Corporate Director (Finance & Resources and s151 Officer)</p> <p>RDL: Director of Finance (Deputy s151 Officer)</p> <p>Lead Member: Executive Member for Finance and Resources</p>	<p>4.1. Ensuring delivery of 2024/25 savings programme through robust monitoring and mitigation – including where any savings have been identified in-year as being at risk, CLT to develop and implement corrective action(s) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Transformation and Change Oversight Board (TCOB) meetings • Budget Review and Oversight Group (BROG) meetings 	<p>April 2024</p>	<p>March 2025</p>
			<p>4.2. Implement the budget strategy for 2025/26 to develop a programme of work that deliver required savings and income over a 4-year period (2025/26 – 2028/29) to close budget gaps and link to the Improvement Plan and Strategic Council Plan – including:</p> <p>a) The development of robust and credible investment and saving plans based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service redesign • Income and debt • Asset rationalisation • Transformation and change • Asset rationalisation • Efficiency and technical review <p>b) A robust review of proposed savings proposals using a rigorous business case approach which sets out the rationale and evidence for the proposed savings and the plan for delivery taking into account risks</p> <p>c) Check and challenge of proposals – including ‘star chamber’ process involving political challenge</p>	<p>April 2024</p>	<p>Sept 2024 (and ongoing)</p>
			<p>4.3. Exceptional Financial Support (EFS): Continuous engagement with DLUHC in consultation with Commissioners on future requirements for EFS including Council Tax increase above referendum levels.</p>	<p>June 2024</p>	<p>Feb 2025</p>

Programme 5	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
Strengthen financial management	This programme aims to ensure there is consistent financial compliance across the organisation by continuing to implement the Financial Improvement Plan which will strengthen practice and approaches to monitoring, compliance and forecasting.	SAO: Corporate Director (Finance & Resources and s151 Officer) RDL: Director of Finance (Deputy s151 Officer) Lead Member: Executive Member for Finance and Resources	5.1. Review and update current Financial Improvement Plan deliverables and programme objectives – to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A training programme which reinforces the supportive and enabling culture of the Finance function • A culture change project in financial management which embeds the principles of the Accountability Framework • Process and practice improvement 	Ongoing	Ongoing
			5.2 Implement monthly budget monitoring and reporting including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exercise to determine reporting needs • Monthly reporting to be shared with Executive Members 	April 2024	Ongoing
			5.3 Continue to work with East Midlands Shared Services partnership and managers to review financial management information and where possible to improve accessibility and ensure value for money.	Ongoing	Ongoing
			5.4 Training and Development: Develop and deliver a refreshed programme of financial management training and guidance for relevant officers and Members to ensure all have the required skills aligned to the Financial Accountability Framework - including forecasting tools to assist budget holders in the management of their budgets, particularly those with volatile budgets.	April 2024	March 2026
			5.5. Strengthen ownership and accountability through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement on the Financial Accountability Framework to improve genuine buy-in from across the Council Financial accountability statements issued and-signed off by Corporate Directors and budget managers 	May 2024	June 2024

Programme 5 Continued	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
Strengthen financial management			<p>5.6 Credible in-year forecasts: To be completed by services to support effective management and monitoring of budgets and allow the Corporate Leadership Team to take early action to manage in-year budget pressures.</p>	April 2024	March 2025
			<p>5.7. Monitoring adherence and reporting non-compliance of financial management processes: such as ‘No PO No Pay’ across the organisation.</p>	July 2024	Ongoing
			<p>5.8 Complete the accounts for 2019/20 in accordance with the guidance and as soon as possible.</p>	Started	As soon as possible

Programme 6	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
<p>Corporate landlord and assets sales</p>	<p>The Programme will centralise property management for the Council’s operational, commercial and community properties to reduce duplication, ensure safety compliance and deliver cost-efficient services, supporting a leaner, more efficient organisation. It will identify opportunities for asset disposal, which will feed into an Asset Sales Programme that is reviewing all capital assets to identify opportunities for generating capital receipts to help balance the near-term budget while maintaining acceptable income levels and ensuring the Council’s property estate meets current and future needs.</p> <p>The asset sales programme will help close the gap between expected capital receipts and the requirement to repay Exceptional Financial Support, borrowings and reinvest in the capital programme. This involves increasing both the number and pace of property sales.</p>	<p>SAO: Corporate Director (Growth & City Development)</p> <p>RDL: Director of Economic Development and Property</p> <p>Lead Member: Executive Member for Finance & Resources</p>	<p>6.1. Consolidate operational assets into a unified portfolio with centralised budgets</p>	May 2024	Sept 2024
			<p>6.2 Establish a Corporate Landlord structure and operating model with improved void management and streamlined commissioning models.</p>	May 2024	Dec 2024
			<p>6.3 Develop governance guidelines for decision-making within the Corporate Landlord framework.</p>	June 2024	July 2024
			<p>6.4 Create a single asset list and property system for easy access to relevant property information.</p>	Sept 2024	Dec 2024
			<p>6.5 Review and rationalise the operational portfolio in line with revised service operating models, identifying opportunities for estate optimisation and disposals</p>	May 2024	March 2026
			<p>6.6 Assess and maximise occupancy of office estates, identifying disposal opportunities</p>	June 2024	Sept 2024
			<p>6.7. Formulate a Corporate Asset Management plan which outlines how the Council’s assets will be maintained.</p>	Sept 2024	Dec 2024
			<p>6.8 Conduct surveys for repairs and maintenance planning.</p>	Dec 2024	Mar 2025
			<p>6.9 Establish timely and efficient asset disposal and governance processes in line with legislative requirements.</p>	Sep 2024	Dec 2024
			<p>6.10 Develop timed disposal plans to bridge any gaps between capital receipts and Exceptional Financial Support.</p>	Jun 2024	Jun 2024
			<p>6.11 Execute the Asset Disposal Programme to ensure that Exceptional Financial Support can be funded in full, avoiding any additional revenue budget pressure where possible</p>	May 2024	May 2026

Programme 7	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
<p>Council companies and traded services</p>	<p>Simplify and streamline the Council's portfolio of owned or affiliated companies, aiming for a sustainable, well-governed and viable set of Council Owned Entities (COEs).</p>	<p>SAO: Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)</p>	<p>7.1. Review the list of all commercial ventures in which the City Council is involved, to include the development of processes to create new entities where necessary</p>	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p>
	<p>Aligning each company's objectives to the Council's strategic priorities and enhancing governance practices to ensure its interests in each company are appropriately managed.</p>	<p>RDL: Director of Commercial and Procurement</p>	<p>7.2. Complete the liquidation of companies that have been closed</p>	<p>Started</p>	<p>Mar 2025</p>
	<p>Develop capacity, policies and processes within the Council to make strategic decisions focusing on companies with significant financial or service delivery risks, while mitigating emerging risks in all companies.</p>	<p>Lead Member: Executive Member for Finance and Resources</p>	<p>7.3 Complete Strategic Reviews of all COEs in which there is a continuing interest and implement recommendations</p>	<p>June 2025</p>	<p>July 2025</p>
			<p>7.4. Review the Companies' Governance Handbook to ensure compliance with latest guidance and best practice and ensure compliance through: A) Annual business planning processes. B) Board effectiveness reviews. C) Risk management.</p>	<p>Started</p>	<p>Mar 2025</p>
			<p>7.5 Development of shareholder engagement with COEs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession planning for Council appointed NEDs • Clarify the role of the shareholder representatives • Develop a learning and development plan for shareholder representatives • Carry out an evaluation of the Shareholder Unit 	<p>Started</p>	<p>Mar 2025</p>
			<p>7.6 Review all commercial traded service activities in which the City Council is involved, building on work already done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure work links to Fees and Charges review • Conduct annual survey of customers of traded services • Ensure service plans for traded services link to MTFP • Clarify the Commercial Board and the Director of Commercial and Procurement's input into the process 	<p>Started</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p>
			<p>7.7. Develop new commercial and procurement strategy, ensuring financial accountability framework cross-references to this work and is not a separate process</p>	<p>Started</p>	<p>Dec 2025</p>

Programme 8	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL	Key Activities	Start	End
<p>Improve governance</p>	<p>This programme will lead to better governance, clearer accountability, stronger working relationships and improved, more transparent, decision-making. The programme focuses on:</p> <p>The constitution: ensuring we continue to have a fit for purpose, modern, constitution including an updated scheme of delegation</p> <p>Formal and informal decisions: effective and timely informal processes that support our formal decision-making</p> <p>Effective working relationships: activities to improve understanding, trust and respect between Members and officers, strengthening our culture of collaboration and teamwork</p> <p>Development and support to Members and officers: to ensure they can confidently fulfil their respective roles and responsibilities including leadership, decision-making, scrutiny, audit, regulatory roles, partnerships and engaging with local communities.</p>	<p>Lead Member</p> <p>SAO: Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)</p> <p>RDL: Director of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer)</p> <p>Lead Member: Deputy Leader</p>	<p>8.1 Maintain, enhance and embed the Constitution: Re-introduce the Standards & Governance working group to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consider proposals from Members, officers and Commissioners that identify areas for review b) Propose changes for consideration by Full Council c) Consider activity needed to raise awareness and understanding of the constitution d) Review the Member/officer protocol <p>8.2 Review and refresh the Scheme of Delegation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Desktop review of current Scheme, informed by levels of delegations from other local authorities and with input from all chief officers b) Publish the new Scheme listing delegated responsibilities c) Launch a new Delegated Decision System and review the replacement of the Reports Management System and re-issue and reiterate clear procedures to ensure finance, legal and HR sign-off for Member and officer delegated decisions is obtained d) Ensure that all Members and officers understand and are accountable for their delegations <p>8.3. Review and improve committee and decision processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review committees and meetings that support informed decision-making to identify efficiency and effectiveness improvements b) Evaluate formal decision-making processes and report formats and propose improvements c) Agree process and expectations for Member briefings and engagement d) Consider options and develop proposal for webcasting Full Council, Executive Board and other committee meetings to be introduced and implemented as soon as possible 	<p>July 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Oct 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024</p> <p>Nov 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024 (ongoing)</p> <p>Aug 2024</p>

Programme 8 continued	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
			<p>8.4 Member and officer development:</p> <p>a) Re-launch the Councillor Development Steering Group to advise on improved development and support for elected Members (and relevant officers) - including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member induction programme • Member development offer • Role development and support • Information and communications <p>b) Undertake and analyse an elected Member survey to inform development and support requirements and baseline perceptions on relationships and levels of trust</p> <p>c) Work with Executive Members and Chief Officers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build accountability, ownership, trust and support effective ways of working to develop a One Council approach • develop shared activities that promote working relationships • develop and agree a set of collective and individual expectations for Member / Chief Officer interaction <p>8.5 Strengthening audit and scrutiny role:</p> <p>a) Progress the Audit Committee Improvement Programme to CIPFA standards</p> <p>b) Further develop Overview and Scrutiny to Centre for Government Studies (CFGS) standards</p> <p>(This activity will be supported by Programme 10: Strengthen internal controls and assurance (Risk Management and Internal Audit))</p>	<p>July 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2024</p>

Programme 9	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
<p>An engaged, effective and empowered workforce</p>	<p>This programme aims to improve the officer structure, workforce culture and the management of performance to deliver the Council’s priorities in an efficient and effective way. The focus of the programme is on:</p> <p>Engaged Workforce: Creating an engaged and committed workforce with a clear vision and purpose, who feel supported and empowered to embrace change and improvement.</p> <p>Effective People and Technology: Creating workforce efficiencies through supporting employees to maximise the uptake of technology, reduce duplication and streamline processes.</p> <p>Effective Structures: Reviewing the spans and tiers of senior management, attracting and retaining talent and ensuring that workforce plans meet the needs of the organisation.</p> <p>Effective Performance Management: Ensuring a high support and high challenge culture of accountability to deliver the Council's goals, using evidence and feedback to support performance reviews.</p>	<p>SAO: Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)</p> <p>RDL: Strategic Director of HR & EDI</p> <p>Lead Member: Executive Member for Finance and Resources</p>	<p>9.1 Implement HR Improvement Plan: To enhance policies, processes, systems and practices, to empower the workforce to be efficient and effective.</p>	June 2024	June 2025
			<p>9.2 Complete recruitment to key leadership roles and ensure relevant interim capacity/arrangements in place – including appointments of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Executive • Director of Children’s Services • Director of Adult Social Care • Monitoring Officer 	May 2024	TBC
			<p>9.3 Re-assess and map organisation culture: to monitor progress and promote behaviour change and continuous improvement in relation to leadership, accountability, delivery and performance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Undertake and analyse survey b) Develop and agree recommendations / actions 	June 2024	Sept 2024
			<p>9.4 Embed leadership and performance standards:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue embedding the Council’s leadership framework and behavioural expectations, clearly defining what ‘good’ looks like, with a focus on professional and management literacy. b) Focus a learning culture that promotes innovation whilst strengthening accountability, ensuring decisions are made in a timely way at the appropriate level. 	June 2024	March 2026
			<p>9.5 Increase and improve employee engagement – including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Commissioning Staff Survey and other engagement interventions to understand and baseline staff perceptions b) Co-produce action plans with teams to address areas for improvement c) Review corporate, directorate and service level employee engagement to ensure a consistent approach is embedded. 	October 2024	January 2025

Programme 9 continued	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
		<p>SAO: Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)</p> <p>RDL: Strategic Director of HR and EDI</p> <p>Lead Member: Executive Member for Finance and Resources</p>	<p>9.6. New Organisational Structure Design aligned to the Future Council vision, purpose and future operating model – including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Development of consistent organisational design principles b) Application of principles to rationalise structures and drive efficiencies <p>9.7 Develop Strategic Workforce Planning - including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A comprehensive workforce planning and skills analysis b) Improving attraction and retention c) Building internal development pathways d) Aligning business strategy with workforce capacity and capability requirements. <p>9.8 Strengthen Employee Performance Management - including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review and develop proposals to strengthen the Individual Performance Reviews (IPR) process - Including using data, evidence and insights to drive improvement b) Ensure alignment to the Future Council Framework, helping to embed consistent standards and approaches in service leadership, management and delivery c) Ensure key objectives identified by the Council’s leadership are cascaded into the IPR Objectives of Corporate Directors <p>9.9 Review hybrid working policy: to reflect the needs of the business and enhance the visibility and accessibility of senior leaders across the Council and develop methods for testing consistency and compliance.</p>	<p>July 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>March 2025</p>	<p>April 2025</p> <p>Dec 2025</p> <p>Feb 2026</p> <p>August 2025</p>

Programme 10	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL	Key Activities	Start	End
<p>Strengthen internal controls and assurance</p> <p>(Risk management and Internal Audit)</p>	<p>The programme focuses on developing a systematic, informed and disciplined approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of risk management and audit services, delivering independent, objective and value-added assurance that shape the Council’s control and governance processes</p> <p>It focusses on 2 main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk management: Transforming the Council’s management of risk through delivery of a structured, proportionate and consistent approach across all levels of the Council that achieves more risk-aware and accountable behaviours and places risk consideration at the heart of effective decision making and governance. • Audit: Ensuring the delivery of an effective PSIAS compliant audit function that supports achieving the Council’s objectives and facilitates proportionate governance, risk management and control processes to reduce the probability of significant errors, fraud, or non-compliance. 	<p>Lead Member</p> <p>SAO: Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)</p> <p>RDL: Head of Internal Audit, Risk and Insurance</p> <p>Lead Member: Executive Member for Finance and Resources</p>	<p>10.1 Develop, agree and implement risk improvement plan</p> <p>10.2 Align risk management framework and strategy to ISO31000</p> <p>10.3 Refresh risk register to consider risks at strategic (corporate) level and operational (service) level – including engagement with CLT and Directors Forum</p> <p>10.4 Develop and agree suite of proportionate, timely and measurable mitigations that are regularly reviewed and updated</p> <p>10.5 Establish and define accountability using RACI approach and develop risk leads within each division through training and support (consistency in reporting and quality)</p> <p>10.6 Update decision making approach to better articulate the management of risk in all plans, projects and decisions</p> <p>10.7 Conduct a review of behaviours to identify improvement focus and training needs with the objective of embedding risk management across the organisation</p> <p>10.8 Commission digital tools to report against Risk</p> <p>10.9 Revise the Internal Audit Charter to clearly outline the roles and responsibilities aligned to the established RACI framework and accountability principles</p> <p>10.10 Develop proposals for operating model redesign</p> <p>10.11 Revise Internal Audit methodology and develop, and agree, Council wide assurance map</p> <p>10.12 Commission risk based annual audit plan focused on audit of high risk/priority areas</p> <p>10.13 Establish development plans for teams based on comprehensive competency assessment</p> <p>10.14 Expand use of data analytics to inform Internal Audit activity and focus</p>	<p>June 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024</p>	<p>July 2024 (and ongoing)</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sept 2024 (and ongoing)</p> <p>Nov 2024 (and ongoing)</p> <p>Nov 2024 (and ongoing)</p> <p>Oct 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>Dec 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024 (and ongoing)</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Programme 11	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL	Key Activities	Start	End
<p>Improve enabling processes and systems</p>	<p>This programme builds on the Council’s digital transformation journey and will undertake a whole Council review of key enabling services to identify opportunities to improve and increase efficiency, clarity and purposefulness. It will help to ensure that processes and systems are designed with and for the customer, are fit for purpose and embrace a ‘digital first’ approach.</p>	<p>Lead Member</p> <p>SAO: Corporate Director (Finance and Resources)</p> <p>RDL: Director of Customer Services</p> <p>Lead Member: Executive Member for Finance & Resources</p>	<p>11.1 Establish current baseline position and potential for improvement through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) workshops/surveys designed to identify the barriers/blockers to effective processes and systems and identify ‘bottlenecks’ b) review existing improvement programmes such as the Finance Improvement Plan and HR Improvement Plan. c) Learn from best practice case studies from elsewhere 	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p>
			<p>11.2 Develop proposals to build intuitive processes and establish accessible navigation of our systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Establish any quick/medium term fixes to help colleagues as quickly as possible. b) Establish a longer-term improvement strategy aligning with the dates contracts for our current systems expire and need replacing. 	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p>
			<p>11.3 Establish the principles that underpin a consistent operating model for enabling services – aligning with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) DLUHC’s Local Digital Declaration framework b) Future Council Vision, Purpose and Framework being developed (Programme 1) 	<p>Jul 2024</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p>
			<p>11.4 Establish a phased Corporate Improvement Programme, that is prioritised and appropriately project managed, with a commitment to User Acceptability Testing and clear communication of progress, milestones and ongoing continuous improvement – including:</p>	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Sept 2026</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review the website to ensure a clear customer journey without jargon and clear information about how to access services and what the Council does and doesn’t provide with integrated signposting to other suppliers/partners. 	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p>

Programme 11 continued	Purpose and description	SAO / RDL Lead Member	Key Activities	Start	End
			<p>b) Agree and adopt a right first-time approach and work across other workstreams to adopt a principle of 'picking up' at the front door so customers aren't passed around.</p>	July 2024	Sept 2024
			<p>c) Establish a consistent corporate customer insight strategy to ensure complaints and feedback are acted upon and fed into performance framework.</p>	July 2024	March 2025
			<p>d) To design and deliver a consistent model of accessing Council services through appropriate use of technologies – AI/Digital/RPA and roll out across the organisation with appropriate focus on safeguarding and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion.</p>	July 2024	March 2025
			<p>11.5 Review the Council's IT software, infrastructure and strategy to ensure it is fit for purpose; based on a default of off-the-shelf systems that are commissioned by IT services.</p> <p>Review to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Determination of an IT Policy and strategy b) How the ownership of systems and software is managed c) Review of software to identify duplications d) Identify opportunities to use new software to deliver efficiencies e) Identify opportunities for systems to 'talk to each other' for example Finance and HR data, Finance and Social Care data 	July 2024	March 2025

Appendix A2: Key Performance Indicators

Aim	Metric
A Council that delivers with clear direction and purpose	£ spend on services per head of population (benchmarked)
	Number of Have Your Say complaints
	% Have Your Say comments, compliments and complaints resolved
	% of ombudsman complaints upheld (OFLOG and annual letter)
	% compliance with ombudsman recommendations (annual letter) and the % outstanding or overdue
	% ombudsman cases that were upheld which had satisfactory remedies in place before the complaint reached the ombudsman
A Council that is financially sustainable	Planned Savings Achieved £% (Global Figure)
	Non-ringfenced reserves as a % of net revenue expenditure
	Performance against budget - Budget Monitoring
	Council tax collection rate %
	Housing rents collection rate %
	Business rates collection rate %
	% supplier invoices paid on time (within payment terms)
	Value of capital receipts generated (£) from asset sales against target
A Council that is well run with effective people, processes and systems	Staff survey - staff satisfaction
	% of staff receiving an end of year review and objective setting in the past 12 months
	% staff who have completed / commenced training courses (mandatory and other) in the next 12 months
	Survey - Member / Officer relationships
	% of corporate KPIs on target / % of corporate KPIs showing improvement over 2+ report periods
	Agency Staff proportion – various functions
	Agency Staff Cost – Various functions
	Citizen / Customer Satisfaction

Appendix A3: Risk and dependency management

	Risk Title	Risk Description	Mitigation
1	Capacity and Pace	The Improvement Plan calls for significant, rapid and wide-ranging changes to how the Council operates across a number of key functions. Though building on the changes that have occurred to date through the Together for Nottingham Plan and other efforts, it is clear that the pace of change must increase in order to meet the goals of the current intervention. At the same time the Council is becoming a leaner organisation as budgets reduce, lack of capacity to implement the change required at the necessary pace in a cohesive way is a clear risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A considered approach to resourcing which weighs competing aims and reprioritises existing resource towards delivery of this plan. • Clear leadership which sets out the aims and priorities of the change required. • Governance that will reduce and eliminate 'siloed' working. • Robust accountability and transparent performance reporting
2	Resources	The Council has been undertaking improvement work for some years and the November 2023 Section 114(3) Report records that the Council's resources were inadequate for its planned expenditure. In this context, the capacity to allocate and repurpose the necessary resources to deliver the Improvement Plan is a risk.	<p>A clear approach to delivery of the Improvement Plan will bring together the Financial Improvement Plan and the delivery of the MTFP as the strategic framework within which improvement activity will be delivered.</p> <p>The Strategic Council Plan will be refreshed or redrafted as required to reprioritise as necessary and ensure that the Council's ambitions remain within its means within the context of the required improvement.</p>
3	Delivery	The Improvement Plan must be delivered effectively in order for the Council to change. If the Improvement Plan is not delivered the financial sustainability of the Council will continue to be at risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governance of the Improvement Plan is set out in section 4. This will ensure that delivery is given due weight across the organisation as it acts as one Council to identify issues and barriers, escalating and dealing with these immediately. • The Assurance Framework set out at Section 4 will provide clear governance, monitoring and assurance reporting arrangements via the CPMO alongside Member scrutiny to ensure delivery. • Continuous improvements to culture, practice and processes will be identified and embedded via robust accountability.
4	Citizen and Partner Perceptions	As the pace of change is increased there is a risk that in the short-term the Council's performance may be seen to get worse rather than better by Citizens and partners with a subsequent loss of trust in the Council.	External communications and engagement will describe the process the Council is going through with open and honest descriptions of current progress while setting out the rationale for change and the ultimate destination of a more effective, efficient and economic Council in the future.
5	Inter-dependencies and Sequencing	The Improvement Plan sees a wide range of interdependencies between the various change programmes. These range from the strategic and overarching down to the specific. Without appropriate management of interdependencies and the sequencing between these, there is a risk that delivery of the Improvement Plan could be negatively impacted, or some programmes could become unviable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for direct communications between SAOs responsible for the programmes of action has been identified early. • Interdependencies between the programmes have been identified and shared. • Changes in the performance or scope of change programmes will be communicated via the proposed governance structure. • Clear leadership will set out the aims and priorities of the change required. • Strengthened Corporate Project Management Office (CPMO)

