

# **Ryedale District Council**

## **Draft Annual Governance Statement 2020/21**

### **Scope of Responsibility**

Ryedale District Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money allocated to it is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

This statement is prepared with consideration to the CIPFA Application of the Good Governance Framework 2020/21 (CIPFA Bulletin 06).

### **Purpose of the Governance Framework**

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture and values, by which the Council directs and controls its activities, and how it leads, engages with and is accountable to the community it serves. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to an acceptable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve the Council's aims and objectives, but it seeks to provide reasonable rather than absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify, prioritise and manage the risks to the achievement of the Council's aims and objectives.

The governance framework has been in place at Ryedale District Council for the year ended 31 March 2021 and up to the date of approval of the annual statement of accounts.

The Council's Governance Framework addresses the way the Council is controlled and managed, both strategically and operationally, and how it will deliver its services. The Framework recognises that the Council's business is focused upon its corporate priorities and seeks to facilitate delivery to our local communities of the goals set out in the Corporate Plan. To improve the effectiveness of this, the Council has built on the Health Checks commissioned in 2018 and 2019 by implementing action plans and strengthening capacity in areas described below. Further reviews - such as by the Society for innovation, technology and modernisation SOCITM - have been undertaken in a spirit of continuous improvement and a new Council Plan 2020-24 is in place..

The structures and processes, risk management and other internal control systems, such as standards of conduct, form part of this Framework, which is about managing the barriers to achieving the Council's objectives.

Members and senior officers are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the Council's affairs and the stewardship of the resources at its disposal. Following the appointment of a new Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer in Autumn and Summer 2018, this task is now managed by the Strategic Management Board, Head of Corporate Governance and other senior managers, who have commissioned and taken action to address governance related issues. This includes briefing relevant Committees for consideration. Overview and Scrutiny have also pursued a robust approach to strengthening governance arrangements in key areas such as risk management. A review of capacity in Corporate Governance has also taken place and a new structure was implemented during 2020/21.

The Council has designed systems and processes to regulate, monitor and control its activities in order to achieve its vision and objectives.

The key elements of the Council's Governance Framework are as follows:-

- The Council's key priorities during 2020/21 were reflected in its Council Plan 2020-24, which was approved by Full Council in September 2020. This sets out the following key aims:
  - Support strong, inclusive and attractive communities
  - Harness Ryedale's unique economy to deliver growth, homes and jobs
  - Create an environment that is sustainable, safe and clean
  - Develop our organisation as an innovative, enterprising Council
- The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made, and the procedures that are followed to ensure that these are lawful, efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. This incorporates the Members' Code of Conduct and a number of other locally agreed codes and protocols.
- The Council's budget and policy framework is set by the full Council. The Policy and Resources Committee has delegated authority to operate and make decisions within the framework. Some powers are delegated to senior officers.
- In addition to the Policy and Resources Committee there are two specific regulatory committees for Licensing and Planning. These have independent powers within their legislative framework. Each of these acts within defined terms of reference agreed by the full Council.
- Throughout 2020/21 Council committee meetings were held remotely and, when possible, hybrid meetings using MS Teams. They have been broadcast to be able to be viewed by members of the public.
- During the pandemic some decisions were made under urgency procedures by the Chief Executive following consultation with relevant political representatives. Decisions made under urgency procedures are recorded on the Council's committee management system. At the next available Full Council meeting all such decisions are reported.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee acting as a Corporate Governance Standards Committee has monitored standards of conduct of Members and advised the Council on probity issues. Entries made in the Register of Members' Interests were reviewed

by the Monitoring Officer.

- Council decisions are subject to review by the Council's Scrutiny function, which has the ability to call-in and review decisions and also to contribute to the development of policy.
- The committee management system (modern.gov) enables the recording, tracking and monitoring of committee agenda, minutes, reports and decision records.
- Council meetings are open to the public except when exempt or confidential matters are being disclosed. During 2020/21 this has been accomplished by introducing Remote Meeting Rules within the Constitution and broadcasting remote meetings, as well as making them available to view afterwards on YouTube. The public have an opportunity to participate in some of the meetings. This has been facilitated by initially asking people to provide questions in advance of the meeting and latterly by providing access to the remote meeting via MSTeams. Since the ending of legislation permitting remote meetings on 7th May 2021 the Council has facilitated face to face covid secure council meetings. Meetings are streamed live using MSTeams and YouTube. They continue to be open to the public.
- A number of areas are delegated to officers for the purposes of decision-making; however, limits on the exercise of delegation are laid down in the Council's Constitution. The Council also has a specific delegation scheme for Planning which is published on the website.
- The Council has adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance
- The Council has a Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy, covering 2020-24 and a Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy, which are reviewed annually. A revised strategy and policy were approved by Overview and Scrutiny (acting as Audit) Committee in January 2021. The Council also has separate Speak Out and Anti Money Laundering Policies. The Council employs Veritau to provide a counter fraud service.
- The Chief Executive post is also an Assistant Chief Executive at North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC). The two councils are working together to support efficiencies and deliver improved services through effective partnership working.
- The Head of Corporate Governance also acts as the Council's Monitoring Officer. The appointment of a Monitoring Officer is required in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. It is the function of the Monitoring Officer to report to Members upon any contravention of any enactment or rule of law or any maladministration by the Authority. The Monitoring Officer also has responsibilities relating to the Members' Code of Conduct.
- The Chief Finance Officer (s151) (a joint role employed by NYCC where the postholder is an Assistant Director for Strategic Resources) is the officer with statutory responsibility for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs, in accordance with the Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. In compliance with CIPFA's "Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government", Ryedale is in full compliance as the Chief Officer (s151) is a member of the Strategic Management Board.
- Both the Statutory Officers referred to above have unfettered access to information,

to the Chief Executive and to Members of the Council in order that they can discharge their responsibilities effectively. The functions of these Officers and their roles are clearly set out in the Council's Constitution.

- Financial sustainability is a key risk for the Council and a robust financial management framework is fundamental to managing and mitigating that risk. It comprises:
  - Financial and Contract Procedure Rules as part of the Constitution;
  - A Financial Strategy which provides the framework for financial planning – projecting high level resources and spending over 10 years, it identifies the short, medium and long term financial issues the Council is dealing with and its approach to managing reserves;
  - Medium-term financial planning using a three-year cycle, updated annually, to align resources to corporate priorities. Due to the impact of Covid-19 a revised budget and medium term financial strategy was approved by the Council in September 2020.
  - Service and financial planning integrated within the corporate performance management cycle and linked to the Council's corporate objectives;
  - Annual budget process involving scrutiny and challenge;
  - Quarterly monitoring by management of revenue and capital budgets – with regular reports to Policy and Resources Committee;
  - Production annually of a Statement of Accounts compliant with the requirements of local authority accounting practice;
  - Compliance with requirements established by CIPFA.
  
- Corporate programme, which is produced with explicit goals and associated performance targets related to the delivery of the Council Plan 2020-2024 in order to ensure that achievement of performance is measurable;
  
- The Council's staff performance approach links personal objectives directly to the corporate programme and ultimately to the Council Plan 2020-2024;
  
- Regular reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on complaints and compliments
  
- The Council maintains a professional relationship with Grant Thornton, the body responsible for the external audit of the Council. Regular review meetings are held with the Chief Executive and s151 Officer and reports presented to Audit Committee
  
- Recruitment and selection procedures are based on recognised good practice and all staff posts have a formal job description and competency-based person specification. Services are delivered and managed by staff with the necessary knowledge and expertise with training needs identified via the formal appraisal process
  
- Pay is governed by a Pay Policy considered and approved annually by Council.
  
- A revised approach to managing risk has been adopted in recent years.
  - This has led to an overhaul of the Corporate Risk Register and the development of Service Risk Registers. Advice and guidance has been provided by Veritau and in some cases by North Yorkshire County Council. This work has been recognised and endorsed by members who see it as an

important part of the Council's improvement strategy. As part of that, an update on Risk Management, including the Corporate Risk Register, is presented to Audit Committee twice a year.

- A Risk Management guidance document has been developed for key staff along with risk management training;
  - The maintenance of the Corporate Risk Register comprising risks for the Council as a whole, assigned to designated officers, with appropriate counter-measures and an action plan established for each key risk;
  - As well as presentation of this to Committee, Strategic Management Board also keeps the corporate risk management arrangements under review and examine and challenge this and service risk registers
  - Management and Internal Audit of a risk-based approach in the preparation and delivery of the audit plan;
  - Officers of the Council are required to consider risk management issues when submitting reports to Committees and Council for consideration by Member. This includes managing risks around equalities, safeguarding and health and safety.
- The Council has established a Corporate Information Governance Group (CIGG) in order to address the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which came into effect on 25th May 2018. The Council's Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) is the Head of Corporate Governance. The CIGG includes representatives from Veritau, who have been engaged as the Council's Data Protection Officer (DPO), a requirement of the GDPR. Veritau provide regular updates to the Audit Committee.
  - The maintenance of an adequate and effective system of Internal Audit is a requirement of the Accounts & Audit Regulations. Internal Audit is provided by Veritau North Yorkshire Ltd. (VNY), which is part of the Veritau group. The work of Internal Audit is governed by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. In accordance with these standards Internal Audit is required to prepare an audit plan on at least an annual basis.
  - Internal Audit examines and evaluates the adequacy of the Council's system of internal controls as a contribution to ensuring that resources are used in an economical, efficient and effective manner. Internal Audit is an independent and objective appraisal function established by the Council for reviewing the system of internal control.
  - The audit plan is informed by the Council's main strategic risks. This is intended to ensure limited audit resources are prioritised towards those systems which are considered to be the most risky and/or which contribute the most to the achievement of the Council's priorities and objectives.
  - The Council seeks to ensure resources are utilised in the most economic, effective and efficient manner whilst delivering continuous improvement. It aims to achieve this by a variety of means including the following:
    - Service/process transformation and efficiency reviews;
    - Working with partners;
    - External and Internal Audit feedback.

## Review of Effectiveness

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by:

- the Annual Internal Audit Assurance opinion, as provided by Veritau North Yorkshire;
- comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates;
- the Overview & Scrutiny Committee review that the elements of the governance framework are in place and effective, to ensure compliance with the principles. They also reviewed the system of internal audit and concluded it was effective and remained a key source of assurance for the Council in 2020/21.

The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee process has provided challenge and has monitored the Council's policies and performance on an ongoing basis, albeit during 2020/21, a number of meetings did not take place due to COVID. Nevertheless, the Members of O&S have worked together, adopting a non-political approach, developing and using their knowledge and expertise, and that of others to the best effect. An evidence-based approach to the O&S work has been instrumental in achieving good results. COVID impacted on the Committee's work, but it did receive a report from Everyone Active on delivery of the leisure contract and reviewed progress on implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan.

In addition to receiving regular reports on Treasury Management, Risk and Complaints, the Committee supported the Head of Corporate Governance's proposals for two standards sessions to be delivered in June and July. These were

- A workshop on member-officer relations, and
- A training session on standards and probity for elected members.

The Committee also agreed that scoping reports be drawn up for the following topics:

- Affordable Housing
- Review of Enforcement
- Performance Appraisal System

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also received reports on:

- A new Officer Code of Conduct, which it recommended for approval to Council
- Standards Training
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Report and Annual Letter
- Update on Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)
- Safer Ryedale and the Community Safety Plan
- CIPFA Financial Management Code

The Council is dedicated to ensuring that its resources are utilised in the most effective and efficient manner whilst delivering continuous improvement. Work has been undertaken during the year to ensure members were fully informed of, and involved in, shaping the budget strategy ahead of key meetings in February 2021.

New financial monitoring arrangements introduced part way through 2018/19 have been and were in place for the full financial year, giving outturn estimates to members on a quarterly basis which can now be seen as being consistent with the final actual outturn position. During 2020/21, these reports were expanded to include the most recent financial information and projections on costs arising from the pandemic

To improve the Council's effectiveness of this, capacity and additional support is now in place in services such as Health and Safety, Corporate Governance and Finance, IT, Communications, Transformation, Legal and Procurement. Additional support for Strategy and Performance was due to be implemented in 2020/21, progress has been delayed as a consequence of COVID management and mitigation but new staff are now in place.

Based on the assurance work undertaken by Internal Audit, the Head of Internal Audit (Veritau) has provided an opinion on the adequacy of the control environment which concluded that this gave reasonable assurance and also recognised that the Council has made good progress in the last few years to improve its governance arrangements.

It should also be emphasised that Covid-19 has significantly affected the authority over the last year, with a wide-ranging impact on business operations and controls. While the work of internal audit is directed to the areas that are most at risk, or provide most value for the authority it is not possible to conclude on the full extent of the impact of Covid-19 on the operations of the authority. No reliance was placed on the work of other assurance bodies in reaching this opinion. Areas in which controls are below the required standard are reported initially to the relevant Manager who ensures prompt corrective action is taken, and ultimately to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee who monitor progress with improvements via follow up reports from Internal Audit.

Key systems were audited in 2020/21 and a number of audit reports and other pieces of work were provided to management and the O&S Committee.

In November 2020 the Council's external auditors (Grant Thornton) provided the Council with an unqualified opinion on the Council's accounts within their Annual Audit and Inspection letter. The opinion also noted a full year's worth of progress in areas such as financial monitoring and risk management that commenced only partway through the previous financial year. We expect the 2020/21 opinion (due in November 2021) to be in line with this also.

A new Council Plan was adopted in September 2020; the corporate programme to deliver this, and its underpinning performance framework is currently in development. Progression through the democratic process will take place in due course. The Council's People and Culture Plan and Council Plan, details key milestones and measures for success relating to organisational development.

## **Coronavirus**

There has been a significant impact on Council services of the coronavirus pandemic from March 2020. Despite the challenges, the Council has maintained consistent essential services for residents, whilst adapting to provide alternative virtual services wherever possible.

A decision was taken on 20 March 2020 to suspend Council meetings. For a significant time during 2020/21 the Chief Executive took decisions on urgent matters after consultation with the Leader of the Council, and where appropriate, the Chairman of the appropriate Committee and the relevant Ward Member(s). Committee and Council meetings resumed in September 2020.

Meetings follow government guidance on making these COVID secure and comply with relevant legislation.

Returns to MHCLG, decision-notices and a financial tracker were maintained throughout the use of urgency powers to track the detail of decisions made and the financial impact. These were reported to Full Council in September 2020.

### **Key Issues**

No system of governance or internal control can provide absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss. This Statement is intended to provide reasonable assurance. It is stressed that no system of control can provide absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss. In concluding this overview of the Council's governance arrangements, a number of issues have been identified that need to be addressed to ensure continuous improvement in the Governance Framework. The aim is to address these issues during the 2021/22 financial year, by way of an action plan for improving the governance framework and system of internal control. This will be subject to monitoring by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The most significant issues for the Council to address during 2021/22 will be those resulting from the residual impacts of the pandemic and also Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

## **Key Issues**

In the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement, seven key issues were identified. All of these ongoing and will be continued (but amended) in the new version.

This Statement is intended to provide reasonable assurance. It is stressed that no system of control can provide absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss. In concluding this overview of the Council's governance arrangements, a number of issues have been identified that need to be addressed to ensure continuous improvement in the Governance Framework. The aim is to address these weaknesses during the 2021/22 financial year, by way of an action plan for improving the governance framework and system of internal control. This will be subject to monitoring by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **1. Financial Sustainability**

<b>Accountable Officer:</b>	s151 Officer
<b>Control Issue</b>	<p>On-going and future changes to the Council's financial framework including several changes to national and local funding regimes will increase the financial pressure on the Council and risk profile.</p> <p>This needs to be matched with effective financial management on the part of members and officers.</p> <p>This Control Issue was revised in 2020/21 to include dealing with the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic. As a result of our monitoring we correctly identified at an early stage that resources from central government did not cover the full costs to Ryedale District Council of the pandemic.</p>
<b>Actions</b>	<p>The agreed Medium Term Financial Strategy of the Council highlights the expected need to make future savings. This informs the budget process for future years.</p> <p>The s151 Officer considers the risk as part of the closure of accounts including the need to make appropriate provisions and reserves at the year-end.</p> <p>Ensure effective budget management is in operation across the Council, including accurate data and forecasting and reporting to members. Ensure that members are kept aware of all relevant financial information to assist in budget setting in future years.</p>

	<p>The MTFS will also take into account the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic (see below).</p> <p>The financial impact of LGR will be a major feature in 2021/22 – if it goes ahead.</p>
<b>Progress Report</b>	<p>This is a Key Issue which has formed part of the AGS for a number of years, and it is expected that this will continue to be the case.</p> <p>A revised Financial Strategy was approved by Council in February 2021 and members were consulted during the preparation of the budget through reports and briefings.</p> <p>Financial monitoring is now fully in place and has explicitly included the impact of COVID in 2020/21. This will continue in 2021/22 and we will continue to complete a monthly tracker which can be submitted to central government. Through this we will continue to lobby for additional costs that cannot be funded by the council.</p> <p>Reviews on additional services are undertaken to ensure that required capacity is funded and resources managed effectively; this remains critical as the impact of Covid 19 continues to impact on service demand in key areas of business. This increased demand is not anticipated as lessening during 2021/22.</p> <p>The financial impact of Local Government Review will require careful consideration with regard to use of resources and financial impact as will ongoing monitoring of impact of EU exit</p> <p>A revised MTFS will be developed in the following months and brought to members during the autumn to P&amp;R. This will continue to be updated over the following months until formal approval is expected in February by Council.</p> <p>Improvements have been made in procurement to ensure better value for money. In addition to the point made at 8 below, this has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centralising IT budgets to maintain management grip on applications costs</li> <li>• Contract Management Training</li> <li>• Introduction of a forward procurement plan</li> </ul>

## 2. Waste and Recycling Review

<b>Accountable Officer:</b>	Head of Waste and Environmental Services.
<b>Control Issue</b>	To ensure that RDC achieves efficient and effective waste and recycling collection.
<b>Actions</b>	<p>Implementation of new optimised household waste and recycling collections linked to new recycling vehicles and waste transfer station.</p> <p>A piece of work on route optimisation will be completed.</p> <p>Delivery programme of new recycling vehicle to be completed in 2020/21.</p>
<b>Progress Report</b>	<p>This was highlighted as a Key Issue in the 2018/19 AGS and continues to be an area of focus driven by organisational need and national policy change.</p> <p>Significant operational demands were faced during 2020/21 as residents were spending more time at home due to the Covid lockdown periods. This resulted in unprecedented variations in tonnages presented for collection and operational collections were changed to manage the completion of existing rounds with minimal disruption to household waste and recycling services.</p> <p>The new recycling vehicle became operational during 2021/22 following significant vehicle modifications.</p> <p>The implementation of the new optimised household waste and recycling collection rounds has been rescheduled later in 2021/22 (subject to Covid policy directives) now that this new vehicle is in service and given that the country is now emerging from restrictions.</p> <p>In addition, national policy directives are expected during 2020/21, as is a decision about local government reform.</p> <p>These factors will all be taken into account when moving forward.</p> <p>There is ring-fenced investment in place to facilitate this including a new vehicle replacement programme, which was approved as part of the capital programme for the period 2021/22 to 2024/25, and a streetscene transformation capacity funding which was agreed as part of the 2021/22 revenue budget.</p>

### 3. The Local Plan

<b>Accountable Officer:</b>	Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.
<b>Control Issue</b>	The Local Plan requires review and adoption. This Project is ongoing, beginning in 2020/21 and will continue until adoption. This is estimated to be summer 2023 based on members' current agreements to a limited review of the Plan taking place
<b>Actions</b>	<p>Review of the development plan as the Local Plan Strategy was seven years old when this was first developed.</p> <p>This will highlight expected levels of development that will take place in the District and will set out the specific types of new development required to meet Ryedale's needs.</p>
<b>Progress Report</b>	<p>This has been highlighted as a Key Issue since the 2018/19 AGS (for action in 2019/20).</p> <p>Some delay in early stages of the review by the Local Plan Working Party (LPWP) arising from the Covid outbreak and capacity in the officer team. A timetable for future meetings has also been established. Formal adoption of the review is likely to be July 2023 as set out in the Local Development Scheme (subject to the outcome of the examination and LGR). It should also be noted that this is an area of significant policy interest at a national level, and this may have a bearing on the overall timetable.</p> <p>The target dates for the plan have been agreed by members who also agreed that there would be a limited review of the plan in order to hit the submission for examination targets dates in advance of any local government restructure.</p> <p>The Sites Document was formally adopted on 29 June 2020 as scheduled.</p> <p>Member approved the new Local Development Scheme in February 2021 and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement was approved in March 2021.</p> <p>Work on the collation of evidence to inform initial public consultation and a Call for Sites consultation which ended on 6 July 2021.</p>

#### 4. Resilience and Capacity

<b>Accountable Officer:</b>	Head of HR
<b>Control Issue</b>	<p>To ensure sufficient capacity to enable the Council to carry out strategic and/or operational objectives.</p> <p>This also includes HR policies and procedures - review and approval, including staffing aspects of Equality and Diversity.</p>
<b>Actions</b>	<p>Continuous review of the new arrangements now in place.</p> <p>HR policies should be fit for purpose. Documents should grow and adapt with an organisation. Policy review and revision is a crucial part of an effective policy and procedure management plan.</p> <p>Action plan towards developing level for the Equality Framework for Local Government with respect to staffing matters.</p>
<b>Progress Report</b>	<p>This was initially highlighted as a Key Issue in the 2018/19 AGS (for action in 2019/20). The Action was that actions from a comprehensive Health Check of HR were followed up and implemented.</p> <p>Capacity and additional support has been put in place in services such as Health and Safety, Enforcement, Planning &amp; Regulatory Services, Corporate Governance, Finance, IT, Communications, Transformation, Legal, Revenues and Benefits and Procurement. Additional support for Strategy and Performance was planned for implementation in 2020/21, but was delayed by the need to prioritise Covid-19. This is now in place (June 2021).</p> <p>15 HR policies have now been reviewed and either approved by Council or in the process of gaining approval. A rolling programme of the 5 remaining policies will come through democratic meetings for approval during 2021/22.</p> <p>Additional resources were secured during the Covid-19 pandemic to support key areas of the business to function e.g. customer services advisors. However this is constantly under review and pressures in capacity are exacerbated by the work that has been undertaken and is likely to increase on LGR. Therefore this will continue to be reviewed during 2021/22 and brought to members' attention where additional capacity is required. This was highlighted in the Financial Strategy presented to Full Council in February 2021.</p> <p>Any available further updates will be provided in the final AGS.</p>

## 5. Economic Recovery and Growth

<b>Accountable Officers</b>	<p>Programme Director - Economic Development.</p> <p>Head of Customer Services and Communities.</p>
<b>Control Issue</b>	Economic Recovery and Growth.
<b>Actions</b>	<p>Delivering a strong, sustainable economy will need to now take account of the recovery required post-Covid to address the long-term, sustainable economic success of the district. This includes addressing the needs of those who are experiencing poverty and severely reduced income as a consequence of the pandemic.</p> <p>Submission of York/North Yorkshire devolution asks to Government were agreed by Elected Members. Submission has occurred and councils across York and North Yorkshire are continuing to ask for a negotiation process with Government to begin.</p> <p>A plan for leaving the European Union is also critical given the impact this may have on many businesses. Component parts of the proposed devolution deal relating to thriving businesses, strong job opportunities, robust infrastructure, and strong culture, tourism and low carbon sectors, are aiming to be progressed through bids into new Government funding tranches (e.g. Community Renewal Funding, Levelling Up) that are replacing EU funding tranches.</p> <p>Inclusive growth is also key to mitigate the increasing levels of poverty that are arising from the consequences of Covid - 19. This includes a focus on partnership initiatives with other key bodies including Town and Parish Councils, NYCC and the voluntary and community sector.</p>
<b>Progress Report</b>	<p>This was highlighted as a Key Issue in the 2018/19 AGS but was revised last year to take account of the recovery required post-COVID</p> <p>Examples of Economic Development work carried out in 2020/21 include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the provision of free public wifi in the market towns of Malton, Pickering and Helmsley</li> <li>• securing external funding from the Local Growth Fund to undertake initial feasibility work on a number of projects including a Ryedale Business Centre,</li> <li>• further work on the installation of additional EV charging points throughout Ryedale including in RDC car parks, at Ryedale House and at the RDC Depot on Showfield Lane, Malton.</li> </ul>

	<p>In addition to this, during 2020/21, a key focus was on providing immediate support to businesses. This included handling increased service demands and direct action to enable businesses to trade safely (e.g. environmental health, community officer roles in Covid secure management, increased benefits claims and housing applications). Grants to business and individuals have been made as quickly and effectively as possible to ease distress and protect lives and livelihoods (e.g. self-isolation, a variety of business grants).</p> <p>The Council's actions to support economic recovery are aligned to the Council Plan and have also been progressed as part of the regional Local Resilience Forum arrangements.</p> <p>Ryedale is also playing a key role in the management of poverty across York and North Yorkshire, with the Head of Customer Services and Communities acting as the Deputy Chair.</p>
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## 6. Climate Change

<b>Accountable Officers</b>	Programme Director - Economic Development.
<b>Control Issue</b>	Delivering the Climate Change Action Plan to ensure that Ryedale District Council can contribute towards the reduction in global temperature rise.
<b>Actions</b>	<p>Progressing Action Plan delivery through numerous projects which include operations, partnerships with public, private, voluntary sectors and Ryedale Environmental sectors and residents, building and assets, transport and vehicles.</p> <p>Completion of the review of the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan in March 2022.</p>
<b>Progress Report</b>	<p>This was highlighted as a Key Issue in the 2018/19 AGS (for action in 2019/20) and specifically to review and enact the Action Plan. This has been done and taken into account in the update below.</p> <p>Agreed three-year revenue budget in place to support delivery.</p> <p>Climate Change Officer currently being recruited.</p> <p>Current achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delivery of LED street lighting across Malton and Norton;</li> <li>• delivery of 15 additional Electric Vehicle charging points (Malton, Norton and Pickering);</li> <li>• delivery of 11.4 mile Malton – Pickering cycle route enhancements;</li> <li>• securing HNDU funding for a local geothermal project in partnership with Third Energy;</li> <li>• development work on Circular Malton, through an anaerobic digester project feasibility study progression in partnership with local groups; this could see the reuse of the district's organic waste</li> </ul>

## 7. Council Plan

<b>Accountable Officers</b>	CX
<b>Control Issue</b>	A Council Plan is a necessary strategic document for guiding the work programme for the organisation and its employees. The current Council Plan was adopted in September 2020.
<b>Actions</b>	Now the Council Plan is adopted, a corporate programme and underpinning performance framework is being developed. This will be subject to democratic decision-making in due course.
<b>Progress Report</b>	<p>This was highlighted as a Key Issue in the 2018/19 AGS (for action in 2019/20) and specifically noted that there would be a revision of the Plan and its priorities. This was achieved.</p> <p>A series of engagement sessions took place with Elected Members and officers to produce the new Council Plan, which was adopted by Council in September 2020. It highlights four main priorities as below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our communities: strong, inclusive and attractive</li> <li>2. Our economy: harnessing Ryedale's unique economy to deliver growth, homes and jobs</li> <li>3. Our environment: a sustainable, safe and clean place to live</li> <li>4. Our organisation: an innovative, enterprising council.</li> </ol> <p>A corporate programme is being delivered to achieve the objectives set out in the Council Plan; the reporting mechanism for this is Policy and Resources. An annual report of performance for 2020/21 will be presented in July 2021 with quarterly reporting from September 2021 onwards.</p>