

### Information

Following feedback and internal reflection, the action plan has been refreshed for future updates. While the headline actions remain unchanged, a review has taken place which has refined how progress is presented, to ensure greater clarity. To reduce duplication, some actions have been merged or repositioned, these changes are articulated below. In addition, the order of some actions has been changed in some instances and where appropriate actions have been grouped under headings to ensure that interconnected activities are reported together.

Purpose of each heading	
Status	Description
Complete	Complete
In progress	Work has started and is continuing
Scoping	Scoping has taken place to define a plan, but work has not yet progressed
Ongoing/Embedding	This work has been defined as ongoing and will form part of the organisation's Continuous Improvement Strategy and will be continue to be embedded as new ways of working

Details of changes made to columns
Status column has been removed as actions are grouped under status headings as described above
Column for impact to be added from March 2026 update
Column for evidence to be added from March 2026

Changes to Theme headings
As the organisation progresses on its improvement journey, we have begun reporting on Partnerships and Continuous Improvement separately.

Changes made to location of actions	
Action	Update
Take part in a Local Government Association (LGA) peer review in 18-24 months and seek external support and challenge from the LGA, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CFGs) to support the Organisational Improvement Plan.	Moved from Partnerships and Continuous Improvement Tab to stand alone Continuous Improvement tab
Implement a Programme Management Office (PMO), with standardised processes and tools, to ensure consistency in terms of how the organisation develops, manages and monitors projects and programmes.	Moved from Partnerships and Continuous Improvement Tab to stand alone Continuous Improvement tab
Develop and implement a new organisation-wide operating model to improve processes, efficiency, understanding and quality.	Moved from Partnerships and Continuous Improvement Tab to stand alone Continuous Improvement tab
Ensure progress against the actions contained within the Organisational Improvement Plan is effectively monitored, working closely with the constituent local authorities and the Independent Improvement Board, and reported in a transparent manner to Cabinet, the Improvement Board, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) and EY (external auditor).	Moved from Partnerships and Continuous Improvement Tab to stand alone Continuous Improvement tab
Undertake an assessment and identify any new actions to ensure that we are striving for excellence in the remaining categories set out in the statutory guidance on best value standards and interventions (not covered in the Best Value Notice or by the external auditor statutory letter), which are leadership and service delivery.	Moved from Partnerships and Continuous Improvement Tab to stand alone Continuous Improvement tab

Undertake an assessment and identify any new actions to ensure that we are striving for excellence in the remaining categories set out in the statutory guidance on best value standards and interventions (not covered in the Best Value Notice (BVN) or by the external auditor statutory letter), which are leadership, use of resources and service delivery.	
Produce a readiness plan for fiscal devolution, including a potential future integrated settlement, and new accountability arrangements as set out in the Devolution White Paper.	Moved from Use of Resources to Governance and merged with action below
Undertake a business planning exercise and produce a readiness plan in anticipation of the expanded powers set out in the Devolution White Paper.	Merged and presented under the Governance tab
Produce a readiness plan for fiscal devolution, including a potential future integrated settlement, and new accountability arrangements as set out in the Devolution White Paper.	

Partnerships					
Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps and dates	Overarching measure of success
Actions in progress					
Implement a balanced external communications plan to ensure TVCA restores public confidence, promotes itself and manages challenge & external scrutiny, with a greater role for Cabinet portfolio holders.	CP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage Partners and Stakeholders to develop a plan</li> <li>Work with Partners and Stakeholders to implement and embed plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reinstated regular Heads of Communications meetings with TVCA &amp; five Local Authorities</li> <li>Terms of Reference for group established with rolling chair to maintain shared ownership</li> <li>Increased visibility of Cabinet Portfolio leads in press articles and media opportunities, plus MP Engagement</li> <li>Increased engagement and visibility led by ELT with Business Community</li> <li>Working with Local Government Association Head of Communications Improvement</li> <li>Agreed scope of support to be provided by LGA specialists</li> <li>Development of strategy now in progress alongside LGA</li> <li>LGA held interviews in December with Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives</li> <li>Communications Strategy workshop held with TVCA and LA Heads of Communications on 14 January</li> <li>Draft Strategy shared with Dame Amanda Milling of the Independent Advisory Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 March 2026 - Draft Strategy shared with TVCA Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>March 2026 - Shared with partners and Cabinet Members (Local Authority Leaders) for agreement via email requesting feedback.</li> <li>31 March 2026 - Expected full completion, considering comments followed.</li> <li>1 April 2026 - Implementation.</li> </ul>	Clear, easily accessible information for the public that meets with legislation and best practice
Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
Ongoing actions					
Refocus the Chief Executives meetings into a Tees Valley Strategic Leadership Team, made up of the six chief executives (5 LAs and 1 CA, CEXs) supporting the delivery of priority workstreams.	TB	Undertake a review of the TV CEXs meetings, priorities and Terms of Reference, implement changes from the review appropriately and reflect any changes in the governance structure and corporate calendar of the wider organisation and embed changes to processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TV CEX meeting is now a standing item on TVCA ELT to ensure strategic alignment with TVCA key priorities</li> <li>TV CEX continue to meet monthly with TVCA bringing Strategic Priorities for discussion.</li> <li>TV CEXs meeting is part of the TVCA formal Cabinet cycle</li> <li>Strategic forward plan discussed with CEX</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing - TVCA CEO to continue to work strategically with the TV CEXs group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Tees Valley Strategic Leadership Team meetings.</li> <li>Positive feedback and demonstrable impact of the working arrangements received.</li> </ul>

Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
Complete actions - To continue to embed					
<p>Implement a collaborative approach to strategic long-term priority setting and planning, working closely with the constituent local authorities, with meaningful political engagement at the outset and throughout the process.</p>	<p>TB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Implement a series of workshops for priority setting,</li> <li>•Engage key partners and Members</li> <li>•Ensure the workshops fit with the corporate calendar.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•12-month forward plan has been developed in collaboration with Cabinet.</li> <li>•12-month forward plan developed for Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee and Audit &amp; Governance Committee.</li> <li>•Overview &amp; Scrutiny Improvement Plan and Work Programme developed and approved by the Committee on 19 November 2025.</li> <li>•Audit &amp; Governance Committee work programme and enhancement plan agreed by the committee on 27 November 2025.</li> <li>•Collaborative approach implemented to the development of strategic priorities in advance of Cabinet decisions, led by the portfolio holder and involving key stakeholders. Examples of positive feedback on the new collaborative approach from both portfolio holders and stakeholders, for instance the development of the new approach to adult skills provision and the development of the Get Tees Valley Working Plan, where the collaborative approach taken was described as an exemplar in local partnership delivery by the Department for Work and Pensions.</li> <li>•New committee report development process implemented, with pre-committee engagement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ongoing - This is an iterative process that will continue to embed the new way of working, to ensure robust strategic planning for all committees and informal engagement in advance of meetings.</li> </ul>	<p>Partners and key stakeholders understand long-term plans and provide positive/improved feedback on meaningful engagement.</p>

Use of Resources					
Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps and dates	Overarching measure of success
Actions in progress					
Respond effectively and in a timely manner to address the recommendations and actions contained within the external auditor's statutory letter received on the 15 <sup>th</sup> April 2025.	JM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity review</li> <li>Process review</li> <li>Clear timetable for production of its 2024/25 Statement of Accounts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Close working relationship established with EY, including regular dialogue with senior officers to jointly resolve outstanding queries on material matters.</li> <li>2024/25 published by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2025</li> <li>TVCA is working closely with EY to conclude the 2023/24 and 2024/25 external audit processes to enable signing of the accounts by the Interim Section 73 Officer and for EY to issue their disclaimed audit opinion.</li> <li>All material matters and transactions have been subject to group discussion and agreement.</li> <li>Two material matters discussed with CIPFA for assurance and clarification.</li> <li>Significant progress has been made in reviewing and restating the TVCA 2023/24 and 2024/25 accounts, as well as the accounts for all other group entities.</li> <li>Appropriate and robust working papers have been prepared to support the financial statements.</li> <li>Public accounts inspection requirements are now understood and were fully complied with.</li> <li>A capacity review was undertaken by the Interim Section 73 Officer.</li> <li>The Interim Section 73 Officer commenced at the end of July 2025, prioritising capacity issues and the completion of prior-year accounts.</li> <li>Additional suitably experienced interim resources have been deployed to resolve remaining 2024/25 matters.</li> <li>A further experienced interim lead for 2025/26 year end processes commenced in December.</li> <li>A comprehensive, integrated workbook has been developed to underpin the production of the final accounts, and this workbook clearly tracks all adjustments made to the draft accounts published on 30th June 2025. It also includes control and integrity checks to ensure accuracy and consistency of amounts reflected in the accounts.</li> <li>Close engagement and transparent reporting to the TVCA Audit &amp; Governance Committee to ensure they are kept up to date with progress.</li> <li>February 2026 - TVCA Submitted 7 of the 8 entities accounts by the statutory backstop date 27th February 2026.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 2026 - Ensure that TVCA and the Development Corporations produce a high-quality set of accounts by the publication date for the draft accounts of 30 June 2026.</li> <li>Ongoing - Work will continue at pace to work closely with the external auditor to satisfy their queries raised and to enable the audit process for 2023/24 and 2024/25 to be concluded as soon as practicable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All public inspection periods for the Annual Financial Statements (including narrative report) and Annual Governance Statement are complied with in line with legislation.</li> <li>All year-end statutory deadlines met for the production of Annual Financial Statements (including narrative report) and Annual Governance Statement to deliver before the backstop date</li> </ul>
Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
Ongoing actions					
Ensure that all actions from audit reports are addressed in an effective and timely manner and progress is reported to Audit & Governance (A&G) Committee and Cabinet.	JM	External Audit recommendations evidenced as complete with Auditors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Close engagement and transparent reporting to the TVCA Audit &amp; Governance Committee to ensure they are kept up to date with progress.</li> <li>S73 officer improving relationships with External Auditors as described above.</li> <li>The formal reporting to TVCA A&amp;G and TVCA Cabinet will follow the approved plan.</li> <li>This requires reports to be produced for circulation with these stakeholders for May, June, September and November.</li> <li>Revised approach agreed to statutory backstop date of 27 February 2026.</li> <li>Updates and progress will be reported to Cabinet &amp; A&amp;G Committee.</li> <li>Training sessions held with A&amp;G Members and meeting held with Chair pre-publication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing - This action is ongoing. Action links to the Annual Governance statement review action noted on the Governance section of this report.</li> </ul>	External Audit recommendations evidenced as complete with Auditors

Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
<p>Develop and implement a workforce development strategy, to ensure a sustainable and high-performing finance function.</p>	<p>JM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce a baseline of Finance Team Capacity and Capability. Produce Terms of Reference for review of Finance team and approval by Cabinet.</li> <li>• Benchmarking analysis and review by Tees Valley Strategic Resources Group (FDs) for feedback.</li> <li>• SWOT analysis and local government finance workforce action plan key recommendations analysis performed to support review of the Finance Team.</li> <li>• Formulation of Finance Team structure options and funding requirements as applicable and recommendations to TVCA Senior Leadership Team and stakeholder groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Interim Finance &amp; Resources Director was appointed in July 2025 and undertook an immediate review of the short-term requirements.</li> <li>• This review concluded that the existing team was small and flat in structure, with no separation of the three key elements of a full finance function: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• financial management</li> <li>• financial accounting &amp; reporting</li> <li>• treasury management</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Additionally, the skillset and experience of team members were not necessarily aligned with activity being undertaken.</li> <li>• August - September 2025 - An interim structure was established.</li> <li>• Interim resource has been secured to ensure that the team is fit for purpose in the short-term.</li> <li>• Additional specialist support has been brought in where necessary, with resources added on a controlled, as needed basis.</li> <li>• This interim structure has been designed to undertake the full financial review and implement the improvements needed.</li> <li>• Formulation of Finance team structure has been developed by the Interim Group Director of Finance and Resources with support from HR.</li> <li>• Staff are now assigned to one of the three functions noted above, improving clarity and accountability.</li> <li>• Additional specialist support has been brought in where necessary, with resources added on a controlled, as needed basis.</li> <li>• Dedicated resource aligned to finance processes and improvements.</li> <li>• November 2025 - Updated structure discussed with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT)</li> <li>• December 2025 - Shared with the IAB as part of the Use of Resources Deep Dive given on 8 December 2025.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment for permanent Finance &amp; Resources Director (S73) officer is in progress and due to conclude in April 2026.</li> <li>• May 2026 onwards Transition from the interim finance arrangements and commence the recruitment of the vacant permanent finance posts.</li> </ul>	<p>The Finance team has a clear structure building on current capabilities to ensure an appropriately qualified team and a development pathway to a resilient high performing service</p>
<p>Review all finance processes and procedures and implement any necessary changes to ensure exemplar finance best practice, capture changes within the Constitution and improve awareness and understanding across the organisation.</p>	<p>JM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce a baseline assessment of finance processes and procedures and 'gap analysis' where applicable to form the basis of future improvement plan.</li> <li>• Cabinet approval of finance process changes as required in line with Constitution.</li> <li>• Roll out of processes across the organisation (including all necessary awareness raising and training).</li> <li>• Implementation of the necessary system changes to reflect the new sub-scheme of delegation.</li> <li>• Roll out training for all new budget holders and individuals with delegations. Roll out training for document authorisation system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of finance processes undertaken and complete</li> <li>• This includes Budget monitoring, finance accounting monthly control process,</li> <li>• Treasury management and cash management.</li> <li>• Process owners assigned</li> <li>• Dedicated resource within the Finance team who has responsibility for documenting and tracking processes and improvements made.</li> <li>• The Local Government Association (LGA) have been engaged to provide additional support on key process improvement.</li> <li>• Process tracker developed, updated and shared with the IAB.</li> <li>• New budget setting process implemented for 2025/26.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April 2026 - A new budget timetable to be created and to be implemented for 2026/2027.</li> <li>• Ongoing - Continue roll out of new processes where applicable.</li> <li>• April 2026 onwards - Implement the programme of process improvements and ensure that they are embedded across the organisation.</li> <li>• July - Work with Governance to ensure alignment of the sub-scheme of delegation.</li> <li>• July - Constitution changes to be updated as part of the constitution refresh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully documented finance business processes and procedure documentation is widely available and understood by staff</li> <li>• Ownership and accountability is demonstrated through budget holder leadership for their respective areas of delegated authority.</li> <li>• Document authorisation processes are compliant, timely and accurate working to agreed service standards across the Group</li> </ul>

Action moved from Use of Resources to Governance theme to avoid duplication

Headline Action		Update			
Produce a readiness plan for fiscal devolution, including a potential future integrated settlement, and new accountability arrangements as set out in the Devolution White Paper.		Full updates provided in Governance tab			

Governance					
Headline Action	Accountable Director/ Lead Officer	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps	Overarching measure of success
Actions in Progress					
Actions linked to Constitution review					
Undertake a comprehensive review of the TVCA Constitution, including Scheme of Delegation, working closely with the constituent local authorities and Cabinet, to ensure it is fit for purpose.	JMc	Complete internal review of the Constitution, engage members and partners in the review and formalise revised version at a future Cabinet meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Delivering a new and enhanced Constitution is central to the long-term improvement aspirations of TVCA.</li> <li>•An internal review of the Constitution has taken place.</li> <li>•Various sections of the Constitution have been considered and prioritised.</li> <li>•On 12 December 2025 a report presented to Cabinet outlined immediate organisational improvement requirement that requires clarity on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision-making principles and how they should be applied</li> <li>The definition of a key-decision</li> <li>The scrutiny call-in process</li> <li>Officer delegations</li> <li>Contract Procedure Rules</li> <li>Managing unreasonable public behaviour with regard to Freedom of Information requests and complaints.</li> </ul> </li> <li>•The immediate focus of constitutional update is on decision-making, specifically in ensuring that clarity exists in regard to how decisions should be taken and held to account.</li> <li>•Proposed some immediate enhancements to the existing Constitution to address identified priority areas relating to the Organisational Improvement Plan.</li> <li>•A structure for a revised Constitution developed and shared with Cabinet on 12 December 2025.</li> <li>•On 12 December Cabinet considered and approved the decision-making principles.</li> <li>•On 12 December Cabinet approved in principle the Public Code of Conduct – subject to review by the Audit and Governance Committee</li> <li>• Audit &amp; Governance Committee reviewed the proposed Constitutional amendments at its meeting on 20 February</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A programme of work is in place, led by Jodie Townsend to support the development and implementation of a revised TVCA constitution.</li> <li>• Complete the Constitution review and draft the amendments.</li> <li>• The fully revised Constitution will be considered by the Audit &amp; Governance and Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committees and the pre-Cabinet engagement process, in advance of being presented to Cabinet for approval on 26 June 2026.</li> <li>• Revised, fit of purpose constitution to be taken considered by the pre-cabinet engagement framework with a view to a final report going to Cabinet for decision in July 2026.</li> </ul>	Revised Constitution is agreed at TVCA Cabinet. TVCA has clear, demonstrable and effective governance processes
Undertake a comprehensive review of the TVCA Assurance Framework, taking into account best practice, working closely with the constituent local authorities and Cabinet, and implement any necessary changes to ensure it remains fit for purpose.	JMc/SB	Undertake an internal review of the Assurance Framework. Work with partners and Members to update. Seek Cabinet approval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Assurance Framework has been identified as a priority area for improvement.</li> <li>• Best practice centres around the development of a Single Assurance Framework (SAF), which will enable Tees Valley Combined Authority to address issues, introduce a new approach and culture to approvals and drive standards.</li> <li>• An initial assessment of the existing Assurance Framework by the Interim Monitoring Officer in September 2025 concluded that the existing framework is in need of redesign, with opportunities to strengthen it.</li> <li>•A SAF provides opportunities to deal with the uniqueness and nuances of the Tees Valley set up of Mayoral Development Corporations.</li> <li>•Tees Valley Specific Design Principles have been developed.</li> <li>•Engaged with the Ministry of Housing, Communities &amp; Local Government (MHCLG) to align design principles.</li> <li>•Cabinet has endorsed the approach and design principles for the development of a SAF on 12 December 2025</li> <li>•Audit and Governance committee considered design principles on 20 February 2026.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•24 April 2026 - Draft SAF to be presented to Cabinet</li> <li>April 2026 - Following Cabinet approval draft SAF to be submitted to MHCLG for review.</li> </ul> <p>The indicative timescale for final SAF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•26th June 2026 presented to Cabinet - this timescale is subject to MHCLG internal processes for review and feedback</li> <li>•Internal implementation plan to support adoption of the approved SAF to be developed to ensuring alignment across the organisation and other actions in this plan - including the constitution review.</li> </ul>	Approval of updated Assurance Framework. Data is available providing evidence of effective assurance processes.

Headline Action	Accountable Director/ Lead Officer	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps	Overarching measure of success
<p>Review all governance processes and procedures and implement any necessary changes to ensure exemplar governance and decision-making best practice, capture changes within the Constitution and improve awareness and understanding across the organisation.</p>	<p>JMc</p>	<p>Undertake internal review of processes, sub-divide to directorate/teams, identify changes to be made. Identify stakeholders and consultees and decision making needed i.e. from Cabinet. Incorporate review by formalising each process into TVCA governance structure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Initial review of Governance processes and procedures undertaken.</li> <li>•Following this review items that required immediate attention were prioritised.</li> <li>•Following this review at its meeting on 12 December Cabinet considered Governance items as detailed below:</li> <li>•Approved the development of a Single Assurance Framework which will replace the existing Local Assurance Framework.</li> <li>•Approved the establishment of an Independent Remuneration Panel</li> <li>•Approved in principle the Public Code of Conduct</li> <li>•Approved Decision-making Principles</li> <li>•Specific details are noted throughout this document.</li> <li>•Immediate priority items will result in updates to the constitution when required.</li> <li>•A full constitution review is underway.</li> <li>•At its meeting on 20 February 2026 Audit &amp; Governance Committee reviewed and made no amendments and supported the recommendation to Cabinet to approve the Public Code of Conduct.</li> <li>•Audit and Governance committee to consider SAF design principles on 20 February 2026.</li> </ul>	<p>20 March 2026 - Public Code of Conduct to Cabinet for approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•June - Review of Mayoral Decision-making process and notices</li> <li>•July - Internal process review to be complete</li> </ul> <p>Ongoing - Internal Governance group to drive development of content is progressing this work and ensuring alignment across the organisation and other actions.</p>	<p>Clear, demonstrable and effective governance processes demonstrated through positive feedback from Members, partners and stakeholders and understanding of key processes by TVCA staff.</p>
<p>Review the Cabinet decision-making process and implement any necessary changes to ensure meaningful political engagement at the outset, including presenting Members with thorough options appraisals, and throughout the process.</p>	<p>JMc</p>	<p>Undertake a detailed review of Cabinet decision making process, engage partners and Members in this review, and make any necessary changes to the Constitution and internal processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key to organisational improvement is ensuring that the TVCA governance framework remains fit for purpose by reflecting current legislation, operational requirements, and best practice.</li> <li>• It is good practice to amend the Constitution with the aim to clarify decision-making processes, strengthen accountability and transparency, and support effective collaboration between the mayor, Cabinet, and stakeholders in delivering strategic priorities for Tees Valley.</li> <li>• Completed review of the existing Local Assurance Framework.</li> <li>• Tees Valley-specific design principles, which align with the approved Tees Valley strategic fit, have been developed and endorsed.</li> <li>• There has been engagement with the Ministry of Housing, Communities &amp; Local Government (MHCLG).</li> <li>• On 12 December 2025 Cabinet considered and approved the decision-making principles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ongoing - Further development work is continuing.</li> <li>•Approval of a full updated SAF is on the Cabinet forward plan for 26 June 2026.</li> <li>•The Single Assurance Framework will replace the existing Local Assurance Framework.</li> <li>•July - Single Assurance Framework adopted and implemented.</li> </ul>	<p>Clearly documented process from origin to decision.</p>
<p>Undertake a comprehensive review of the Code of Conduct for Officers and Members and implement any necessary changes to ensure it is fit for purpose and aligns with best practice.</p>	<p>JMc</p>	<p>Review current Code of Conduct, secure Cabinet sign off and implement changes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Scoping has taken place</li> <li>•Review will include assessment of language, clarity and accessibility; ethical standards; compliance; supporting protocols and process; required training and awareness; links to reporting and whistleblowing; examination of enforcement and available sanctions; clarity on process and opportunities for use of Independent Persons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•April 2026 - Recruitment of 3 independent persons to commence.</li> <li>•May 2026 - Undertake review of Code of Conduct and Implement any change</li> <li>•May 2026 - Ensure updated Code of Conduct policy and form and they are on the TVCA website.</li> </ul>	<p>Revised Code of Conduct that aligns to best practice approved by Cabinet and included in member induction processes.</p>

Headline Action	Accountable Director/ Lead Officer	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps	Overarching measure of success
Actions relating to statutory/ non-statutory committees					
Review the operation of all TVCA statutory committees, ensuring appropriate officer support, and implement any necessary changes to ensure that the responsibilities of each are addressed effectively and efficiently with robust work plans.	JMc	Review legislative requirements and terms of reference for each Statutory Committee, engage partners and Committee members in the review, and update the constitution accordingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles and responsibilities of key groups within the Cabinet cycle have been considered and articulated as part of the Cabinet decision making process, which were considered and approved by Cabinet on 12 December.</li> <li>• This is to provide further alignment with organisation objectives and fit with best practice approaches and governance opportunities.</li> <li>• Both Regulatory Committees have adopted news ways of working. Are adopting new work programmes and have developed improvement plans in support of the Organisation Improvement Plan.</li> <li>• Senior Responsible Officer lead from Executive Leadership team allocated to all statutory and non-statutory committees</li> </ul> <p>Review undertaken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• July 2026 - Review to be complete, links to Governance review as detailed above</li> </ul>	<p>Revised Terms of References produced.</p> <p>Evidence of training and feedback from Committee members.</p> <p>Changes reflected in governance processes and Constitution.</p>
Review the non-statutory officer advisory group governance structure, in collaboration with the constituent local authorities and other key stakeholders and implement any necessary changes to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.	JMc	Review what exists, what they do and how they contribute to overall governance across the authority, engaging with key partners and stakeholders in the review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping is including examination of best practice advisory board/ committee structures within CAs as well as the specific functions, membership, opportunity and organisational alignment required within the TVCA governance framework.</li> <li>• Senior Responsible Officer lead from Executive Leadership team allocated to all statutory and non-statutory committees</li> </ul> <p>Review undertaken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• July 2026 - Review to be complete, links to Governance review as detailed above</li> </ul>	<p>Coherent committee and non-statutory advisory group structure that supports the authority and work of Cabinet. Demonstrated in Committee effectiveness reviews.</p>
Implement a new Member induction process and on-going programme of development, learning from best practice, for members of all TVCA statutory committees to ensure that they are familiar with TVCA, their roles & responsibilities and the expectations of their position.	JMc	Request feedback from Members and stakeholders on the current induction process. Develop Member induction process for Cabinet and all Statutory Committees.	<p>Collaborative approach to be developed to discuss roles and roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Review and refresh of member induction to be undertaken</p>	<p>May 2026 - commence review and refresh of member induction to be undertaken.</p> <p>June 2026 - New member induction to be rolled out</p> <p>Ongoing - ongoing programme of development</p>	<p>All new committee members complete the induction within an agreed timeframe following of appointment. Ongoing programme implemented</p>
Review the TVCA Publication Scheme and make any necessary changes, to make the maximum amount of information readily available to the public.	JMc	Assess what is currently published against what we are able to share publicly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication Scheme is linked to a wider review of polices linked to data and data protection, this work is in progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026 - An Interim Information Governance Manager - To commence role in March 2026</li> <li>• April 2026 - Review policies complete</li> <li>• May 2026 - Onwards - Prioritisation and implementation of refreshed polices following review.</li> </ul>	<p>Revised publication scheme linked to legislative requirements, which is regularly updated and enhanced, with scheduled reviews</p>

Headline Action	Accountable Director/ Lead Officer	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps	Overarching measure of success
Annual Governance statement					
<p>Review the format and effectiveness of the existing Annual Governance Statement in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) &amp; the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) Good Governance Framework and make any necessary changes.</p>	JMc	<p>Review current format, engage partners and members as appropriate, taking into account best practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Review of 23/24 and 24/25 taken place Annual Governance Statements (AGS) taken place for DCs and TVCA</li> <li>•Updated draft templates in place and are in line with CIPFA and SOLACE guidance.</li> <li>•Process is established which accords with the best value guidance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•March - Complete draft TVCA AGS for 2025/26 financial year.</li> <li>•March - Complete review of Development Corporation AGS for 23/24 and 24/25</li> <li>•ASG will be incorporated in continuous improvement and used as a tool for improvement going forward.</li> <li>•Statements being shared with Audit and Governance committees across the organisation ahead of submission to EY.</li> </ul>	<p>Production of annual governance statement which fairly reflects the position of governance across the authority with open and transparent acknowledgement where improvements need to be made, with appropriate actions to address.</p>
Readiness for Devolution					
<p><i>The 2 actions below have been merged - and top action moved from Use of Resources to Governance -</i></p> <p>Produce a readiness plan for fiscal devolution, including a potential future integrated settlement, and new accountability arrangements as set out in the Devolution White Paper.</p> <p>Undertake a business planning exercise and produce a readiness plan in anticipation of the expanded powers set out in the Devolution White Paper.</p>	TB/SB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce baseline self-assessment of readiness against best practice using models produced for MCAs who have already progressed through readiness activity.</li> <li>• Produce an action plan designed to address any gaps in readiness identified through the baseline assessment work to deliver for March 2026 to inform formal readiness processes with Government.</li> <li>• This is on the basis that the first financial year where further fiscal devolution and integrated settlement could occur for TVCA is 1 April 2027.</li> <li>• Approval of readiness plan with stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a clear need to ensure readiness for the new responsibilities and powers in the English Devolution Bill.</li> <li>• TVCA is considering future organisational structure, capacity and resource requirements, which is interrelated with the workforce development strategy.</li> <li>• Consideration is being given to how it can ensure the activities that the organisation is delivering now are effectively captured and aligned to anticipated future activities, ensuring that the organisation is meeting its statutory, legal and contractual functions.</li> <li>• Planning has been undertaken to fully understand the powers and responsibilities in the Devolution Bill and there has been engagement with MHCLG.</li> <li>• Consideration has been given to the resource implications, and this is being considered as part of the workforce development strategy workstream.</li> <li>• The development of the SAF, which will progress to an Accountability Framework, which is a requirement for potential future fiscal devolution.</li> <li>• ELT have produced a matrix of existing programmes and operational priorities to support the development of this work, including the Spatial Development Strategy and the Local Growth Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•March- A clear timetable to be produced and considered by ELT, linked to timetables for Constitution, Governance a, Single Assurance Framework Review and Workforce Development plan.</li> <li>•The organisation will produce a baseline self-assessment of readiness against best practice using models produced for MCAs who have already progressed through readiness activity for fiscal devolution.</li> </ul>	<p>Planning exercise. Agree readiness plan. Readiness plan is in place with clear target dates and responsibilities. TVCA Cabinet approved readiness plan</p>
Ongoing Actions					
<p>Ensure committee reports are of sufficient quality and draw attention to the pertinent information, considering best practice and feedback from Cabinet and local authority officers.</p>	JMc	<p>Review structure and content of reports &amp; deliver report writing training to identified staff. Deadline for reports clearly communicated with escalation process and action taken recorded.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•A full review of the reporting template and structure for Cabinet reports has been completed.</li> <li>•Report writing training has been delivered to some staff.</li> <li>•A new template and structure for now rolled out.</li> <li>•Linking to the strategic forward plan, clear Cabinet cycles are reporting deadlines are now defined.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ongoing- Report writing training to continue to be rolled out to TVCA staff</li> <li>• The framework around report approval is being strengthened.</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrable audit trail of informed decision making. Testing of the process to ensure robustness.</p>

Headline Action	Accountable Director/ Lead Officer	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps	Overarching measure of success
Ensure that TVCA continues to embed the organisational response to all recommendations from the independent Tees Valley review and reports produced by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and (CIPFA).	TB	Establish baseline and progress against recommendations and develop action plan to address outstanding actions. Develop and implement continuous improvement actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•TVCA remains conscious of previous recommendations from the Tees Valley Review and those from reports produced by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability. These recommendations have been incorporated into the Organisational Improvement Plan and effective implementation is closely monitored.</li> </ul>	Ongoing- Continue to demonstrate progress and embed actions.	Demonstrable progress towards embedded actions.
Implement a new governance e-agenda and forward planning system to improve efficiency and compliance.	JMc	Implement modern.gov, & roll out training to staff, partners and members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is continuing in terms of scoping and finding an appropriate platform for Governance e-agenda and forward planning system.</li> <li>• Scoping into a Governance e-agenda and forward planning system is continuing.</li> <li>• Conversations on-going with platform provider for Modern.gov and exploration is continuing with alternative platform providers.</li> </ul> Publish forward plan and agendas on the website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•This work is interlined with the review of Governance processes and procedures.</li> <li>•Process reviews to be fully undertaken and addressed first then the system will be the outcome and support mechanism to embed the improvements.</li> <li>•Work is continuing in terms of scoping and finding an appropriate platform for Governance e-agenda and forward planning system - whilst the process review continues.</li> <li>•June 2026 - Implementation of case management system for legal services and e-agenda</li> </ul>	Modern.gov works for staff and members with feedback regularly sought and actions taken to address issues
Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Actual Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
Complete actions - To continue to embed					
Review Cabinet portfolios and strengthen the role of portfolio holders, ensuring TVCA priorities reflect and deliver on local priorities where this is appropriate and can add value, including appropriate support from senior TVCA officers, and capture changes within the Constitution.	TB	Working with the LAs and Cabinet, agree how portfolio holders are identified and agreed, and how portfolio holders input into TVCA governance processes. Make any necessary changes to the TVCA Constitution and internal processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of portfolio holders has been strengthened with the intention that each portfolio holder leads their area of responsibility, with support from senior officers.</li> <li>• Additional responsibilities have been included into the portfolios, for example finance and inward investment, which marks a step forward in terms of transparency and ownership.</li> <li>• There is also a need to ensure that Cabinet as a whole develops a deeper understanding each portfolio.</li> <li>• The empowerment of portfolio holders has meant that they have led on the development of strategic priorities, for example through workshop sessions and engagement with staff across TVCA and the constituent local authorities.</li> </ul> Strengthening the role of portfolio holders has also been a major part of the development of TVCA's new External Communications Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ongoing - Work with Cabinet to broaden portfolios to include more key areas of the organisation to increase visibility and provided clearer decision making.</li> <li>•Ongoing - Develop Cabinet's collective strength and shared leadership.</li> <li>•Ongoing - linked to the wider Governance review - The portfolio arrangements to continue to develop with the aim that portfolio holders' own reports relating to their portfolio in Cabinet meetings.</li> </ul>	Feedback from Cabinet members of shared ownership and contribution.  Identifiable output in decision making and wider governance, which acknowledges the role and remit of portfolio holders.

Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Actual Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
<p>Implement regular informal Cabinet meetings, both with and without officers present, Cabinet workshop sessions where appropriate and portfolio meetings with senior TVCA officers and senior local authority officers where appropriate.</p>	<p>JMc</p>	<p>Implement a cycle of Informal cabinet meetings, workshop sessions and portfolio meetings in the corporate calendar, which have an identified and timely link to the governance processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation has strengthened its governance framework through the enhancement of informal governance arrangements with Cabinet.</li> <li>• Introduction of informal Cabinet meetings with a purpose to discuss the forward plans, key decisions and review of draft Cabinet reports.</li> <li>• A series of dedicated Cabinet workshops to provide a valuable opportunity for Cabinet members to engage in open and constructive dialogue around the Authority's strategic direction, priorities, and the alignment of these within the budget-setting process.</li> <li>• The enhanced governance arrangements mark a significant step in fostering collective ownership of TVCA's vision and ensuring that future decisions are grounded in shared understanding and ambition.</li> <li>• Standing meetings have been established with Portfolio leads and TVCA Directors/Officers.</li> <li>• The Pre-Cabinet cycle includes meetings with the Tees Valley Chief Executives group and Tees Valley Management Group, in addition to meetings with Local Authority Monitoring Officers and Finance Directors.</li> <li>• A twelve-month Cabinet forward plan for 2026/27 has been developed collaboratively with Cabinet</li> <li>• This includes a programme of informal engagement that is now in place.</li> <li>• Ensuring that Cabinet is involved in the development of strategic priorities and has a sound understanding of the issues in advance of the formal Cabinet meetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ongoing- continue to build upon this momentum through continued engagement, using future workshops to deepen strategic alignment, strengthen governance, and ensure that our resources are targeted where they can deliver the greatest impact for the region.</li> </ul>	<p>Production of corporate calendar, which is agreed and owned by TVCA, partners and Members. Evidence of additional engagement with Cabinet members, with all feedback addressed and reported back to Cabinet members.</p>
<p>Develop and implement an on-going improvement plan with the Overview &amp; Scrutiny (O&amp;S) Committee to continue to make improvements to the effectiveness of the overview and scrutiny function, including a more strategic approach to work planning and improving the relationship with Cabinet and portfolio holders.</p>	<p>JMc</p>	<p>Work with O&amp;S Committee to develop improvement plan (merging any actions under the previous Centre for Governance &amp; Scrutiny review where appropriate), with identified aims, objectives and timescales. Ensure improvement activity is appropriately included in the Committee's work plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First listening workshop held 14 May 2025</li> <li>• Development of improvement continues with ownership of improvement by O&amp;S committee.</li> <li>• Committee has adopted new work programmes and have</li> <li>• Developed, agreed and adopted improvement plan in support of the Organisation Improvement Plan.</li> <li>• Second workshop held 14 Feb 2026</li> <li>• Notes provide evidence of improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ongoing - continue to deliver and embed</li> </ul>	<p>O&amp;S Committee have shaped and developed the plan, the effectiveness of which can be demonstrated in its work and results.</p>
<p>Ensure that all TVCA statutory committees are appropriately supported and challenged to maximise effectiveness.</p>	<p>JMc</p>	<p>Review governance officer capacity. Action log developed and maintained and reported to each Committee meeting. Review use of confidential items at statutory committees. Implement staff training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviews have taken place of the statutory committees.</li> <li>• Action logs have been developed and are maintained.</li> <li>• There is an identified member of the TVCA Executive Leadership team who works alongside the Governance lead for each statutory committee as a Senior Responsible Officer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to appropriately support statutory committees</li> <li>• Ensure staff training is undertaken by relevant officers</li> </ul>	<p>Review of effectiveness of each Committee.</p>

Culture					
Headline Action	Accountable Director/Assistant Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps	Overarching measure of success
Actions in Progress					
Development related actions					
Initiate and undertake a programme of Organisational Development (OD), with an external partner to provide support and challenge.	SB/CW	Procure O&D partner to support the OD development, develop the programme of OD for consideration and agreement by TVCA Senior Leadership Team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•OD Partner Procured - April 2025</li> <li>•A series of workshops have been held with the Senior Leadership team - May 2025 - December 2025</li> <li>•TVCA is working in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) to complement the OD partner work - December 2025</li> <li>•TVCA are accessing training and guidance on organisational development via the LGA - December 2025</li> <li>•Directors undertook 90 day plan exercises with the CEO - Concluded December 2025</li> <li>•The 6m appraisal cycle was commenced with clear direction to Head of Service to cascade to their managers that appraisal objectives should relate to Directors 90 day plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•April 2026 - Change management processes.</li> <li>•May 2026 - An initial analysis of TVCA's OD plan and it's aims</li> </ul>	O&D Programme is developed and agreed with clear steps for implementation over the short, medium and long term.
Develop and implement a professional development plan for the Chief Executive (CEX) and all Directors to ensure continued development, and establish a high performing senior leadership team	SB/CW	Develop Organisational Development (OD) road map, which details a 12-month rolling programme of OD workshops, mentoring, coaching, and supplementary interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Feb 2026 - Workforce development roadmap designed and agreed with TVCA and the LGA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Series of initiatives are identified in the roadmap which will be designed and implemented over next 6 months - a full update will be provided in the March update</li> </ul>	Personal Development Plans in place for the CEX and Directors.
Embed appraisal process that ensures individual accountability through clear objective setting, which is aligned to team and organisational priorities and robust performance management.	SB/CW	Run training sessions for appraising managers on effective objective setting to ensure consistency. Create a process that overlays the appraisal incremental time points (6month and annual) whereby objectives review is more fluid to create accountability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Reviews have concluded to understand the capability, capacity, skills including gaps competencies and leadership against the priorities, budget; essentially a SWOT or PESTLE analysis.</li> <li>• The LGA have been engaged and have supplied a workforce development plan roadmap. This includes where they can support. This will be a long-term piece of work.</li> <li>• Budgets have been set for each Directorate which will underpin the structure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•March 2026, October 2026 and ongoing - Directors will receive a compilation of the objectives set for all in their Directorate including rankings of performance.</li> <li>•April 2026 - LGA undertaking a review of the appraisal process</li> <li>•May 2026 - Objective setting training</li> <li>•September 2026 - Updated appraisal cycle commencing 010926 will be supported in advance by the above.</li> </ul>	Appraisal process is embedded. Objectives are demonstrably achieved or action is taken to address this.

Headline Action	Accountable Director/Assistant Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps	Overarching measure of success		
Workforce development related actions							
Develop and implement a workforce development strategy through a demand and skills analysis, to ensure appropriate capacity and capability, across the organisation, focused on Cabinet approved priorities.	SB/CW						
Develop and implement a workforce development strategy, to ensure expertise and experience across TVCA & the constituent local authorities are fully utilised in support of continued organisational improvement.	SB/CW	Create baseline assessments of workforce - identify skills gaps - creation of team and individual development plans. Develop a draft strategy for consideration and agreement by TVCA Senior Leadership Team. Set out the steps for implementation over the short medium and long term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Action strongly correlates to the Operating Model and Organisational Development work as described above.</li> <li>•Action is overarching and links across the Improvement Plan.</li> <li>•The outcome of linked actions will help further inform the progress and timeline for a strengthened operating model.</li> <li>•Discussions are ongoing with Cabinet on the Strategic Framework which will inform this.</li> <li>•The people plan is now referred to as the Workforce Development Plan.</li> <li>•The plan will review how directorates and teams will be structured,</li> <li>•Providing the framework for decision making and delegations.</li> <li>•A mapping exercise has begun to provide the basis for this work.</li> <li>•Engaging support from the LGA to undertake a capacity and capability review that will inform the wider Workforce Development Strategy—addressing current needs in addition to strategic priorities and future requirements of the organisation, including those associated with further devolution.</li> <li>•Plan of stakeholder engagement has been developed in partnership with Local Authorities.</li> <li>•Reviews have concluded to understand the capability, capacity, skills including gaps competencies and leadership against the priorities, budget; essentially a SWOT or PESTLE analysis.</li> <li>•The LGA have been engaged and have supplied a workforce development plan roadmap. This includes where they can support. This will be a long-term piece of work.</li> <li>•Budgets have been set for each Directorate which will underpin the structure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•April 2026 A scoping exercise has been undertaken, and the people plan (workforce development plan) is being drafted.</li> <li>•The LGA have supported with a roadmap to bring staff along and gain buy-in to this document through a series of intervention and initiatives prior to a final document being in force.</li> <li>•This will be linked to strategic priorities for the Authority including future devolution.</li> </ul>	Production of a workforce development strategy which is clear on the steps to achieve a high performing workforce. Staff Utilise staff surveys to monitor impact.		
Develop and implement a workforce development strategy, to enhance skills and knowledge at all levels within the organisation.	SB/CW						

Headline Action	Accountable Director/Assistant Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps	Overarching measure of success
Develop and implement a workforce development strategy, to ensure a sustainable and high performing finance function.	SB/CW	Create baseline assessments of workforce - identify skills gaps - creation of team and individual development plans. Develop a draft strategy for consideration and agreement by TVCA Senior Leadership Team. Set out the steps for implementation over the short medium and long term.	<p>The Interim Finance &amp; Resources Director was appointed in July 2025 and undertook an immediate review of the short-term requirements. •This review concluded that the existing team was small and flat in structure, with no separation of the three key elements of a full finance function: •financial management•financial accounting &amp; reporting•treasury management•Additionally, the skillset and experience of team members were not necessarily aligned with activity being undertaken. •August - September 2025 - An interim structure was established. •Interim resource has been secured to ensure that the team is fit for purpose in the short-term. •Additional specialist support has been brought in where necessary, with resources added on a controlled, as needed basis. •This interim structure has been designed to undertake the full financial review and implement the improvements needed. •Formulation of Finance team structure has been developed by the Interim Group Director of Finance and Resources with support from HR. •Staff are now assigned to one of the three functions noted above, improving clarity and accountability. •Additional specialist support has been brought in where necessary, with resources added on a controlled, as needed basis. •Dedicated resource aligned to finance processes and improvements. •November 2025 - Updated structure discussed with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) •December 2025 - Shared with the IAB as part of the Use of Resources Deep Dive given on 8 December 2025.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Recruitment for permanent Finance &amp; Resources Director (S73) officer is in progress and due to conclude in April 2026. •May 2026 onwards - Transition from the interim finance arrangements and commence the recruitment of the vacant permanent finance posts.</li> </ul>	Production of a workforce development strategy which is clear on the steps to achieve a high performing workforce. Staff Utilise staff surveys to monitor impact.
Develop and implement a workforce development strategy, to ensure a sustainable and high-performing governance function.	SB/CW		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Interim legal &amp; governance team structure implemented.</li> <li>•Additional Interim resources brought in both legal and governance to strengthen the existing structure, improving the level of internal expertise and reducing reliance on external legal support.</li> <li>•New approach to Information Governance implemented with dedicated team.</li> <li>•Recruitment process to recruit permanent Chief Legal &amp; Monitoring Officer underway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•March 2026 onwards - recruit to the vacant permanent roles in the legal &amp; governance team.</li> <li>•Ensure preparedness for the new responsibilities and powers in the English Devolution Bill.</li> <li>•March 2026 (ratified by Cabinet 24 April 2026) - Conclusion of interview process for permanent Finance Director and Monitoring Officer.</li> </ul>	

Headline Action	Accountable Director/Assistant Director	Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
Induction process actions					
Review TVCA staff induction process to improve organisational awareness and understanding of governance and finance processes.	SB/CW	Review existing induction content and work with governance, procurement & finance teams to build fit for purpose induction content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Induction content to cover Governance and Procurement is created and Finance contribution will complete this requirement.</li> <li>•To support understanding of developing finance processes and procedures finance are also developing good relationships with Heads of Service and Budget managers.</li> <li>•CEX quarterly meet and greets to commence from April 2026 for all new starters.</li> <li>•The Tees Valley bus tour, part of the induction process, has been widened to include existing staff. Staff members also deliver the content for the bus tours.</li> <li>•Each team will complete a lunch and learn on who they are and what they do and the intranet will have staff grouped by Directorate/team with a written overview of what they do as a ready artefact for staff to access.</li> <li>•Full lunch and learn programme developed.</li> <li>•A new values-linked induction video has been created</li> <li>•An induction feedback survey is issued to all new starters post-induction to continually improve this key activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•April 2026 Induction with CEX commenced on quarterly basis</li> <li>•June 2026 Overhaul the induction so that connectivity to TVCA, its purpose, mission and strategic objectives are clear to new starters. Include a specific finance, governance and procurement overview.</li> </ul>	New induction process rolled out to staff.
Headline Action	Accountable Director/Assistant Director	Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
Ongoing actions					
Implement an internal communications plan to improve employee engagement and voice, through ongoing engagement and learning activity and to embed the actions within the Organisational Improvement Plan across the organisation.	CP	Develop and embed an internal communications plan, which is shared with all staff. Continually monitor plan to ensure effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Improved internal engagement through introduction of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff briefings – from April 2025 – ongoing</li> <li>• Staff forum – from March 2025 – ongoing</li> <li>• Lunch and Learn session from March 2025 – ongoing</li> <li>• Regular video updates from the Chief Executive – April 2025 - ongoing</li> <li>• Updates from Director of Operations – June 2025</li> <li>• Reception display board notifications – July 2025</li> <li>• Engaged with the staff forum on internal communications plan – September 2025</li> <li>• Engaged with staff forum on improvements to intranet - June 2025</li> <li>• The 2025 staff survey had a cross section of staff attending staff focus group sessions to understand the 4 weakest scoring areas.</li> <li>• Actions were created and have been delivered. This includes work with the communications team on an internal communication strategy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Internal comms plan to continue embedding and adapting</li> <li>•Further structure added to the implementation plan to support improvement related progress</li> </ul>	Communications plan is agreed and staff are reporting positive feedback (through regular feedback requests) on communication and visibility.

Headline Action	Accountable Director/Assistant Director	Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
<p>Improve relationships between senior management and all staff through improved communication, visibility, engagement activity, openness to receiving feedback/challenge and demonstrating that the organisation is responsive to staff.</p>	<p>SB/CW</p>	<p>Regular staff updates via TVCA intranet - request feedback from staff - on-going staff surveys - Discussion at all staff meetings on progress of embedding change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>September 2025 - Staff focus group sessions identified the need for continued transparent communications, with a marked improvement noted.</li> <li>November 2025 - A staff forum request was delivered for more visible and accessible executive level leadership comms, including written recap of CEX update.</li> <li>Staff want better cross-team understanding and this will be achieved through lunch and learns, intranet development on what teams do.</li> <li>Comms team is now working to improve internal knowledge on organisational&gt;Directorate&gt; team objectives and deliverables.</li> <li>The Implementation of the communication methods detailed above aim to support relationship building.</li> <li>Organisational Priorities meetings between Directors and Heads of Service implemented</li> <li>You said/We Did staff forum feedback from People Team update during February 2026 All Staff Briefing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing - continued implementation of strengthened internal communications</li> <li>May 2026 - Implementation of Director, Heads of Service and Manager meetings to open lines of communication further.</li> <li>April 2026 Share the HR Metrics with all staff to be open about the data we collect and analyse and inform that we are a structured organisation that is data driven. This will give context and clarity to initiatives that are designed to improve our metrics.</li> <li>April 2026 Hold face to face inductions with TB each quarter for joiners in that quarter but also invite current staff. and * CEX to be join meetings at a team level in a Q&amp;A open style</li> </ul>	<p>Evidence shared on TVCA intranet - staff confirm they are informed through regular feedback requests.</p>
Complete					
<p>Ensure that the TVCA values (open, empathetic, collaborative &amp; focussed) are embedded through everyday activity, organisational development and the appraisal process.</p>	<p>SB/CW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design and implement a recordable system to give positive feedback where TVCA's values are lived out and demonstrated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intranet shoutout feature has now been updated to link achievement to the values demonstrated by colleagues</li> <li>TVCA values are embedded in job adverts by way of candidates needing to align their profile to the values.</li> <li>In selection processes, interviews now have a set matrix and managers are provided with a bank of questions to assess technical skills, role competencies and TVCA value alignment.</li> <li>A new induction video has been created that focuses on TVCA's values as the theme Office graphics/wall decals are installed displaying our values also the reception TV screen and intranet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May 2026 The staff survey is structured around the four values and how far embedded the values have been, will be evidenced in its repeat for 2026</li> </ul>	<p>Clear data showing increasing evidence of TVCA staff living our values</p>
<p>Recruit a permanent Chief Executive (CEX) and recruit to the vacant Director posts and ensure appropriate input from the S73 Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer in the senior leadership team.</p> <p>All future recruitment will be undertaken in accordance with the new and emerging cultural values of the organisation. All senior leaders will be expected to exhibit, champion and inspire the behaviours of cultural change.</p>	<p>TB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with external recruitment agency for CEX post</li> <li>Undertake process to recruit remaining Director vacancies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permanent CEO appointed by Cabinet in June 2025</li> <li>Interim Financial Director and Monitoring Officer in post</li> <li>Cabinet agreed approach to recruit permanent Finance Director and Monitoring Officer</li> <li>Recruitment of permanent Finance Director and Monitoring Officer began w/c 19 January, with closing date of 15 Feb</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2026 (ratified by Cabinet 24 April 2026) - Conclusion of interview process for permanent Finance Director and Monitoring Officer.</li> </ul>	<p>Recruitment concluded. High performing senior leadership team. Recoding of improved data.</p>

Headline Action	Accountable Director/Assistant Director	Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
<p>Create a healthier work environment by engaging with staff through the staff survey and staff forum and making changes/delivering activities that will influence staff satisfaction in terms of wellbeing and engagement.</p>	<p>SB/CW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Staff Forum</li> <li>• Staff surveys acted upon</li> <li>• Create 12-month calendar of Lunchtime Learns</li> <li>• Provide multi-purpose space for staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Forum up and running, improvement an ongoing agenda item</li> <li>• Focused staff survey workshops</li> <li>• Wellbeing room created</li> <li>• Lunchtime Learn programme established</li> <li>• Collaborative team working space in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April 2026 Achieve an internal culture base line with a culture-specific survey to staff</li> <li>• June 2026 – Repeat the annual staff survey</li> <li>• October 2026- Ongoing - Bi-monthly pulse surveys in tandem with key actions on any lower scoring areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff agree their wellbeing is valued and can see improvements</li> </ul>

Continuous Improvement					
Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Next steps	Overarching measure of success
Actions in Progress					
Develop and implement a new organisation-wide operating model to improve processes, efficiency, understanding and quality.	SB	Set out how directorates and teams will be structured and where decision making will sit in order to create a set of general accountabilities for Directors, which are expressed through their objectives to deliver against the policies set out by the Combined Authority. Create a scheme of delegation that covers specific delegations or requirements for compliance where officers are fulfilling these accountabilities. Undertake an internal review of existing policies & processes, identify gaps and improvements to be made, implement any changes and roll out any appropriate internal & external communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance and Governance have been prioritised for review.</li> <li>• Work on officer schemes of delegation, approval systems, and related processes is progressing.</li> <li>• Scoping for Workforce Development Plan has taken place - detailed in Culture tab.</li> <li>• HR have conducted research on requirements with ELT.</li> <li>• A review of the Scheme of Delegation has commenced, linked to the refresh of the Assurance Framework and broader governance matters.</li> <li>• Reviews of existing policies and processes have been undertaken across several themes relevant to the improvement plan and business-as-usual activity.</li> <li>• Implementation of any updates will take place at the earliest suitable opportunity, with internal and external consultation and communication carried out where required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing - Strengthened operating model is an outcome of the action plan.</li> <li>• July-September - Adoption and implementation related and key strategic items, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Constitution</li> <li>• Single Assurance Framework</li> <li>• Governance Review outcome</li> <li>• Long-term priority setting</li> <li>• Local Growth Plan</li> <li>• Spatial Development Strategy</li> <li>• Investment pipeline</li> <li>• Workforce Development Strategy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Agreed operating model is rolled out and understood. Staff can report via surveys understanding of high-level objectives and where their role impacts these.
Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
Complete actions - To continue to embed					
Ensure progress against the actions contained within the Organisational Improvement Plan is effectively monitored, working closely with the constituent local authorities and the Independent Improvement Board, and reported in a transparent manner to Cabinet, the Improvement Board, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) and EY (external auditor).	SB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular engagement with all stakeholders, building relationships.</li> <li>• Set up report structure for both internal and external reporting at agreed frequency.</li> <li>• Set up spreadsheet to show progress against each action or KPI.</li> <li>• Attend Improvement Board and MHCLG meetings providing previous minutes and recording any actions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IAB meetings in place</li> <li>• Initial partner/stakeholder workshops held May/June 25</li> <li>• Follow up workshops concluded in Jan/Feb 26</li> <li>• Improvement Plan progress built into Governance structure</li> <li>• Regular engagement with partners and stakeholders implemented and continuing</li> <li>• Reporting structure agreed and in place</li> <li>• Governance process in relation to IAB and MHCLG well established and ongoing</li> <li>• Forward plan for IAB implemented and considered with the Chair and Board members monthly</li> <li>• Review of actions and progress undertaken</li> <li>• Refreshed presentation of progress, to include impacts and evidence.</li> <li>• January - Review of action plan complete.</li> <li>• January - IAB meeting deep-dive on Partnerships &amp; Continuous Improvement</li> <li>• February - Increased contact with IAB and committee members</li> <li>• February - Informal IAB meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March - IAB meeting deep dive on Culture</li> <li>• Ongoing - working with IAB for support and challenge on progress</li> <li>• Ongoing - reporting progress as agreed</li> </ul>	Clear & regular reporting, timely meeting papers, improved/positive feedback

Headline Action	Accountable Director	Initially identified Key Steps	Key Milestones/Progress to date	Ongoing steps to embed	Overarching measure of success
Undertake an assessment and identify any new actions to ensure that we are striving for excellence in the remaining categories set out in the statutory guidance on best value standards and interventions (not covered in the Best Value Notice or by the external auditor statutory letter), which are leadership and service delivery.	SB	Undertake assessment. Agree actions and develop implementation plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial assessment of the remaining areas in the Best Value Notice guidance has undertaken and will be appropriately included as part of continuous improvement.</li> <li>TVCA have engaged with an Organisational Development partner who is providing leadership support further details provided in the Culture section of this update.</li> <li>Service delivery actions are integrated within the improvement plan in multiple areas, such as the strategic framework, scheme of delegation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing - adoption and implementation of Continuous Improvement Plan that aligns with Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through continuous monitoring a clear positive direction of travel can be demonstrated.</li> </ul>
Ongoing actions					
Take part in a Local Government Association (LGA) peer review in 18-24 months and seek external support and challenge from the LGA, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CFGs) to support the Organisational Improvement Plan.	SB	Liaise with LGA/CIPFA/CFGs for peer review and external support & challenge. Agree dates & timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement and support from LGA, CIPFA, and CfGS is being accessed to support the improvement journey.</li> <li>Details on specific actions and workstreams are reflected within the relevant action updates throughout this report.</li> <li>Discussions have taken place with the LGA about bringing forward a Peer Review ahead of the originally proposed timeline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April - Further scoping work to begin.</li> <li>Dates for the Peer Review will be agreed at an appropriate point following scoping and development of Peer Review Implementation Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed dates with each planned into TVCA timescales</li> <li>benchmarking/improved position recorded &amp; continually measured.</li> </ul>
Implement a Programme Management Office (PMO), with standardised processes and tools, to ensure consistency in terms of how the organisation develops, manages and monitors projects and programmes.	SB	Explore the structure of a PMO style model within TVCA to ensure it is fit for purpose and specific to TVCA. implement a fit for purpose PMO style model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-market engagement undertaken and concluded</li> <li>Next steps were considered.</li> <li>The requirement of a PMO model would follow an updated operating model.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing- Once operating model is reviewed and updated based on the outcomes noted above a PMO model will be considered.</li> </ul>	An appropriate PMO 'model' is in place for TVCA. Demonstrable benefits of the PMO can be seen & recorded.