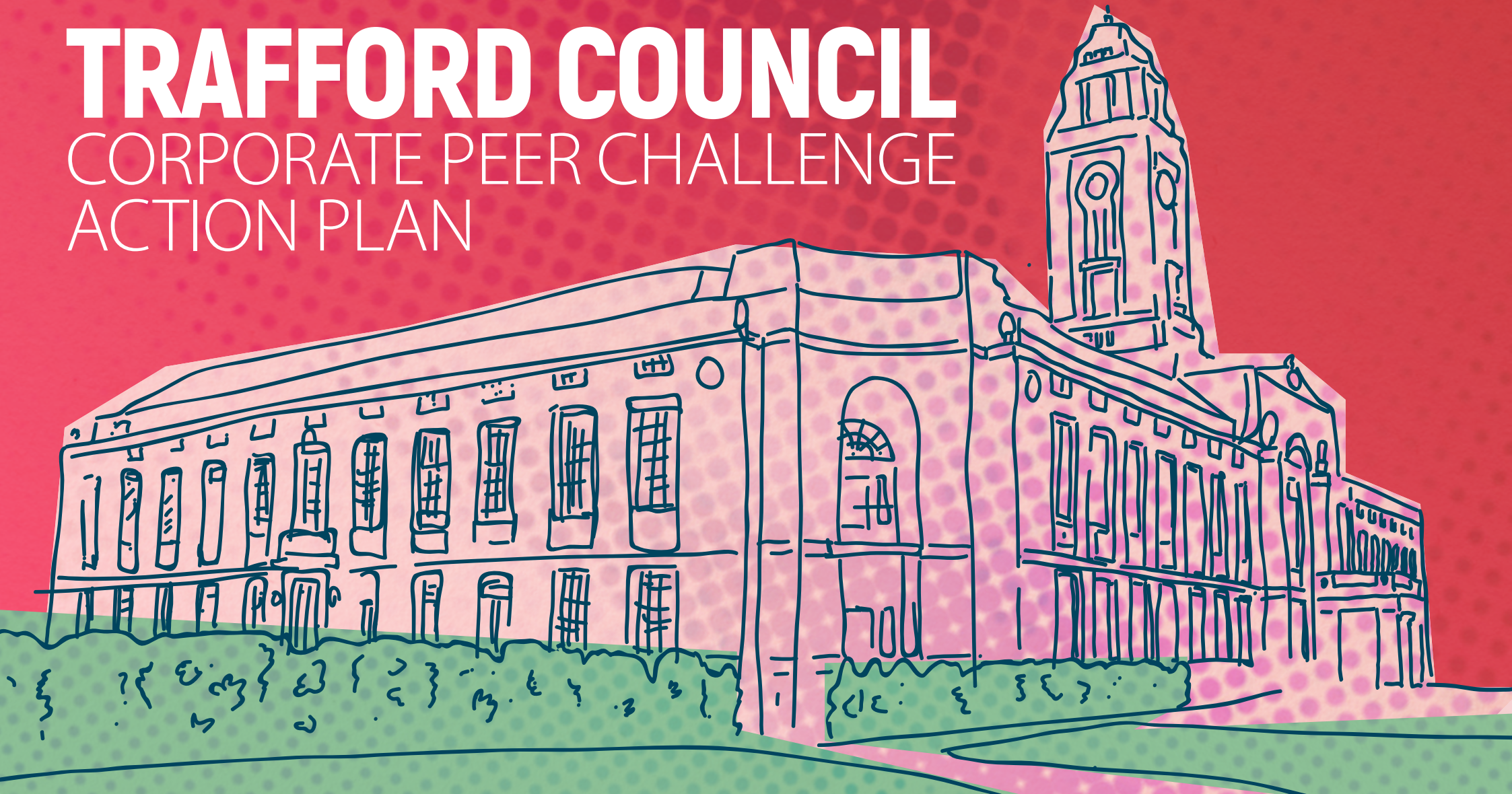


TRAFFORD COUNCIL

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN



Introduction

In January 2025 the Local Government Association (LGA) undertook a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) of Trafford Council. The Council welcomed the CPC as an opportunity to both showcase the excellent work of our teams and partnerships as well as identifying areas where the Council can do more to improve outcomes as an organisation and for our communities. The Council welcomed the final report from the LGA and the recommendations it set out as a fair reflection of the breadth of our work. The CPC report was presented to the Council Executive in June 2025, with an action plan setting out how the Council would respond to the recommendations. As we prepare for the LGA follow up visit in November, this action plan has been updated to provide more information on our progress to date.

We started with strong foundations and great ambition, as recognised by the LGA, and thanks to the effective partnerships we have built and the robust plans we have put in place, we're making good progress on delivery. Every action from the CPC visit is either completed or well underway, alongside delivery against the Council's strategic priorities. Since the CPC, the Council has amongst other things:

- Mitigated significant in-year financial pressure in 2024/25 and set a balanced budget for 2025/26;
- Achieved an improved '1Star' rating in our Best Companies staff engagement survey;
- Launched a new forum – 'Let's Connect' - which brings our senior leaders in the Council together;
- Embarked at pace on an ambitious programme of change in Adult Social Care (ASC);

- Refreshed our Children's Ambitions Plan and established Priority Action Groups with partners to go deeper into our priority areas of focus;
- Appointed Lord Seb Coe as the Chair Designate of the Old Trafford Regeneration (OTR) Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC), and sought formal Government approval for the MDC;
- Opened move Altrincham Leisure Centre after a £21m refurbishment;
- Opened the new King Street and Sir Tony Lloyd Square in Stretford Town Centre;
- Refreshed our Corporate Plan Performance reporting and management;
- Redesigned our website and launched a new Customer Relationship Management system.

The LGA Peer Challenge reflected back to us the financial challenge that the Council faces and the need to address our structural deficit at pace. Immediately following the CPC, the Council were notified that our application for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS), including an above referendum level of Council Tax increase, had been approved by Government, which alongside a number of challenging local budget decisions including charging for services were fundamental to enabling the Council to set a balanced budget in March 2025. Since then, through our strengthened Financial and Transformational Change programme we have developed clear workstreams and sub-governance to build a three-

year programme of change that aims to both deliver better outcomes for our communities and tackle our structural financial challenges. Meanwhile we continue to advocate relentlessly for a fairer funding settlement that reflects the real needs of our borough.

The environment in which we operate has changed so much since January 2025. Some changes have helped us to move forward; others have provided challenges to the Council and to our communities. It's important to understand that context, and we have included a snapshot of those changes in the pages ahead.

Finally, we want to thank everyone who has been part of delivering our CPC action plan - our dedicated members, officers, partners and residents and, of course, our corporate peers who visited us and shared valuable insights and experience. This has been a genuinely positive experience, and we are not stopping here. Our work will continue beyond the next CPC visit because we're committed to being the best Council we can be.

We're proud of Trafford. We want it to be the best place to live, work and thrive — and this plan is one more step in that direction.



Councillor Tom Ross,
Leader of Trafford Council



Sara Todd,
Chief Executive of Trafford
Council

Contextual Landscape

Understanding the national, regional, and local landscape is essential to appreciating the context in which Trafford is delivering our CPC action plan, highlighting both the opportunities available to us as well as the challenges we are navigating as we continue to improve.

National Context

Trafford has actively engaged with the Government's Fair Funding Review (FFR), submitting a consultation response that highlights a significant concern with the proposed new local government funding process. Although in the draft FFR proposals our core spending power has increased by 5.19%, we estimate that our budget gap will widen by approximately £19m over the next three years. This presents a major challenge in setting a balanced budget, maintaining service levels and delivering improvements. Engagement with and lobbying of Ministers and officials directly, via our MPs, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and in partnership with other councils similarly affected has been underway across the summer.

Government also published the draft Local Government Outcomes Framework (LGOF) over the summer, which outlined the key metrics that councils will be measured against. Trafford has participated in engagement sessions and submitted feedback to the consultation. As we continue to refine our Corporate Plan performance management, we aim to reduce duplication and will look to embed the final LGOF metrics into our reporting once they are confirmed.

In addition, the Department of Health and Social Care has announced the abolition of NHS England and reforms to Integrated Care Boards (ICB) and Partnerships. While there remains uncertainty nationally about the roll out of the reforms, we have worked together with ICB colleagues in Greater Manchester (GM) and locally to develop an operating model with 10 Place Partnerships - one in each Borough - at the heart of the model. This will enable us to build on our integrated place-based neighbourhood work here in Trafford.

Regional Context

In July 2025, the GMCA launched the new Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS), a 10-year vision to create a thriving city region where everyone can live a good life. The strategy, built around seven interconnected workstreams designed to strengthen five foundational aspects of life, provides the overarching framework to Trafford's policy landscape as we work together with the GMCA and other GM councils to drive economic growth and reform public services for the benefit of our residents, businesses and communities.

One of the flagship GMS workstreams is Live Well, which is driving public service reform across the sub-region and is supported by GM being announced as the National Prevention Demonstrator. Live Well focuses on prevention, integration, and empowering communities. In Trafford, Live Well has gained momentum in recent months, with governance structures now in place and the programme moving into its implementation phase. Our local Live Well approach will serve as an umbrella for public service reform and how we

work with our communities, aligning with the Trafford Partnership, and helping to make sense of and integrate various thematic place-based initiatives within our neighbourhoods.





Local Context

Throughout the year, the Council has focused on delivering against our Corporate Plan priorities whilst also responding to an ever-changing environment.

We have seen an increase in protests outside the Cresta Court Hotel in relation to asylum seeker housing — a challenge faced nationally. Thanks to strong partnership working with Greater Manchester Police, the protests have been managed effectively but have challenged community cohesion in the borough. The recent terrorist attack outside of Heaton Park Synagogue in Manchester has also impacted all our communities and we have stood shoulder to shoulder with our Faith and Belief leaders through our Faith in Action Network which goes from strength to strength. We have also established a Strategic Cohesion group to ensure we maintain a focus on working with our communities and our Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) network to address these complex challenges.

There have been some changes within Council. Cllr Liz Patel is now Deputy Leader, while continuing her role as Executive Member for Economy and Regeneration. Cllr George Devlin has taken on the role of Executive Member for Housing & Advice, and Cllr Eve Parker is now Executive Member for Leisure, Arts, Culture & Heritage. Autumn has also seen the Council organising two separate by-elections brought about by the sad passing and resignation of councillors.

CPC Action Plan

The Council has made progress in delivering the recommendations in our CPC action plan as set out in detail in this document, and in particular we would highlight:

In addressing the Council's budget challenge we have balanced our budget, strengthened our Finance & Transformational Change (F&TC) programme and stepped up our lobbying efforts. These actions reflect the commitment and energy behind the first few CPC recommendations. Our draft three-year budget will be published in December (having been held in abeyance due to the consecutive by-elections), and we are focused on achieving a balanced position by February 2026. The F&TC programme continues to deliver and remains a central part of our transformation journey into next year and beyond.

In ASC, there's been significant movement - delivering and embedding our Improving Lives Every Day (ILED) ambitions, development of a new ASC 'front door' service and progressing recruitment to permanent leadership roles in the directorate. We have also been preparing for Care Quality

Commission (CQC) Assurance, with the on-site visit scheduled for w/c 1st December. In Children's Services, we have been refreshing our Children's Ambitions Plan, preparing for national legislation changes and we had an Ofsted Focus Visit in late September.

Our regeneration programmes have made real progress. The Altrincham Leisure Centre, now branded as 'move Altrincham', was opened in August, after a significant £21m refurbishment project. The phased opening of the new state-of-the-art wellbeing facility is part of our wider leisure refurbishment programme and our Get Trafford Moving movement to tackle health inequalities. Next up is delivering our Levelling Up funded Leisure Programme in Partington which is now taking shape.

Stretford Town Centre, through the £17.6m Future High Street Fund investment and joint venture with Bruntwood, is continuing to transform, with King Street and Pinnington Lane restored and the brand-new public 'Sir Tony Lloyd' square open. The Western Gateway Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) has been established jointly with the GMCA and Salford City Council, and the OTR MDC is progressing through the statutory approval process with Lord

Coe appointed as Chair Designate and a new Project Director being appointed.

We have also been listening to our staff. Our b-Heard survey this summer, gathering staff opinions on working at Trafford, had a 54% response rate, up from 43% two years ago. We are now officially a '1 Star company', reflecting good levels of staff engagement, and a step up from our previous 'one to watch' status. The insights from the survey are helping us shape improvements in staff wellbeing and engagement. September also marked the launch of phase one of our Succession Planning for critical roles.

Our Executive Forward Plan is now more closely aligned with Scrutiny, and that's proving to be a successful shift. This alignment enables a more comprehensive and long-term view of council activity, supporting decision making, cross-council engagement, pre-decision scrutiny and accountability.

We published our refreshed Annual Corporate Plan report in July, providing a clear overview progress against each strategic priority. The report included performance data from quarterly and annual indicators, direction of travel, benchmarking against statistical neighbours, and

case studies demonstrating progress. This information continues to inform decision-making and is shared at Departmental Management Team Meetings (DMT) to support discussions on progress, activity, and any mitigations. We have reviewed the Corporate Plan indicators and targets for this financial year and will revisit them again once the LGOF is agreed.

We are also putting more emphasis on storytelling and internal communications. Our successful 'Bread and Butter' campaign over the summer telling the story of our environmental and highway programmes is an example of this. Meanwhile our new 'Let's Connect' sessions are giving senior leaders space to come together to interact, network and innovate as a senior group to strengthen our cross-organisational understanding and foster collaborative working.

It is often said the only constant in local government is change. We know the landscape continues to shift nationally, regionally and locally and we remain deeply committed to working together across Trafford to deliver for our residents, businesses and communities.

Recommendations

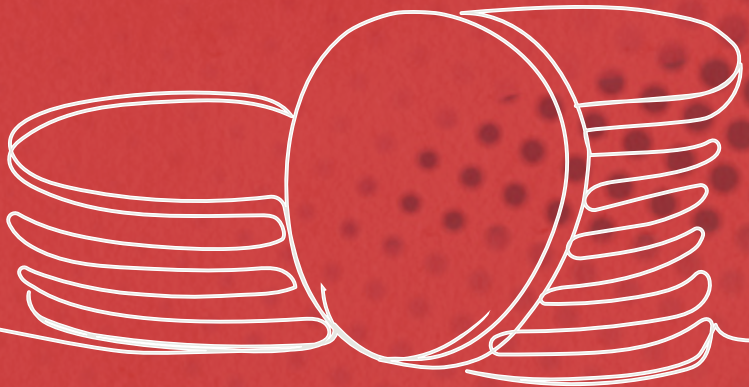
Ref #	Recommendations
1	Take all steps necessary to eliminate overspend in 2024/25 in light of the highly challenging financial position faced by the council.
2	Take the necessary local decisions, at pace, that are required to deal with the ongoing budget deficit, so that the savings and efficiencies required can be fully realised.
3	Establish an overarching programme of change which clearly states the success measures, savings and efficiencies that will deliver on your priorities.
4	Progress at pace the improvements required within Adult Social Care, to fully capitalise on the positive action taken to appoint the new interim Corporate Director of Adults & Wellbeing.
5	Strengthen the strategic partnership with GMMH & MFT to better support the mental health needs of children, young people and adults across Trafford.
6	Maintain the corporate, political and partnership focus on the children's improvement ambition.
7	Develop the 'Executive/Forward Plan'.
8	Further develop the role of Overview and Scrutiny.
9	Ensure greater visibility to support consistent connectivity of Community Safety with services across Trafford, including local safeguarding arrangements.
10	Clarify the locality working arrangements with partners, to enable greater impact. This includes clarifying the vision and role / contribution of each of the different aspects of locality-based working across the local system.
11	Support leaders across the council to develop storytelling around the progress, the priorities, change, challenges and difficult decisions.
12	Refresh the Corporate Plan monitoring arrangements to provide a focussed set of information, which gives a clear indication of progress against key milestones and outcomes.
13	Create spaces for directors and heads of service to routinely come together as collectives, to further develop cross-organisational working.
14	Ensure resilience around single points of responsibility / potential failure across the council.
15	Ensure appropriate capacity and governance is in place to maximise the opportunities from the Western Gateway, which is an immense opportunity for the borough and the region.

RAG Status:



Red: Indicates significant issues or risks that require immediate attention and action.
Amber: Ongoing work required to deliver, may need monitoring or minor adjustments.
Green: On track and progressing well/completed within timeframe agreed.

**TAKE ALL STEPS NECESSARY
TO ELIMINATE OVERSPEND IN
2024/25 IN LIGHT OF THE HIGHLY
CHALLENGING FINANCIAL POSITION
FACED BY THE COUNCIL.**



Progress Update

The Council successfully delivered a balanced budget for 2024/25, reflecting strong financial management. The 2025/26 Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2026/27–2027/28) were approved in March 2025, including £9.6m in EFS and a bespoke Council Tax increase of 7.49%. This strategic move goes some way in addressing Trafford's historically low funding and long-term financial resilience.

Regular budget monitoring remains a priority, with the 2024/25 Outturn Report showing a final overspend of just £347k—down from a £3.6m forecast—thanks to effective mitigation measures. The Council continues to focus on reducing in-year pressures in 2025/26 and accelerating savings, that will be reflected in the December 2025 Draft Budget Report.

As at Period 4 2025/26, the projected budget overspend is £635k and plans are being developed to help mitigate that position.




The Reserve Strategy is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with financial challenges and priorities. While reserves are low, they are sufficient for 2025/26, though caution is advised due to a projected £43m budget gap over the next three years. Oversight by the Executive, Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), and F&TC Board, as well as Accounts and Audit Committee ensures transparency and timely decisions.

Trafford has intensified lobbying campaign efforts to address its funding shortfall, engaging with government bodies, MPs, developing working relationships with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and attending key events like the LGA Conference.

A structured approach to consultations, including Executive sign-off, has been adopted.

The Council has also worked with GMCA to influence regional strategies and ensure fair treatment under the upcoming GM Integrated Settlement.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
1	Take all steps necessary to eliminate overspend in 2024/25 in light of the highly challenging financial position faced by the council.	1.1	Ensure budget balances for 2024/25. Regular budget monitoring reporting to Executive, Corporate Leadership Team and Transformation Board. Management action continues to focus on reducing in year pressure.	CEX – Director of Finance		Mar-25
		1.2	Take key decisions on savings to avoid the unsustainable use of reserves to balance the budget.	Director of Finance		Mar-25
		1.3	Continue to develop a robust lobbying campaign ensuring key council issues are effectively set out, along with potential solutions, with a view to making a strong case for sustainable financial funding.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Ongoing

**TAKE THE NECESSARY LOCAL
DECISIONS, AT PACE, THAT ARE
REQUIRED TO DEAL WITH THE
ONGOING BUDGET DEFICIT, SO THAT
THE SAVINGS AND EFFICIENCIES
REQUIRED CAN BE FULLY REALISED.**



Progress Update

The Council has introduced revised governance arrangements for the F&TC Board to enhance oversight and align with strategic priorities. These changes support a new three-year Transformation Programme focused on service innovation, efficiency, and financial sustainability. The Board, along with its sub-boards, monitors progress, reviews the 2025/26 budget, and oversees mitigations for overspend and rising demand, including reviewing costs of children transitioning to adulthood, remodelling commissioned provisions, prevention savings through a new triage team, and new homelessness strategy that was approved March 2025 by Executive to assist with demand management.

Benchmarking activities—both generic and targeted—has informed strategic planning and service improvement. These included comparisons with CIPFA statistical neighbours, authorities receiving EFS and engagement with nearest statistical neighbours to better understand the factors contributing to success and the challenges they face.

Deep dives into Children's Services, ASC and Temporary Accommodation have shaped business cases such as Care Closer to Home, Adults Social Care Front Door, Fairer Cost of Care, and Discharge to Assess in Adults, and in Children's Services initiatives include Placement Sufficiency, Edge of Care, and Home to School Transport. Strong collaboration across teams, especially with Adults, and Estates supported Our Place business case. All business cases and initiatives continue to be progressed via the dedicated sub-boards covering Adults, Children's, Education and Temporary Accommodation. The Executive plays a key role, with regular sessions on benchmarking and deep dives enabling detailed policy discussions and informed decision-making.

The draft budget reflects significant progress, with the three-year programme gap reduced to £7m—down from £43m. This marks a substantial achievement in our financial planning efforts. However, the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the FFR and the Business Rates Reset

presents a serious financial challenge. These changes have the potential to significantly impact the Council's long-term financial sustainability. The Council submitted a robust and evidence-based response to the FFR consultation and continue to actively lobby—both at the GM level and nationally—to highlight the implications of these reforms. Our advocacy efforts aim to ensure that the voices of local authorities are heard and that the financial resilience of councils like ours is protected.






A minimum operating model has been considered to support long-term financial sustainability, drawing on benchmarking data from peer authorities and those under Commissioner intervention. This work underpins Trafford's draft budget proposals aligned with the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

We are continuing to work with our EFS, nearest statistical and neighbouring authorities to move forward and share learning to inform Trafford's financial strategy.

Reserve levels remain low but sufficient to address strategic risks. There is limited scope to utilise reserves in support of the budget position, and this has been carefully considered as part of the financial planning for the draft budget 2026–2029 period.

Next Steps:

Continue to develop a balanced budget factoring in the expected policy statement (November), settlement (December) and further scenario planning exercises.

Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
2	Take the necessary local decisions, at pace, that are required to deal with the ongoing budget deficit, so that the savings and efficiencies required can be fully realised.	2.1	Implement step changes in governance and a refreshed approach to the Council's Finance & Transformational Change Programme Board over the next three years.	CEX		Feb-26
		2.2	Undertake a range of benchmarking activity to ensure Value of Money (VFM) is provided across the full range of council services.	Director of Finance		Sep-25
		2.3	Model and consider what is a minimum operating model to achieve a sustainable financial position.	Director of Finance		Sep-25
		2.4	Discussion with other Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) Local Authorities (LA's) to be held on their approach to minimum operating model.	Director of Finance		Sep-25
		2.5	As part of the budget process and the ongoing deficit, the Council will continue to review its earmarked reserves regularly and assess the opportunity to redirect or release funds.	CEX - Director of Finance		Feb-26

**ESTABLISH AN OVERARCHING
PROGRAMME OF CHANGE WHICH
CLEARLY STATES THE SUCCESS
MEASURES, SAVINGS AND
EFFICIENCIES THAT WILL DELIVER
ON YOUR PRIORITIES.**



Progress Update

The F&TC Programme provides a structured approach to managing organisational change in alignment with the MTFP. Following lessons learned sessions held in late 2024 with the F&TC Board and Executive, and incorporating findings from the CPC, the programme has been refreshed to support the development of sustainable budget proposals for 2026/27 and 2027/28.

To strengthen governance and delivery, four sub-boards have been established: Adults, Children's Social Care, Education, and Temporary Accommodation. These groups meet monthly to develop key transformation activities and appropriate innovations and policy options, ensuring alignment with strategic priorities. In Adults, initiatives focus on prevention to reduce long term costs and promote resident outcomes.

Examples include the redesign of the ASC Front Door, development of community-based support networks,

use of assistive technology, and a review of over 65s residential care. The Education sub-board has presented and reviewed robust Home to School Transport policy options with the Executive, ensuring clarity around policy decisions and consultation impacts. The Temporary Accommodation sub-board has utilised the Homelessness Prevention Grant to support the activities within Trafford's Housing Option Service.

Established in March 2025, the Transformation Board oversees the programme, providing governance, coordination, and challenge. Its responsibilities include reviewing project portfolios, aligning key programmes, and monitoring progress against action plans. Membership spans CLT, HR, Digital & IT, Communications, and others, depending on the agenda.

Key programmes of work for the Transformation Board include Corporate Front Door and Smarter Working, Digital Futures Programme including

exploration of Artificial Intelligence, Magic Notes - a tool to enhance the quality and recording of assessments for frontline workers, CareCubed – an online tool for evaluating care placement costs, system enhancements in Liquid Logic to support efficient working. Joint working continues on strategic initiatives such as Project Skyline, the GMCA Children's Sufficiency Programme.

Collaboration across GM is growing, with Deputy Chief Executives exploring collaborations and transformation opportunities. In recent months Transformation initiatives across GMCA were reviewed over a series of bespoke sessions to look at these opportunities including shared service arrangements, digital innovation and procurement contracts.

National engagement is also progressing through the LGA Transformation Network, with political leadership aligned.

Plans are underway to launch a cross-


GM Transformation Forum and host a regional event in 2026, with updates shared regularly through the F&TC Programme.

Next Steps:

Continue to deliver the F&TC programme to support the three-year budget proposals, ensuring that reflections and lessons learned are embedded into ongoing improvements and maintain focus on addressing the budget gap.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
3	Establish an overarching programme of change which clearly states the success measures, savings and efficiencies that will deliver on your priorities.	3.1	A refreshed approach to the Council's Finance and Transformational Change Programme will support in the development of clear budget proposals and plans for the more challenging years of 2026/27 and 2027/28. Develop and introduce three additional Finance & Change sub-groups for Adults, Children's and Bed and Breakfast (BnB) Elimination.	CEX		Sep-25
		3.2	Establish a Transformation Board to look at transformational and innovative ideas, and the digital transformation strategy and plans, as well as reviewing the existing performance, impact, risks and issues.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Apr-25
		3.3	Actively explore opportunities to collaborate with GMCA, GM Councils and other LA's or public service organisations around service transformation and change.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Jun-26

The background features a teal-to-green gradient with white line art of two hands shaking. The hands are positioned at the top left and bottom left, with their fingers interlocking in a firm grip. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

**PROGRESS AT PACE THE
IMPROVEMENTS REQUIRED WITHIN
ADULT SOCIAL CARE, TO FULLY
CAPITALISE ON THE POSITIVE
ACTION TAKEN TO APPOINT THE NEW
INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF
ADULTS & WELLBEING.**

Progress Update

In January 2025, under the leadership of the interim Director of Adults and Wellbeing (DASS), ILED programme was strategically reconfigured to ensure its operating model supports service improvement and CQC readiness. The revised model is structured around five priority tiers: Specialist Interventions, Commissioning & Market Development, Service Delivery & Integration, Prevention & Self-Help, and Leadership & Culture. Each tier is led by a Director-level SRO, supported by a robust governance framework and regular reporting to the ILED Board, chaired by new Independent Chair Jane Robinson. To support the leadership of the DASS, the Independent Chair provides strategic oversight, impartial leadership, and assurance across the programme. Working in close partnership, the DASS and the Independent Chair facilitate cross-sector collaboration, enable challenge and scrutiny, and maintain a strong focus on delivering improved outcomes for people and communities.

Key developments of the ILED programme within Adults Social Care include the withdrawal from the Section 75 agreement, bringing Mental Health Social Workers under direct Council management to improve accountability and service integration. In Commissioning, a fair pricing framework and the CareCubed tool are being introduced to support market sustainability. Service Delivery has seen the launch of the Central Integrated Neighbourhood Team and approval of the Preparing for Adulthood strategy. Prevention efforts have significantly reduced ASC waiting lists and wait times through new triage and virtual review methods.

In May 2025, Trafford launched a programme of work with Peopletoo to review current practices and identify opportunities to better manage demand and promote independence through the community front door. This initial phase highlighted the need for a new model — a multi-disciplinary ASC Front Door — to improve access





and outcomes. The new model is being co-designed with staff and partners to ensure strong engagement and ownership of the new ways of working. Alongside this, a refreshed practice framework is being developed, and website content is being updated to support the changes. The current phase focuses on detailed design and implementation of the new model, which will be delivered over a nine-month period, with full rollout expected by April 2026.

Providing ongoing leadership and continuity the interim DASS is remaining with Trafford until December 2026. This extended tenure is a deliberate step to bring stability to the team and ensure sustained progress across key areas. Leadership & Culture preparations for the December CQC inspection are well underway, with evidence submitted and staff engagement informing workforce strategies. A proposed restructure of the ASC directorate leadership team into three portfolios aims to strengthen capacity, statutory

compliance, and transformation delivery. Formal consultation on this restructure began on 9 September and concluded on 8 October, with Council approval anticipated in November. Workforce engagement and culture development has been a central focus, with over 130 staff participating in 'Let's Talk Adults' sessions. In addition, a Workforce Race Equality Standard action plan has been created, supported by Skills for Care.

Next Steps:

Continue to deliver ILED programme through 2026, implement Adults Social Care Front Door by April 2026 and finalise the leadership team by end of 2026.

Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
4	Progress at pace the improvements required within Adult Social Care, to fully capitalise on the positive action taken to appoint the new interim Corporate Director of Adults & Wellbeing.	4.1	Deliver the Improving Lives Every Day (ILED) Programme and the five bespoke workstreams.	Interim Corporate Director of Adults and Wellbeing		Jun-26
		4.2	Appoint Independent Chair of the ILED Programme.	Interim Corporate Director of Adults and Wellbeing		Apr-25
		4.3	Review the target operating model to ensure it is fit for purpose and undertake redesign where appropriate to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.	Interim Corporate Director of Adults and Wellbeing		Dec-25
		4.4	Develop a high performing leadership team to ensure overall service delivery for our residents and borough by early 2026.	Interim Corporate Director of Adults and Wellbeing		Jan-26

**STRENGTHEN THE STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIP WITH GMMH & MFT
TO BETTER SUPPORT THE MENTAL
HEALTH NEEDS OF CHILDREN,
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS ACROSS
TRAFFORD.**



Progress Update

Trafford has strong partnership arrangements through our two health and care statutory boards, the Health and Wellbeing Board and Trafford Locality Board, that are helping to strengthen our partnership arrangements to support Trafford residents. Manchester Foundation Trust (MFT), and Greater Manchester Mental Health (GMMH) are key partners of both of these boards. This is further supported by Trafford's key input into the new MFT Trafford Local Care Organisation (TLCO) arrangements, with the DASS being part of the TLCO Senior Leadership Team. This is further strengthened with the ongoing delivery of the ILED programme and five priority tiers. From a mental health perspective, an All-Age Mental Health Group, co-chaired by the ICB and ASC Director, provides the forum for oversight of cross-system work on mental health across the continuum of need, from mental health promotion and prevention, early intervention and treatment and recovery.

Work is also underway to strengthen co-occurring mental health and substance misuse needs and provide shared oversight across the Mental Health Transformation Group and the Alcohol, Substance Misuse and Gambling Harms Partnership, demonstrating the partnership ethos that is underway.

During the first part of this year, Mental Health Social Work in Trafford has been reviewed and a paper presented to the July 2025 Executive. The Council currently delegates its social work functions for the provision of social care to people with severe and enduring mental illness to the GMMH Trust. This arrangement is through a Section 75 agreement to provide a seamless integrated service. The review has led to a change in our partnership arrangements with GMMH moving forward, with the Section 75 agreement ending and services being brought under direct ASC management. A transformation programme is underway focused on preventative, person-centred care aligned with Care Act duties.

It is anticipated that this transformation will be completed by March 2026.

Children's mental health oversight and operational delivery is in the process of being strengthened through reviewing lines of sight and connectivity across relevant strategic boards. MFT's Parent Infant Mental Health and GMMH's Talking Therapies is being integrated within Trafford's Early Years work and insights from a deep dive review of mental health undertaken by the school health service has been shared with Trafford's Thrive in Education group. A new Transition Group to support young people moving on from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to adult services has been established and a joint service audit has been undertaken using National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines. This further enhances the strategic partnerships with GMMH & MFT to support the mental health needs in Trafford. Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Improvement work continues to be progressed through Trafford's SEND Ambitions

Plan which provides our overarching approach and strategic intent. One of the ambitions focuses on children's health, including mental health. The SEND board regularly reviews performance information to track progress to make improvements across the partnership.


Next Steps:

Maintain and deepen collaboration with GMMH & MFT to improve the support to children, young people and adults across Trafford.

Drive forward the implementation of Executive decisions from July 2025, to strengthen the partnership and leadership to Mental Health and Social Care workforce.

DASS role to continue as a member of TLCO Senior Leadership Team championing Trafford in the partnership and ensuring agendas, priorities and delivery are aligned.

Continue the development and implementation of the ILED programme.

Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
5	Strengthen the strategic partnership with Greater Manchester Mental Health & Manchester Foundation Trust (GMMH & MFT) to better support the mental health needs of children, young people and adults across Trafford.	5.1	Continue to strengthen those partnership arrangements which will enable us to address system wide pressures and provide the right mental health support for people who need it. This work will be underpinned by two key statutory boards - the Locality Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board.	Interim Corporate Director of Adults and Wellbeing - Corporate Director Children's Services - Director of Public Health		Dec-25

**MAINTAIN THE CORPORATE,
POLITICAL AND PARTNERSHIP FOCUS
ON THE CHILDREN'S IMPROVEMENT
AMBITION.**



Progress Update

In terms of the Children's Social Care continuous improvement journey the refreshed Children's Ambitions Plan was approved by the board earlier this year and is now being put into action. It is a three-year plan but it will be reviewed and updated annually. The Ambitions Plan is following a strengths-based approach with co-production and multi-agency working taking place. A series of Priority Action Groups have been established to drive the key priorities via sprint methodology.

Through Ambition 2 the Quality Assurance Framework has been refreshed with a pilot of the new framework taking place. Our social care interim workforce has continued to reduce thereby creating a more permanent workforce. Through Ambition 5 & 6 the approach to restorative child protection conferences following feedback from families has been reset. There is also a comprehensive programme of training and development to support our workforce.

We have established a separate governance structure for our implementation of the Families First reforms given the breadth and depth of them: health, police, education and VCSFE are fully engaged in the workstreams.

The Leader continues to Chair our Ambitions for Children Board that meets bi-monthly and the Executive Lead Member for Children and Chief Executive are also core members of the Board. In addition, Children's Social Care Director's Management Team have quarterly assurance meetings, with the Leader and the Chief Executive that are chaired by the Executive Lead Member. These meetings allow further focus on key areas of performance, development and improvement, and allow opportunities for challenge and assurance.

The Council had an OFSTED focused visit considering child in need and child protection planning effectiveness on 30th September and 1st October.



Initial feedback highlighted progress and strengths with four areas for continued improvement - we are now awaiting the final letter. The improvements identified are areas that we are aware of and our intention will be to strengthen our plan in regard to those areas.

Additionally, the team are preparing to include the Schools White Paper into operational delivery and are keeping an eye on how the national picture will impact our work locally. It is expected that the White Paper will lead to mainstream education becoming more inclusive for SEND children and this will result in a need to build a multi-agency team around the schools. This will form part of the future developments for the service and link well with the Families First reform agenda.

Next steps:

Progress the partnership response to the Families First Reforms and respond to recommendations from the forthcoming Schools White Paper.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
6	Maintain the corporate, political and partnership focus on the children's improvement ambition.	6.1	Refresh the Children Ambitions Plan and agreed priorities on a co-produced basis to ensure joint ownership across the partnership.	Corporate Director Children's Services		Jun-26
		6.2	Review existing governance and connectivity between the newly formed Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and the Children's Ambitions Board to ensure collective responsibility for all safeguarding activity is in line with statutory requirements.	Corporate Director Children's Services		Sep-26

**DEVELOP THE
'EXECUTIVE/FORWARD PLAN'.**



Progress Update

Since the CPC in January, the Council has taken significant steps to embed and implement improved practices through the development of a comprehensive Forward Plan. This initiative aims to broaden the scope and extend the timeline of the Executive Forward Plan, enhancing transparency and accountability around planned decisions. The Executive/Forward Plan now serves as a strategic tool for horizon scanning, enabling the Council and Executive to anticipate future challenges and opportunities, and to shape a cohesive programme of change. Executive meetings provide a structured forum for managing statutory responsibilities and known demands, while also allowing flexibility to respond to emerging issues.

A key advancement is the alignment of the Forward Plan with a two-year committee calendar, adopted annually by Full Council. This forward-looking approach allows the tracker to be populated up to two years in advance, significantly improving the Council's ability to plan ahead. The plan is now hosted on a shared digital platform, facilitating real-time updates and seamless information sharing across Directorates, CLT, and the Executive. As a result, agendas and reports are being produced more promptly, giving Executive greater time to review materials and make informed decisions. These enhanced systems and communication channels have fostered stronger collaboration and increased accountability for delivering the Forward Plan.



Pre-decision Scrutiny has also played a vital role in strengthening democratic oversight.

For example, regeneration projects across the borough are now subject to a Scrutiny review prior to formal Executive consideration, ensuring broader input and transparency, and Children's Scrutiny is actively contributing to forward planning by examining the ambitions and strategic direction outlined in the Children's Plan, which is scheduled for discussion at the December Executive meeting.

Next Steps:

Develop greater consistency in this approach so that all teams are working in a strategic manner and utilising the Executive/Forward plan effectively.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
7	Develop the 'Executive/Forward Plan'.	7.1	Embed and implement practices to broaden and lengthen the Executive Forward Plan to strengthen transparency of planned decisions.	Director of Legal and Governance		Sep-26
		7.2	Embed practices to broaden the Executive Forward Plan to promote awareness, understanding and accountability across the organisation. Foster a proactive approach to improve efficiencies of agenda production and strengthen report production.	Director of Legal & Governance		Sep-26

**FURTHER DEVELOP THE ROLE OF
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY.**



Progress Update

The first Annual Review of Scrutiny was held in April 2025, bringing together members and lead officers from across Trafford's three Scrutiny Committees. The meeting enabled participants to share best practice, celebrate successes, and identify areas for development. The Review facilitated greater collaboration across members and officers, and enabled the robust questioning required for transparency and confidence in Council services.

The 2024/25 Scrutiny Review proposed twelve recommendations, including changes to Budget Scrutiny, standardising work programme planning, and increasing public engagement. These recommendations have resulted in enhanced democratic engagement and accountability, as well as more detailed member oversight of key Council functions, including budget setting process. Additionally, Trafford's first Scrutiny Toolkit was introduced to support member development and future evolution of Scrutiny.

This is a useful guide for all members but has been particularly effective for the induction of new members to assist them in understanding their roles and responsibilities.

Some of the activity Scrutiny has been involved with during 2025 includes the prioritisation of highway work, safety of roads and pavements in the borough, assets of the community value panel, the Local Plan, Community Estates programme, as well hearing from the Leader on the Corporate Plan priorities as well as obtaining an update from the Task and Finish group that was set up to look at access to council services.

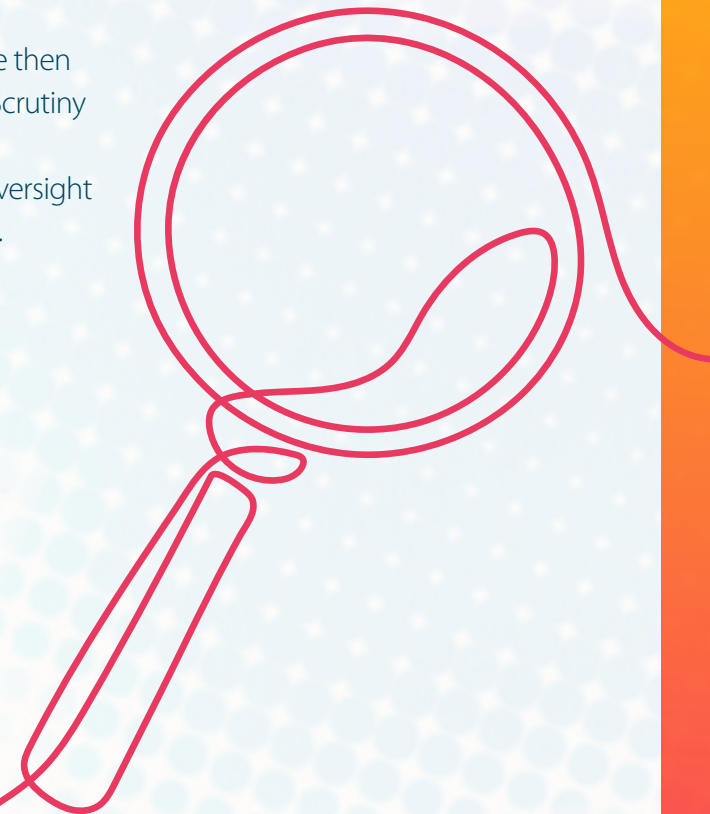
A further outcome of the Annual Review has been the increased emphasis on pre-decision Scrutiny. Before the first meeting of the municipal year, each Scrutiny Committee meets informally to align committee work programmes with Executive priorities and risks.





This has resulted in greater cross-committee collaboration and has provided the opportunity for cross working topics.

Budget Scrutiny has been strengthened through the introduction of a new Task Group to review budget updates and provide greater opportunity to consider and make recommendations on the Council's budget proposals. Recommendations are then presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and shared with the Executive, enhancing member oversight and input into financial planning.

Next Steps:

Develop and embed the work of the Task Group to further support members with budget oversight and financial decision making.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
8	Further develop the role of Overview and Scrutiny (O&S).	8.1	Explore options to continually strengthen the role of Overview and Scrutiny, including the introduction of annual reviews and annual progress reporting .	Director of Legal & Governance		Sep-26
		8.2	Explore options to provide enhanced opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny, resulting in alignment between the Executive Forward Plan and Overview & Scrutiny workplans.	Director of Legal & Governance		Sep-26
		8.3	Strengthen the links between the roles of O&S, Standards and Audit & Accounts committees through the ongoing reviews of those Committees, their role and remit.	Director of Legal & Governance		Sep-26
		8.4	To strengthen collective responsibility within governance, embed practices that enhance O&S's involvement in and oversight of the Council's budget setting process from beginning to end.	Director of Legal & Governance		Oct-26

**ENSURE GREATER VISIBILITY
TO SUPPORT CONSISTENT
CONNECTIVITY OF COMMUNITY
SAFETY WITH SERVICES ACROSS
TRAFFORD, INCLUDING LOCAL
SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS.**



Progress Update

Improving visibility and ensuring that all teams are connected with community safety and local safeguarding arrangements has been a complex but important priority, and while each service area has a distinct focus there are clear overlaps as they work with and in the same communities, so consistency across service provision is an essential priority for the council.

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Board is guided by the Community Safety Strategy to ensure all partners and services have a role in shaping community safety activity. In March 2025, the CSP Board held a multi-agency away day at Stretford Public Hall, which was well attended and had broad representation from across the borough, to review early findings from the needs assessment and agree on the strategic priorities. Community engagement, including school and public sessions, informed a consultation report for the Board and laid the foundations for a new strategy. The draft strategy was shared in early October 2025, with final adoption expected in 2026 following CSP approval.

Neighbourhood-based community safety leads are now embedded in local networks, responding directly to community concerns. The CSP is regularly attended by Directors of Children's and Adults Services, as well as the Independent Safeguarding Board Chair. Recent work includes the publication of a four-year Serious Violence Strategy (2024), an annually refreshed needs assessment led by Trafford Public Health and the CSP and the completion of a drug and alcohol assessment, highlighting the needs of vulnerable groups. The violence reduction officer works closely with community safety, education, and youth services to support early intervention for young people at risk. The Public Health approach is addressing key risks and protective factors and exploring how this can be applied to those at risk of extremism through the Prevent and Channel Panel. By having this collaboration and coordinated response across teams, it allows for the mapping of services and identification of opportunities for better alignment.

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and the Trafford Safeguarding Adult Board continue to work collaboratively to support children, families, and vulnerable adults through strong partnerships with statutory agencies and wider system organisations, including the VCFSE sector. There are Community Safety representatives at the safeguarding boards. The MASA arrangements are reviewed every year, with the annual report published each September. These arrangements are open and easy to access via the Partnership website. Across Greater Manchester, the GM Safeguarding Alliance brings together lead safeguarding partners three times a year to provide joint leadership and oversight of safeguarding for children and young people. To strengthen scrutiny, the group will now be chaired on an 18-month rotating basis by one of the statutory partners. Liz Murphy, the previous independent chair, will continue as the scrutineer.



There are agreed links between MASA arrangements and the CSP on domestic abuse, and a joint Children and Adults workforce development subgroup has been established. Recognising that safeguarding for children and adults is closely connected, there will be two all-age summits each year to keep these agendas aligned. While there has been meaningful progress and improvements, challenges remain around capacity, overlapping responsibilities, and service gaps.

Next Steps:

CSP and Safeguarding Partnerships to reflect on current collaboration and identify areas where joint working can be deepened including further opportunities for shared priorities, planning and co-delivery of interventions.

Launch CSP strategy and secure partnership buy in.

Produce Action Plan and Performance Data set which should be reviewed and monitored at CSP.

Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
9	Ensure greater visibility to support consistent connectivity of Community Safety with services across Trafford, including local safeguarding arrangements.	9.1	Adopt the new Community Safety Strategy, setting out joint community safety priorities for the borough.	Corporate Director of Place – Interim Corporate Director of Adults and Wellbeing – Corporate Director Children's Services		Sep-25
		9.2	Ensure strategic alignment with safeguarding board and community safety partnership to ensure the protection of vulnerable residents and communities in line with the boroughs strategic needs assessment.	Corporate Director of Place – Interim Corporate Director of Adults and Wellbeing – Corporate Director Children's Services		Sep-25

CLARIFY THE LOCALITY WORKING ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARTNERS, TO ENABLE GREATER IMPACT. THIS INCLUDES CLARIFYING THE VISION AND ROLE / CONTRIBUTION OF EACH OF THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF LOCALITY-BASED WORKING ACROSS THE LOCAL SYSTEM.



Progress Update

Since the CPC visit in January, the Council has been implementing the 2025-2028 Locality Plan, which sets out how we will work together to improve the health of Trafford people. This includes tangible projects, for example, working with our Community Hubs to become the main delivery mechanism for Changing Futures (to support residents who experience multiple disadvantage) and Work Well (to support residents into work). More widely we have enhanced the role of organisations in localities – Health and Care Integrated Neighbourhood Teams have been piloted in our Central Neighbourhood – formalising relational working to ensure wrap around support for residents. Work has also been progressed with our Health and Care Participation Group, which is one of the co-operative commitments outlined in the Locality Plan.

The Council recognises the need to ensure we approach locality working and a joined-up approach with the breadth of interactions that happen within places. One of the most significant drivers of this is the Live Well programme. This is GM's flagship public service reform programme, focused on improving everyday support through collaboration with communities and the VCFSE sector. In Trafford, a Live Well Strategy is being developed with partners to create accessible, community-based support and drive system reform. It aligns with the Fairer Trafford approach, placing residents and neighbourhoods at the heart of change.

Live Well is our umbrella to how we work with communities. Being able to be a lens for thematic services and approaches, linking in with Family Hubs, Integrated Employment Support, Culture, Trafford Moving and more to ensure connectivity across support systems. Initial implementation is focused on Sale and Partington, with an Implementation Fund plan

outlining key spend, supported by a multi-agency steering group and evolving governance structures. Staff engagement through Let's Talk sessions has helped shape the programme's direction.

Work in this area is progressing at pace. A Central Neighbourhood 'Fast Forward' event identified three high-impact changes for Sale—Vibrant Places, Maximising the Trafford Pound, and Winter Preparedness—leading to pilot initiatives. A joint symposium in June 2025 further developed shared leadership and vision for neighbourhood models. Sessions with key stakeholders in Partington and Sale is planned. Steps to develop a more relational VCFSE local infrastructure offer have progressed with a new grant agreement with the Trafford Community Collective effective from the 1st October.



By working in partnership with the Collective, the Council is building capacity and empowering the sector, and its leadership, to enhance their role as key community anchors to ensure the success of Live Well and community-based priorities.

Next Steps:

Continue to enhance the locality working with partners and ensuring communication and engagement is strengthened.

Embed Live Well including the implementation/operational governance, highlighting key roles and responsibilities for the system.

Develop the communications plan and engagement with communities.

Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
10	Clarify the locality working arrangements with partners, to enable greater impact. This includes clarifying the vision and role / contribution of each of the different aspects of locality-based working across the local system.	10.1	Agree the leadership of interactions with community, VCFSE and partners in respect of system working.	CEX – Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Jan-26
		10.2	Ensure that there are clear briefings for all council staff, as well as key partners and stakeholders, in locality working with the aim of aiding clarity of purpose, roles and responsibilities as well as opportunities.	CEX		Dec-25

**SUPPORT LEADERS ACROSS THE
COUNCIL TO DEVELOP STORYTELLING
AROUND THE PROGRESS, THE
PRIORITIES, CHANGE, CHALLENGES
AND DIFFICULT DECISIONS.**



Progress Update

The Council is strengthening its leadership culture by supporting senior leaders to use storytelling as a strategic tool, bringing to life our progress, priorities, and the realities of change. Through clear, authentic narratives, leaders are better equipped to explain decisions, navigate challenges, and connect with residents, partners, colleagues, members and communities around a shared purpose.

Communications activity across ASC and Public Health is enhancing visibility and engagement by expanding our channels and products to reach broader audiences. With a digital-by-default approach, we're producing short-form videos and VLOG-style updates for internal and stakeholder use, alongside more frequent newsletters that help maintain alignment and celebrate success. We are also exploring new ways to engage external stakeholders and communities through targeted email newsletters, sharing key updates and stories directly with residents, partners, and organisations. Children's Services have worked closely with the

communications team to spotlight impactful initiatives, such as the launch of Family Hubs in Stretford and Partington, and the Virtual School's award-winning 'Belong' programme. These stories have been brought to life through short films co-produced with health and education partners.

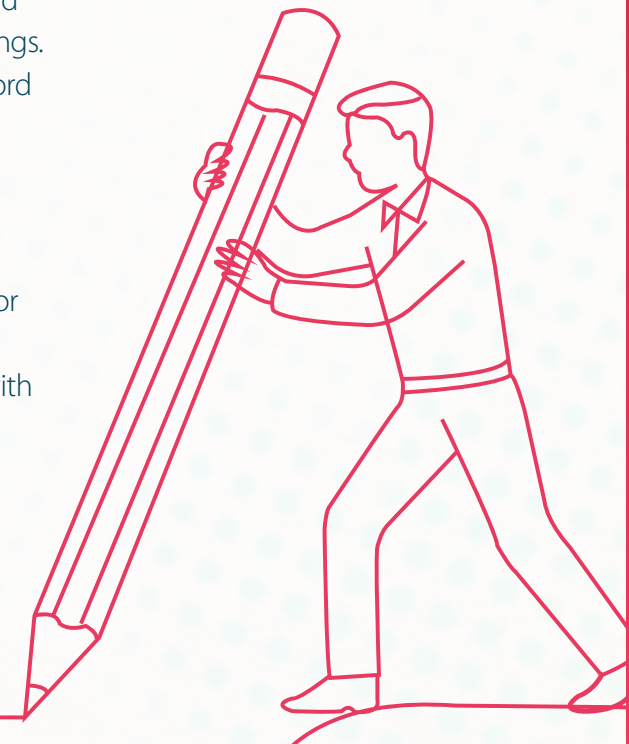
The Council is also elevating everyday stories from the One Trafford Partnership to highlight routine but essential work like grass cutting and road resurfacing. The impact is that the Council has more than doubled PR output and improved public understanding of the infrastructure. Increased promotion of local amenities, from Woodheys Park to the Local Studies Centre, has also driven footfall and attracted national media interest.



In response to public protests, the Council has focused on listening to residents and managing concerns with transparency and care ensuring that our communications reflect both empathy and accountability.

Senior leaders are increasingly present at key events, building relationships with organisations such as the LGA and GMCA. Our storytelling is being cultivated through visibility, connection, and shared purpose. This year, Trafford secured a presence at the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network stand at the Annual LGA Conference and increased its profile at party conferences, attending fringe events across Labour, Conservative, and Reform platforms. Locally, we continue to host strategic events like the Business Breakfast and Trafford Strategic Partnership meetings. These are all spaces where the Trafford Story continues to grow.

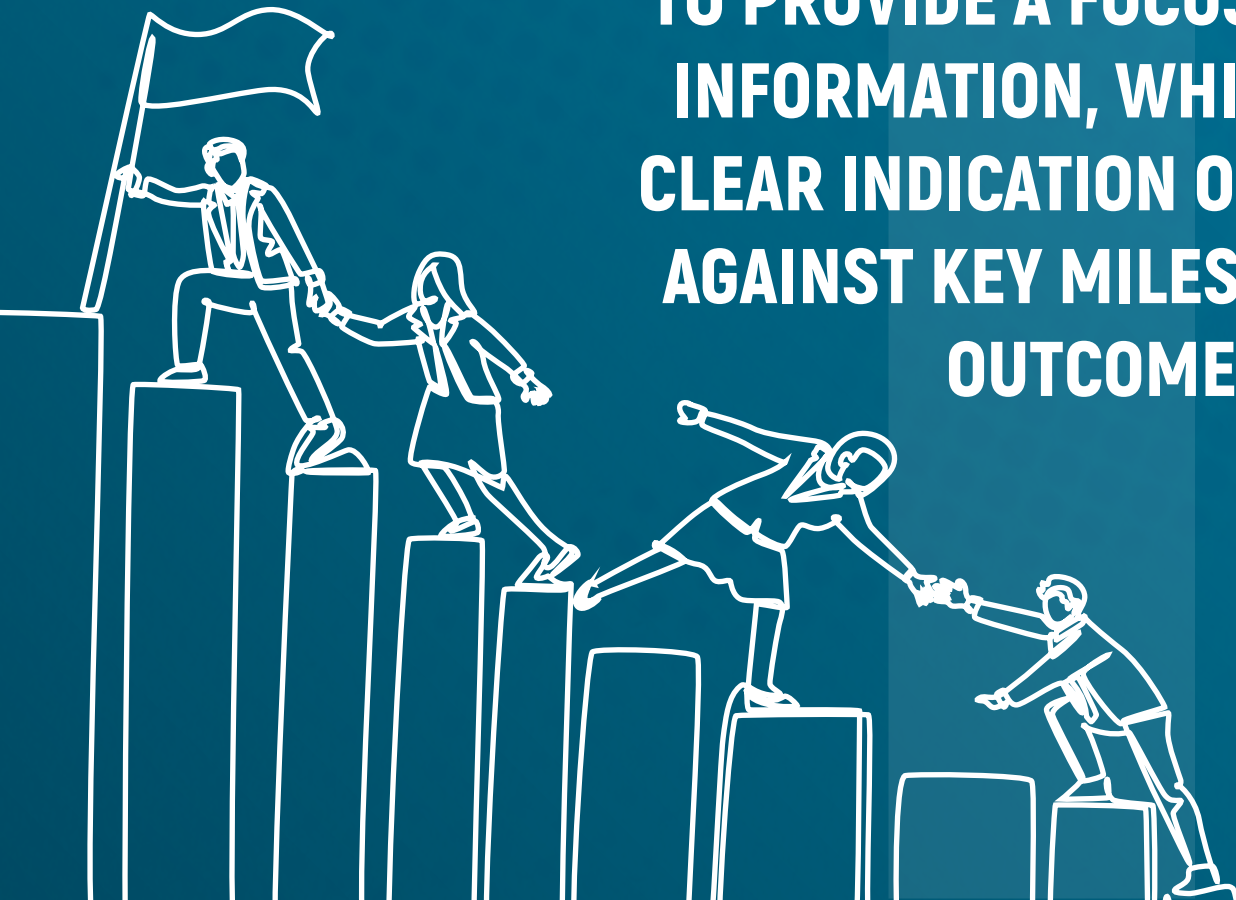
Next Steps:

Continue to develop mechanisms for telling the Council's story, including our challenges, and embed these with residents, partners, colleagues and members.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
11	Support leaders across the council to develop storytelling around the progress, the priorities, change, challenges and difficult decisions.	11.1	Enhance the opportunity to bring together senior leaders to further develop and strengthen our story of people and place and consider how this work is supported by subject matter experts.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Sep-25
		11.2	Develop and increase opportunities for senior leaders attendance and profile at key events i.e. LGA, party conferences, panel events and ensure appropriate communications and marketing are followed through.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Sep-25

**REFRESH THE CORPORATE PLAN
MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS
TO PROVIDE A FOCUSSED SET OF
INFORMATION, WHICH GIVES A
CLEAR INDICATION OF PROGRESS
AGAINST KEY MILESTONES AND
OUTCOMES.**



Progress Update

Following the CPC, the Council undertook a comprehensive review of its Corporate Plan performance indicators. Performance is monitored using RAG ratings and benchmarking. Quarterly indicators are directly linked to Council actions, while annual indicators reflect broader partnership outcomes, including those related to climate and health. The Annual Corporate Plan Performance Report was presented to the Executive in July 2025. Of the 31 indicators assessed, 13 were rated green, 4 amber, 10 red, and 4 neutral. Each indicator was accompanied by a narrative analysis that explained the reasons behind the performance and outlined any mitigation strategies in place.

All indicators and targets for 2025/26 were reviewed at DMT meetings. Only minimal changes were agreed to targets and a small number of indicators, allowing for consistent year-on-year tracking of performance. Significant national and regional developments are expected by April 2026, including

the LGOF, GMS realignment, the Integrated Settlement, and the Trafford Borough Wide Plan. To ensure ongoing performance management and a proactive approach throughout 2025/26, DMT meetings are continuing quarterly to review performance and manage mitigations/next steps as well as being prepared for the developments due in 2026.

Power BI has been successfully adopted replacing static reports with dynamic, interactive dashboards that significantly enhance transparency and data-driven decision-making. To date, 127 reports have been developed, with ongoing training and support provided to embed its use across teams. A recent example is the Blue Badges report, which offers detailed insights at both ward and individual level data. This enables a deeper understanding of service demand and highlights opportunities for process efficiencies. The report is closely aligned with the Corporate Front Door Programme, supporting the transformation of





Council services. The Corporate Plan report is also being integrated into the new Council website for public access, as well as data being included on the Trafford Data Lab.

A comprehensive communications strategy supports storytelling around priorities, using case studies, infographics, and videos. The Annual Report showcases achievements and community impact. An 'Audience with the Leader' event is planned for later this financial year to reinforce strategic intent and gather feedback on performance communication.

Next Steps:

Implement the communication strategy so that colleagues across all teams, as well as residents, partners and members, have a secure understanding of the Council's progress against the Corporate Plan indicators.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
12	Refresh the Corporate Plan monitoring arrangements to provide a focussed set of information, which gives a clear indication of progress against key milestones and outcomes.	12.1	Develop the monitoring and performance indicators for Corporate Plan 2024/27 so that all departments understand and can share how their area of work contributes to achieving the Council's corporate objectives.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Jul-25
		12.2	Strengthen the quality of progress monitoring towards corporate goals by introducing Power BI reporting and dashboard for the Corporate Plan.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Jul-25
		12.3	Revisit with Exec the meaning of each corporate plan priority to assist in how the performance monitoring /story telling can be shared with residents, communities and partners.	CEX		Sep-25
		12.4	Enhance communication to aid understanding of how the council budget and activities support delivery of the Corporate Plan with residents, partners and our workforce.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Dec-25

**CREATE SPACES FOR DIRECTORS AND
HEADS OF SERVICE TO ROUTINELY
COME TOGETHER AS COLLECTIVES,
TO FURTHER DEVELOP CROSS-
ORGANISATIONAL WORKING.**



Progress Update

Our quarterly 'Let's Talk' engagement sessions bring colleagues from across the organisation into the same room to hear updates and engage in discussions. Building on these events, we launched 'Let's Connect' sessions for senior leaders in May 2025, designed to strengthen cross-organisational working. At the most recent session, we shared the results of the b-Heard survey and held constructive conversations about what is working and what needs to improve. In these discussions, there was a keen focus on colleague wellbeing, as well as increasing cross-directorate working. Suggestions for the next session from Children's Services is the discussion around care leavers as a protected characteristic and the implications of this across all directorates.

This space for leaders is more than just meetings. It is about building trust, improving how we communicate, and creating stronger networks across Trafford. It is helping us tell our story better both internally and externally.

That spirit of collaboration is reflected in how our Communications and directorate teams are working together. Our weekly Manager's newsletter continues to keep senior managers informed of corporate priorities and calls to action, helping everyone stay aligned and responsive. Communications colleagues are now embedded in senior management meetings across Adults, Children's, and Place directorates, ensuring that key messages are shared clearly and consistently. Weekly communications grid meetings with senior officers help us spot opportunities to share positive stories and boost Trafford's reputation.



To support with cross-organisational working, the Leader, MPs, CEX, Executive, Directors, and Heads of Service have been attending events such as Thrive Volunteer Fair, Trafford Business Networking Event, Sale West Advice Hub launch, and Trafford Faith in Action Network. These are part of a wider effort to strengthen collaboration across the organisation and with our

communities. The Corporate Director of Place regularly takes opportunities to tell the Trafford development and regeneration story, for example at round table events such as Place North and at our own Trafford Business Breakfast, sharing our story with Leaders from other organisations. A further example of effective collaboration can be seen in Live Well; where we have come together across the Council, and with partners, to co-create a programme for the betterment of our communities.

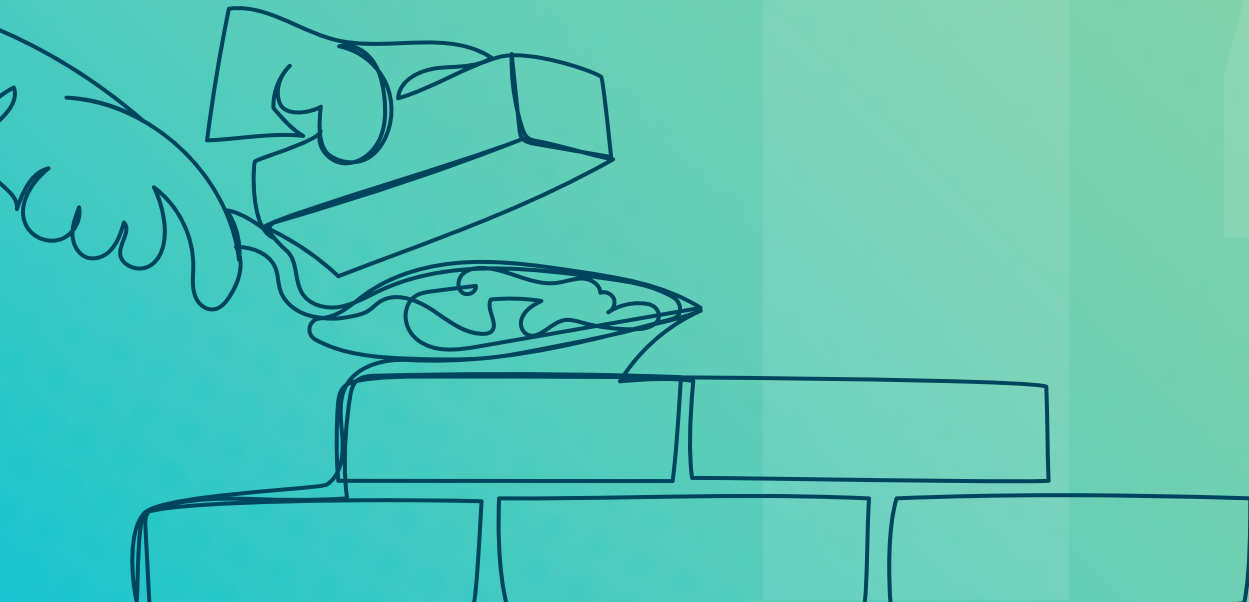
Next Steps:

Build and embed the 'Let's Connect' model to develop strategic collaboration across the organisation.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
13	Create spaces for directors and heads of service to routinely come together as collectives, to further develop cross-organisational working.	13.1	Enhance senior leadership interaction through officers meetings to support shared approaches, increase communication and formally build on the positive relationships that are in place.	CEX		Ongoing
		13.2	Further develop opportunities for senior leaders to interact, network and innovate to strengthen cross-organisational understanding and collaboration working.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Ongoing

**ENSURE RESILIENCE AROUND
SINGLE POINTS OF RESPONSIBILITY
/ POTENTIAL FAILURE ACROSS THE
COUNCIL.**



Progress Update

During 2025 the Council has been actively developing a succession planning strategy through the CLT, forming part of a wider organisational development initiative known as Phase I. Since September, a new talent and succession plan has been co-designed with CLT to ensure a robust pipeline of leadership and critical roles across the Council. This strategic planning process is now being piloted within the Strategy & Resources Directorate, enabling us to test and refine our approach before wider rollout. The pilot will help identify key capabilities and the roles that have the biggest impact on organisational performance, development needs, and opportunities for progression, so that we can support the long-term workforce resilience and leadership continuity. The pilot phase will incorporate succession planning at a senior leadership level for the directorate (corporate director role and their direct reports), and critical role identification and succession planning. Colleagues are preparing a range of accompanying templates, toolkits and support guides to support leaders and

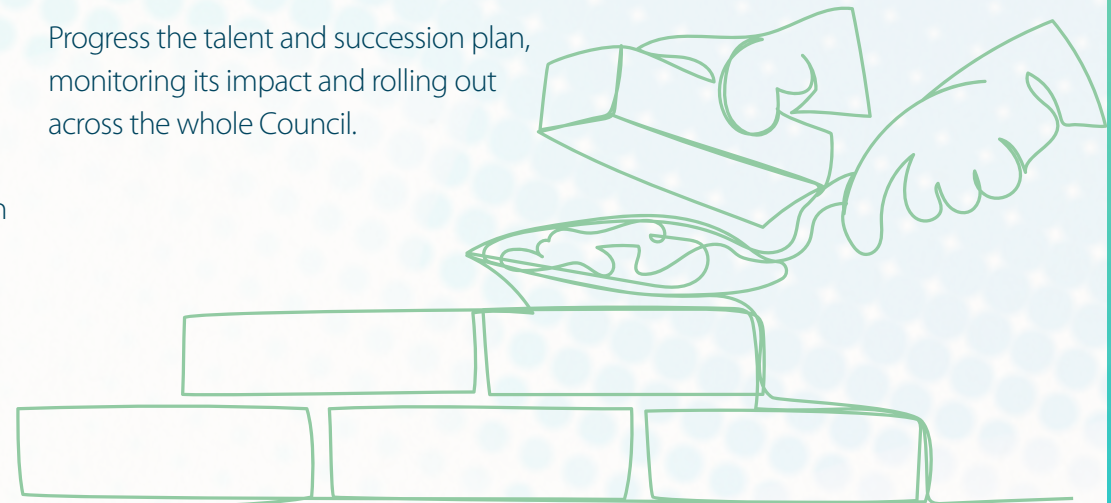
managers with the process. The process entails:



1. Identification of Critical Roles – Identifying roles that have the greatest impact on organisational performance. These will include executive and leadership roles alongside essential roles in specific departments.
2. Build a success profile – Outlining the talent composition needed for each critical role at the present time and in line with future needs.
3. Nominate Successors – Undertaking Talent Review and Career Conversations between managers and their direct reports, alongside measuring performance and potential for future roles.
4. Assess Development Needs – Summarising the talent profile of each succession candidate and identify development gaps for each succession candidate.
5. Develop Talent – Formulating a 70:20:10 development plan for individuals that factors in their career aspirations and development gaps. Support will be available in the medium term through a leadership development programme.
6. Monitor Progress – Updating the Talent Tracker to ensure progress is made and measure indicators of improved succession outcomes.

Once we have piloted the above process and tools within the Strategy & Resources Directorate and acted upon feedback we will roll out the process across all other Directorates in early 2026.

Next Steps:

Progress the talent and succession plan, monitoring its impact and rolling out across the whole Council.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
14	Ensure resilience around single points of responsibility / potential failure across the council.	14.1	Review of Single Points of Failure with teams via Human Resources (HR) and succession planning.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Sep-25
		14.2	Develop and deliver more formal succession planning particularly in leadership roles ensuring that a transparent and robust process is in place.	Deputy CEX & Corporate Director of Strategy and Resources		Sep-25

**ENSURE APPROPRIATE CAPACITY
AND GOVERNANCE IS IN PLACE TO
MAXIMISE THE OPPORTUNITIES
FROM THE WESTERN GATEWAY,
WHICH IS AN IMMENSE
OPPORTUNITY FOR THE BOROUGH
AND THE REGION.**



Progress Update

Two major developments are underway in relation to the Western Gateway: the establishment of a MDZ and a MDC. The MDZ encompasses a large geographical area spanning Trafford and Salford. Although the MDZ is not a statutory body, it benefits from strong governance, with active involvement from politicians and senior officers, enabling focused political attention on key issues affecting Trafford. The MDZ is replacing the former Trafford & Salford Infrastructure Board. An example of progress is the improved coordination of transport planning around the M60, involving collaboration between Trafford Council, Salford City Council, National Highways, and Transport for Greater Manchester.

Meanwhile, the MDC covers the area surrounding Manchester United Football Club and Trafford Wharfside. Between January and August, an investigation into the feasibility of the MDC was conducted with positive results. Progress reports to Executive were submitted in June on both the

MDZ and MDC. Public consultation is now complete, with formal governance and decision-making in September, and submission to the Secretary of State for approval in mid-October. Lord Coe has been appointed chair-designate of the MDC. Recruitment of Non-Executive Directors is commencing, and appointment of a Project Director is expected in October. An initial business plan for the MDC has been approved which sets out the key workstream and the relationship between the MDC and the Council. Work is progressing on several workstreams, for example for Trafford the development of the Wharfside Masterplan, a Transport Framework Document and stakeholder engagement.


The Council is currently undertaking an assessment of internal capacity and available resources as well as the structure of the MDC to ensure we are positioned to seize emerging opportunities and deliver on our strategic ambitions. This review is aligned with our commitment to

strengthening delivery capability across key programmes. As part of this process, the Project Director for the MDC will have a clear focus on identifying leadership that can drive forward our priorities, foster cross-sector collaboration, and ensure robust programme governance and impact.

Next Steps:

Continue to support the work of the Western Gateway and utilise the MDZ and MDC to focus on improving Place outcomes for the borough.



Ref #	Recommendations	Ref #	Actions	Lead Role	RAG Status	Completion Date
15	Ensure appropriate capacity and governance is in place to maximise the opportunities from the Western Gateway, which is an immense opportunity for the borough and the region.	15.1	Reports will be presented to Executive to update on activity and opportunities for the borough - these include the Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) in June 2025 and the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) in June 2025.	Corporate Director of Place		Dec-25



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