

Theme: Partnerships and Continuous Improvement					September 2025 Update	
Accountable Director: Director of Operations					Status	Commentary
Strategic Priorities (Note: Some of the below cross over into other or all areas, the below represents the dominant theme)	Headline Actions	Key Steps	Overarching Measure of Success	Target Date to Achieve		
4. Embed a Culture of Continuous Improvement	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).	Regular engagement with all stakeholders, building relationships.	Clear & regular reporting, timely meeting papers, improved/positive feedback	Q4 2026	Ongoing	IAB Board meetings in place. Stakeholder engagement workshops held. Ongoing relationship building through various groups and committees continues. Example: Bi-weekly meeting with LA's to discuss & develop the Local Growth Plan.
		Set up report structure for both internal and external reporting at agreed frequency.			Complete	Reporting structure agreed by TVCA Cabinet and in place.
		Set up spreadsheet to show progress against each action or KPI.				Spreadsheet set up and actively updated.
		Attend Improvement Board and MHCLG meetings providing previous minutes and recording any actions.			Ongoing	Governance process is now well established. Attendance at meetings ongoing.
1.Rebuild Trust & Shared Ownership Across the Combined Authority	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.	Develop plan	Clear, easily accessible information for the public that meets with legislation and best practice	Q2 2025	In Progress	Proactive external comms and stakeholder engagement plan has been developed in consultation with Local Authority Comms Leads. Significant engagement with senior stakeholders across the region continues to take place, led by the TVCA Executive Team. The plan articulates how portfolio holders will have a greater role in external comms, e.g. quotes in press releases etc.
		Work with partners, stakeholders and Members to embed plan			In Progress	TVCA have established a Communications group with the Local Authorities that will continue to meet quarterly. Wider stakeholder/partner engagement continues to progress well with examples of improvements recorded. Engaging with IAB member Dame Amanda Milling Work is being developed to strengthen the existing plan including scoping to understand the external support available/required with a view to building on: reputation, strengthening the strategic narrative and continuous proactive engagement with business communities, politically interested stakeholders and Local Authorities. This will overlay the interim stakeholder engagement plan that is underway.
		Review and update monthly			Ongoing	To be reviewed as and when it progresses with a view to updating monthly once in full delivery to ensure embedding and continuous improvement.
4. Embed a Culture of Continuous Improvement	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.	Liaise with LGA/CIPFA/CFGS for peer review and external support & challenge	Agreed dates with each planned into TVCA timescales	Ongoing	Ongoing	Engagement with LGA/CIPFA/CFGS being accessed as appropriate to support improvement journey. Peer review dates to be agreed for 18-24 months post BVN.
		Agree dates & timescales				Dates to be agreed at appropriate point.
5. Deliver Strategic Clarity, Long-Term Planning & Performance Focus & Prepare for the next phase of long term devolution	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.	Undertake assessments and identify & implement any actions involving partners & key stakeholders when appropriate - using BVN guidance as the framework/benchmark	Positive benchmarking/improved position recorded & continually measured.	Ongoing/Q4 2025	Ongoing	Improvement team established to provide assessments and continuous monitoring of progress against actions. Consultations and engagements identified and will continue as work progresses.
5. Deliver Strategic Clarity, Long-Term Planning & Performance Focus & Prepare for the next phase of long term devolution	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.	Implement a series of workshops for priority setting, engage key partners and Members and ensure the workshops fit with the corporate calendar.	Partners and key stakeholders understand long term plans and provide positive/improved feedback on meaningful engagement.	Ongoing/Q2 2025	In Progress	The need to establish clarity of purpose to direct decision-making, inform prioritisation and allocation of resources is an essential governance foundation. The priority is to establish this clarity at the earliest opportunity. The development of the strategic planning process will be aligned with the development of a new Single Assurance Framework. The TVCA CEO and wider leadership team are actively engaging with key partners and stakeholders including MPs, Local Authority Leaders and business leaders. TVCA Directors are strengthening their relationships with relevant portfolio holders to support a more collaborative approach. External workshops with a strategic focus on the Local Growth Plan have taken place with key groups during September and will continue in October. The next Cabinet workshop, to be held 7th November, will focus on Budget, Resources and setting priorities for the coming 18 months.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	Develop and implement a new organisation-wide operating model to improve processes, efficiency, understanding and quality.	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.	Agreed operating model is rolled out and understood. Staff can report via surveys understanding of high level objectives and where their role impacts these.	Ongoing Q4 2026	In Progress	Operating Model is in progress. This action is overarching and links across the Improvement Plan to all areas that will lead to improved processes and ways of working. Areas being prioritised for review are Finance and Governance. Development of officer schemes of delegation, approval systems and processes are being prioritised and work in these areas is progressing. This is alongside scoping for a people plan to review how directorates and teams will be structured, which will provide the framework for decision making and delegations. Staff are being engaged on processes to ensure alignment with working in practice. Internal communications on these items is on going as appropriate. Roll out of any changes will happen at the earliest opportunity.
		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				
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	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.	Explore the structure of a PMO within TVCA to ensure it is fit for purpose and specific to TVCA. implement a fit for purpose PMO.	An appropriate PMO 'model' is in place for TVCA. Demonstrable benefits of the PMO can be seen & recorded.	Q4 2025	In Progress	Initial scoping is underway to develop an appropriate timeline and holistic approach, linked to all actions that will deliver improved processes as an outcome, recognising the interdependencies with constitutions and schemes of delegations and ensuring they flow through the processes. Pre-market engagement has concluded and next steps are being considered.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	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.	Implementation of Tees Valley Strategic Leadership Team meetings. Positive feedback and demonstrable impact of the working arrangements received.	Q3 2025	Ongoing	Discussions are ongoing at CEX level to ensure strategic focus on priorities with alignment to the review.
4. Embed a Culture of Continuous Improvement	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.	Undertake assessment. Agree actions and develop implementation plan.	Through continuous monitoring a clear positive direction of travel can be demonstrated.	Q4 2025	Ongoing	Initial assessment of the remaining areas in the Best Value Notice guidance is being undertaken and will be appropriately included as part of continuous improvement.

Theme: Use of Resources					September 2025 Update	
Accountable Director: Interim Group Director of Finance and Resources					Status	Commentary
Strategic Priorities (Note: Some of the below cross over into other or all areas, the below represents the	Headline Actions	Key Steps	Overarching Measure of Success	Target Date to Achieve		
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	Produce a baseline assessment of finance processes and procedures and 'gap analysis' where applicable to form the basis of future improvement plan.	Fully documented finance business processes and procedure documentation is widely available and understood by staff	End Q3 026	In Progress	Key finance processes have now been defined and process owners assigned to each one. The process owners are responsible for documenting the "as is process" and the "to be process", ensuring that fundamental improvements required are documented and an appropriate plan implemented to rectify. A number of the processes e.g. budget monitoring are someway down the improvement path.
		Cabinet approval of finance process changes as required in line with Constitution.		In Progress		
		Roll out of processes across the organisation (including all necessary awareness raising and training)	Ownership and accountability is demonstrated through budget holder leadership for their respective areas of delegated authority.	Q1 2026	In Progress	
		Implementation of the necessary system changes to reflect the new sub-scheme of delegation				
		Roll out training for all new budget holders and individuals with delegations	Document authorisation processes are compliant, timely and accurate working to agreed service standards across the Group	Q3 2026		
		Roll out training for document authorisation system		02/03/26		
2. strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	Develop and implement a workforce development strategy, to ensure a sustainable and high-performing finance function.	Produce baseline of Finance team capacity and capability. Produce Terms of Reference for review of Finance team and approval by Cabinet	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	Q2 2025	In Progress	Initial review undertaken and interim structure to be implemented from October. The permanent workforce plan will be developed by the end of the calendar year with a view to embedding from 1 April 2026.
		Benchmarking analysis and review by Tees Valley Strategic Resources Group (FDs) for feedback			In Progress	
		SWOT analysis and local government finance workforce action plan key recommendations analysis performed to support review of the Finance Team		02/03/26	In Progress	
		Formulation of Finance Team structure options and funding requirements as applicable and recommendations to TVCA Senior Leadership Team and stakeholder groups				
2. strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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 th April 2025.	Capacity review	All public inspection periods for the Annual Financial Statements (including narrative report) and Annual Governance Statement are complied with in line with legislation.	Q2 2025	In Progress	The new S73 Officer is working closely with the external auditors. Capacity is being addressed as above. The public accounts inspection recommendation is now understood and will be complied with. An update on the 2024/25 external audit and year end position was provided to the Authority's A&G Committee on 18 September. Suitably experienced interim resources will be prioritising resolving any residual 2024/25 matters as well as formulating a comprehensive plan for the 2025/26 year-end closing process.
		Process review		Q2 2025	In Progress	
		Clear timetable for production of its 2024/25 Statement of Accounts	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	Q4 2026	Complete	
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	Produce baseline self-assessment of readiness against best practice using models produced for MCAs who have already progressed through readiness activity.	TVCA Cabinet approved readiness plan	Q3 2025	In Progress	Work is continuing on the Strategic Framework which includes a review of Tees Valley strategies and plans, including the Local Growth plan evidence base and proposed metrics and 10 year targets linked to the LGP. This includes review of the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill (July 2025) and interdependencies with other bills and legislation linked to the Devolution Framework. This will include assessment of identified key steps and measures of success as well as examination of readiness plans at other CAs accessed via the CA Governance Network
		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. 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.				
		Approval of readiness plan with stakeholders				
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	The detailed activities are covered by other actions in the use of resources section. The formal reporting to TVCA AGC and TVCA Cabinet will follow the approved plan. This requires reports to be produced for circulation with these stakeholders for May, June, September and November.	External Audit recommendations evidenced as complete with Auditors	Q3 2025	In Progress	S73 officer improving relationships with External Auditors. Revised approach agreed to statutory backstop date of 27 February 2026. Updates and progress will be reported to Cabinet & A&G Committee.

Theme: Governance					September 2025 Update	
Accountable Officer: Group Chief Legal Officer/Monitoring Officer					Status	Commentary
Strategic Priorities (Note: Some of the below cross over into other or all areas, the below represents the dominant priority)	Headline Actions	Key Steps	Overarching measure of success	Target Date to Achieve		
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	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.	Clear, demonstrable and effective governance processes demonstrated through positive feedback from Members, partners and stakeholders and understanding of key processes by TVCA staff.	Q3 2025	In progress	The review process has commenced with a focus on aligning the cycles for Cabinet, other statutory committees and Development Corporation meetings. A revised Cabinet cycle is scheduled to be implemented in time for the December 2025 Cabinet meeting, accompanied by the introduction of a refreshed report template to support the new approach. Engagement with key groups is happening with the areas described above.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	Complete internal review of the Constitution, engage members and partners in the review and formalise revised version at a future Cabinet meeting.	Revised Constitution is agreed at TVCA Cabinet. TVCA has clear, demonstrable and effective governance processes	Q3 2025	In progress	Numerous actions will result in updates to the constitution. The approach that has been identified is to complete action related updates as progress is made and complete a comprehensive review once priority updates have been made. The initial focus includes: •Development of the Officer Scheme of Delegations and alignment with the approval process •Detailed examination of the Publication Scheme, aligning transparency requirements with approvals and delegations •Enhancing access to information procedures •Strengthening compliance policies, particularly in relation to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and complaints handling These priorities aim to improve transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency across the organisation. Engagement is being undertaken with Cabinet Members by the Interim Monitoring Officer on this workstream. There will be appropriate input from all statutory committees in the revision of the constitution.
1. Rebuild Trust & Shared Ownership Across the Combined Authority	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.	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.	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.	Q3 2025	In progress	Work has been undertaken with Cabinet members to refresh portfolio areas to empower and strengthen the role of Cabinet members within the organisation. Interim Monitoring Officer is meeting all Cabinet Members to discuss Portfolio requirements. TVCA Directors are working more closely with their constituent Portfolio holders to provide more shared ownership and contribution. Cabinet workshops have taken place with a view to setting and maintaining a collaborative approach to long-term priority setting. Draft External Comms Plan reinforces inclusion and importance of portfolio leads in comms activity.
1. Rebuild Trust & Shared Ownership Across the Combined Authority	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.	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.	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.	Q3 2025	In progress	Informal Cabinet meetings have been included within Corporate Calendar. Further development of the existing corporate calendar is continuing. Feedback from officers and Members on process and outcomes considered and will be reported back to Cabinet members. Intention is to transition to the point where Cabinet portfolios lead the discussion on their portfolio with support from officers. The December 2025 and January 2026 Cabinet Cycle has been adjusted to ensure Informal Cabinet takes place at appropriate cycle point.
1. Rebuild Trust & Shared Ownership Across the Combined Authority	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.	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.	Clearly documented process from origin to decision.	Q3 2025	In progress	Linked to reviewing processes and decision making. The Cabinet Decision making process has been considered as a priority area of focus for the Interim Monitoring Officer. The Cabinet cycle to December is being amended to initially reflect a standard CA 6-8-week pre-Cabinet cycle alongside improvements to Forward Planning. Engagement on this has begun with key groups
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	Review legislative requirements and terms of reference for each Statutory Committee, engage partners and Committee members in the review, and update the constitution accordingly.	Revised Terms of References produced. Evidence of training and feedback from Committee members. Changes reflected in governance processes and Constitution.	Q3 2025	In progress	Roles and responsibilities of key groups within the Cabinet cycle have been considered and articulated as part of the Cabinet decision making process as described above. With a view to providing further alignment with organisation objectives as well as fit with best practice approaches and governance opportunities.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	Review structure and content of reports & deliver report writing training to identified staff. Deadline for reports clearly communicated with escalation process and action taken recorded.	Demonstrable audit trail of informed decision making. Testing of the process to ensure robustness.	Q3 2025	Ongoing	The Interim Monitoring Officer has undertaken a review of the reporting template for Cabinet reports to ensure they are of sufficient quality and structure.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	Ensure that all TVCA statutory committees are appropriately supported and challenged to maximise effectiveness.	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.	Review of effectiveness of each Committee.	Q3 2025	In progress	This will be reviewed as part of an assessment of governance resourcing, process and procedure and good governance behaviours.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	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.	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.	Coherent committee and non-statutory advisory group structure that supports the authority and work of Cabinet. Demonstrated in Committee effectiveness reviews.	Q3 2025	In progress	Scoping underway to identify approach. 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. Scoping exercise will involve examination of target date.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	Request feedback from Members and stakeholders on the current induction process. Develop Member induction process for Cabinet and all Statutory Committees.			In progress	Workshops held and future workshops planned which will provide feedback in order to progress further.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	Review the TVCA Publication Scheme and make any necessary changes, to make the maximum amount of information readily available to the public.	Assess what is currently published against what we are able to share publicly.	Revised publication scheme linked to legislative requirements, which is regularly updated and enhanced, with scheduled reviews	Q2 2025	Scoping	Scoping underway to identify approach to be taken and the extent to which the Interim Monitoring Officer will want to shape that approach. Scoping to include examination of best practice approaches to ensure maximum transparency compliance and identification of gaps in policy and process required to inform publication scheme. Scoping exercise will involve examination of target date.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	Review current Code of Conduct, secure Cabinet sign off and implement changes.	Revised Code of Conduct that aligns to best practice approved by Cabinet and included in member induction processes.	Q3 2025	Scoping	Scoping underway by Interim Monitoring Officer focused on review of existing approach, constitutional content and identified areas for focus and improvement. Scoping 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. Scoping exercise will involve examination of target date.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	Develop and implement an on-going improvement plan with the Overview & Scrutiny (O&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.	Work with O&S Committee to develop improvement plan (merging any actions under the previous Centre for Governance & Scrutiny review where appropriate), with identified aims, objectives and timescales. Ensure improvement activity is appropriately included in the Committee's work plan.	O&S Committee have shaped and developed the plan, the effectiveness of which can be demonstrated in its work and results.	Q3 2025	In progress	Initial workshop and follow up workshop have taken place. Development of improvement continues with ownership of improvement by O&S committee.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	Implement a new governance e-agenda and forward planning system to improve efficiency and compliance.	Implement modern.gov, & roll out training to staff, partners and members.	Modern.gov works for staff and members with feedback regularly sought and actions taken to address issues	Q2 2025	In progress	Scoping in relation to modern.gov started.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	Review the format and effectiveness of the existing Annual Governance Statement in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) & the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) Good Governance Framework, and make any necessary changes.	Review current format, engage partners and members as appropriate, taking into account best practice.	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.	Q3 2025	Scoping	Scoping underway to identify approach to be taken and the extent to which the Interim Monitoring Officer will want to shape that approach. Scoping will involve examination of best practice and latest guidance. Scoping exercise will involve examination of target date. Scoping exercise will involve examination of target date.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	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.	Undertake an internal review of the Assurance Framework. Work with partners and Members to update. Seek Cabinet approval.	Approval of updated Assurance Framework. Data is available providing evidence of effective assurance processes.	Q2 2025	In progress	The Assurance Framework has been identified as a priority area for improvement. Best practice centres around the development of a Single Assurance Framework (SAF), this will enable Tees Valley Combined Authority to address issues, introduce a new approach and culture to approvals and drive standards. Tees Valley Specific Design Principles have been developed. Engagement with key groups has been taking place on the development and implementation of the SAF.
4. Embed a Culture of Continuous Improvement	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).	Establish baseline and progress against recommendations and develop action plan to address outstanding actions. Develop and implement continuous improvement actions.	Demonstrable progress towards embedded actions.	Q3 2026	Ongoing	Work underway to explore internal programme and project management options to map processes and improve operational effectiveness. Each process improvements will be mapped and systemised to ensure continuous improvement. Internal audits can establish baseline and improvements.
5. Deliver Strategic Clarity, Long-Term Planning & Performance Focus & Prepare for the next phase of long term devolution	Undertake a business planning exercise and produce a readiness plan in anticipation of the expanded powers set out in the Devolution White Paper.	Planning exercise. Agree readiness plan.	Readiness plan is in place with clear target dates and responsibilities.	Q4 2025	In progress	Work is continuing on the Strategic Framework which includes a review of Tees Valley strategies and plans, including the Local Growth plan evidence base and proposed metrics and 10 year targets linked to the LGP. This includes review of the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill (July 2025) and interdependencies with other bills and legislation linked to the Devolution Framework.

Theme: Culture					September 2025 Update	
Accountable : Assistant Director People and Operations						
Strategic Priorities (Note: Some of the below cross over into other or all areas, the below represents the dominant theme)	Headline Actions	Key Steps	Overarching Measure of Success	Target Date to Achieve	Status	Commentary
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	Initiate and undertake a programme of Organisational Development (OD), with an external partner to provide support and challenge.	Procure O&D partner to support the OD development, develop the programme of OD for consideration and agreement by TVCA Senior Leadership Team.	O&D Programme is developed and agreed with clear steps for implementation over the short, medium and long term.	Ongoing/Q4 2025/26	In progress	Work is continuing with the procured OD partners. A series of workshops have been held with members of the Senior Leadership team during September and will continue in to October.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	Review TVCA staff induction process to improve organisational awareness and understanding of governance and finance processes.	Review existing induction content and work with governance, procurement & finance teams to build fit for purpose induction content.	New induction process rolled out to staff.	Q3 2025	In progress	Internal review undertaken, induction content complete in most areas, finance to be finalised following full review and implementation of updated processes.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	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. 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.	Engage with external recruitment agency to develop staged process for vacant CEX post. Undertake a process to recruit remaining Director vacancies. Review Senior Leadership Team to ensure appropriate input from statutory officers. Link with senior Leadership Team development. Design & implement a series of stakeholder surveys.	Recruitment concluded. High performing senior leadership team. Recoding of improved data.	Q3 2025	In progress	Permanent CEX appointed by TVCA Cabinet in June 2025. Members of the Independent Advisory Board were involved in the recruitment and interview process. Interim Group Director of Finance & Resources and interim Monitoring Officer appointed and part of the leadership team in July and August. They continue to embed as an integral part of the senior leadership team and drive improvements in their respective areas. Recruitment process has commenced for Director of Infrastructure and Director of Business Solutions.
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	Develop and implement a workforce development strategy, to ensure a sustainable and high-performing finance function.	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.	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.	Q1 2026	In progress	Initial review undertaken and interim structure to be implemented from October. The permanent workforce plan will be developed by the end of the calendar year with a view to embedding from 1 April 2026
2. Strengthen Governance, Oversight & Accountability	Develop and implement a workforce development strategy, to ensure a sustainable and high-performing governance function.				In progress	Initial review undertaken which has included the Legal Team strucutre, interim structure to be implemented from October.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	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.				In progress	Operating Model is in progress. This action is overarching and links across the Improvement Plan to all areas that will lead to improved processes and ways of working. The outcome of linked actions will help further inform the progress and timeline for a strengthened operating model. Discussions are ongoing with Cabinet on the Strategic Framework which will inform this. As an initial first step we are scoping the people plan to review how directorates and teams will be structured which will provide the framework for decision making and delegations.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	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.				In progress	Links to Operating Model and Organisational Development Plan. The outcome of those actions will help inform work force strategy. Plan of stakeholder engagement has been developed in partnership with Local Authorities. Utilising expertrise in constituent LAs as an example, Director of Inward Investment & Marketing is spending a day a week in each LA area to define the developing Inward Investment Strategy and ensure its fit for purpose for the region.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	Develop and implement a workforce development strategy, to enhance skills and knowledge at all levels within the organisation.				In progress	Links to Operating Model and Organisational Development Plan. The outcome of those actions will help inform work force strategy. As above, scoping the people plan to review how directorates and teams will be structured as first step, with priority focus on finance and governance.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	Ensure that the TVCA values (open, empathetic, collaborative & focussed) are embedded through everyday activity, organisational development and the appraisal process.	Design and implement a recordable system to give positive feedback where TVCA's values are lived out and demonstrated	Clear data showing increasing evidence of TVCA staff living our values	Q3 2025	In progress	Market analysis has taken place. Following scoping most logical and best value approach is to adapt the existing shout out function on the TVCA intranet, which is recordable. This will be compelte in October.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	Embed appraisal process that ensures individual accountability through clear objective setting, which is aligned to team and organisational priorities and robust performance management.	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.	Appraisal process is embedded. Objectives are demonstrably achieved or action is taken to address this.	Q4 2024	In progress	Content has been researched and now being developed. Training sessions to be planned.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	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.	Set up staff forum. Staff surveys acted upon to address issues/concerns - plan 12 month series of lunch & learns - provide multi-purpose space for staff as part of office refurbishment.	Staff forum is up & running. Staff survey results are analysed and areas of concern are addressed and re-surveyed to measure improvements & show positive direction of travel. Staff agree their wellbeing is valued and can see positive improvements.	Q1 2025	In progress	Staff forum continues to meet. Lunch and learn sessions are ongoing. Following analysis of initial staff survey results a focussed staff survey workshop has taken place with a view to establishing further insight around the results. Further workshops are planned in October. A wellbeing space has been planned and is in the process of being built. Due for completion by the end October.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	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	Develop Organisational Development (OD) road map, which details a 12 month rolling programme of OD workshops, mentoring, coaching, and supplementary interventions.	Personal Development Plans in place for the CEX and Directors.	Q3 2025	In progress	Work has progressed with the Organisational Development Road Map, draft has been agreed. To be shared with Directors for comments.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	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.	Develop and embed an internal communications plan, which is shared with all staff. Continually monitor plan to ensure effectiveness.	Communications plan is agreed and staff are reporting positive feedback (through regular feedback requests) on communication and visibility.	Q1 2025	In progress	Research into plan has started. Ideas for internal communications will be asked via the staff forum. Feedback will inform the final plan. Likely finalised by the end of October to allow for staff engagement and feedback.
3. Build a High-Performing Organisation with a strong Operating Model	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.	Regular staff updates via TVCA intranet - request feedback from staff - on-going staff surveys - Discussion at all staff meetings on progress of embedding change.	Evidence shared on TVCA intranet - staff confirm they are informed through regular feedback requests.	Q1 2025	Ongoing	Improved internal engagement through all staff meetings, staff forum, Lunch and Learn sessions, Reception display board notifications and regular updates from the Chief Executive and Director of Operations. Further ideas for internal communications have been asked via the staff forum and all staff Breifings. Feedback will inform the final plan. Likely finalised by the end of October 2025 to allow for staff engagement and feedback.