

Audit & Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 30 July 2019

Report Title: Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2018/19

Senior Officer: Catherine Parkinson, Interim Director of Governance and Compliance Services

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is for the Committee to receive and approve the proposed final Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 for signature by the Leader of the Council and the Acting Chief Executive. Once approved the AGS will accompany the Statement of Accounts and be published on the Council's website.
- 1.2. The Council's assessment of its governance arrangements for 2018/19 has recognised two governance issues. It also summarises the progress made across the Council in managing issues identified in previous Statements. The proposed final statement for 2018/19 is provided in Appendix 1.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Committee approves the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Annual Governance statement should be approved by Members of the Council meeting as a whole, or by a Committee, at the same time as the Statement of Accounts is approved and no later than 31st July. The Audit and Governance Committee has delegated authority to approve the Annual Governance Statement.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Not applicable.

5. Background

- 5.1. The Council is required to prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). This requirement was introduced by the revised CIPFA/SOLACE Good Governance Framework (Delivering Good Governance in Local Government) and is necessary to meet the statutory requirement set out in Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit England Regulations 2015.
- 5.2. The purpose of the AGS process is to provide a continuous review of the organisation's governance arrangements so as to give assurance on the effectiveness on the processes and/or to address identified weaknesses, supporting the continuous improvement of the Authority. This report and Appendix 1 are the results of that review
- 5.3. The draft AGS was published at the beginning of June 2019 on the Council's website. A small number of changes have been made to that draft document regarding timings of meetings and documents, in order to reflect it now being the proposed final.
- 5.4. Two items previously recognised in the AGS have been identified for removal; Governance of the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Council's Investigation and Disciplinary Committee. Sufficient progress has been made on these items for them to be removed from future statements and be reviewed through local management and monitoring arrangements.
- 5.5. Once approved and signed, the AGS will be published on the Council's website, along with the Statement of Accounts, for members of the public, Members, Officers and other stakeholders to view. Further progress reports on items recognised in the Annual Governance Statement will be provided to the Audit and Governance Committee as part of its work programme.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

- 6.1.1. The Production of the Annual Governance Statement is required by Regulation 6(1) (b) of the Accounts and Audit England Regulations 2015.

6.2. Finance Implications

- 6.2.1. There are no financial implications. The production of the AGS aligns with the production of the Council's Annual Accounts and is published alongside the audited accounts.

6.3. Policy Implications

6.3.1. There are no specific policy implications.

6.4. Equality Implications

6.4.1. There are no specific equality implications.

6.5. Human Resources Implications

6.5.1. There are no specific Human Resources implications.

6.6. Risk Management Implications

6.6.1. The Authority is required to prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement to meet the statutory requirement set out in Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit England Regulations 2015. Failure to do so could result in non-compliance with the requirements of the Regulations.

6.7. Rural Communities Implications

6.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

6.8. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

6.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

6.9. Public Health Implications

6.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

6.10. Climate Change Implications

6.10.1. There are no direct implications for climate change.

7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. Not applicable

8. Consultation & Engagement

8.1. The draft Annual Governance Statement has been published on the Council's website since the beginning of June 2019.

9. Access to Information

9.1. The proposed final Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 is attached as Appendix A to this report.

10. Contact Information

10.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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