

Report of	Meeting	Date
Monitoring Officer	Governance Committee	Wednesday, 22 May 2024

Annual Governance Statement (Draft)

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. To consider and approve the draft Annual Governance Statement for inclusion in the Statement of Accounts.

Recommendations

2. That the draft Annual Governance Statement be approved.

Reasons for recommendations

3. The draft sets out a correct position statement in relation to the Council's governance environment and identifies actions to improve compliance which are reasonable and deliverable.

Other options considered and rejected

4. No other options were considered the Council are obliged to prepare an Annual Governance Statement.

Background to the report

5. The council is required to ensure that it has in place a sound system of governance, that it regularly reviews the effectiveness of that system and the it continuously seeks to achieve best value in service delivery. As part of that, the council is required to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).
6. The Annual Governance Statement is developed alongside the Statement of Accounts but assesses the governance framework for the whole council and all of its activities. The form of the AGS and the approach taken to its development is based on guidance that is produced by CIPFA and SOLACE.

7. The guidance from CIPFA and SOLACE sets out that councils are obliged to Develop and maintain an up to date local code of governance consistent with the 'core principles' set out in the framework Review their existing governance arrangements against the framework Prepare a governance statement in order to report publicly on the extent to which the council complies with its own code on an annual basis including how it monitored the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the year and on any planned changes in the coming period.
8. The annual governance statement is required to be signed by the most senior officer (normally the Chief Executive) and the most senior member (normally the Leader), but it is developed and owned collectively by senior officers and members.
9. The guidance states that there should be a review undertaken by a body, such as the Governance Committee, that has not been involved in the production of the AGS.
10. The statement has five sections: Section one: introduction Section two: the council's responsibility in producing an annual governance statement and the purpose of the annual governance statement Section three: the governance framework, and how the council complies with its local code Section four: how the council reviews the effectiveness of the governance framework Section five: reflects back and updates on the progress improvements identified in the previous AGS and improvements recommended to be taken in the coming period.
11. The full draft AGS is attached at Appendix 1. This has been shared with External Audit and is subject to amendment agreed with them.

Climate change and air quality

12. Whilst there are no direct implications of this report, one of the considerations in relation to the governance environment is how the council are delivering on their environmental commitments and obligations.

Equality and diversity

13. Whilst there are no direct implications of this report, one of the considerations in relation to the governance environment is how the council are delivering on their environmental commitments and obligations.

Risk

14. None

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

15. None

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

16. These are addressed within the body of the report.

Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Annual Governance Statement

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