

Committee: Standards & General Purposes Committee

Date: 9 March 2017

Wards: All

Subject: Annual Governance Statement 2015/16 – Improvement Plan Update

Lead officer: Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services

Lead member: Councillor Mark Allison, Cabinet Member for Finance and Deputy Leader

Contact officer: Margaret Culleton, Head of Internal Audit, 0208 545 3149

Recommendations:

- A. That the Standards/General Purposes Committee discuss and comment on that progress achieved to date against the 2015/16 Annual Governance Improvement Plan (set out in Appendix 1).
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Corporate governance comprises the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which local government bodies are directed and controlled and through which they account to, engage with and, where appropriate, lead their communities.
- 1.2. The Annual Governance Statement is the formal statement that recognises, records and publishes an authority's governance arrangements. It was published with the Council's financial statements in June relating to 2015/16 to ensure compliance with the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2015. These Regulations require authorities to "*A relevant body must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes taking into account public sector Internal audit standards and guidance*" and to prepare an annual governance statement "in accordance with proper practices in relation to internal control".
- 1.3. The Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan is a statement of the actions to be taken by the Council in order to remedy any weaknesses that it has identified in the Council's governance arrangements.
- 1.4. This report sets out progress against each of the items in the 2016/17 Improvement Plan which was included in the Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16. This will allow Members to understand the progress that has been made against the actions

and to ensure that the appropriate action is being taken to remedy weaknesses in the Council's governance processes.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Appendix 1 sets out achievements to date against each of the objectives.
- 2.2. Each of the improvement areas have made progress and the majority should be completed by the year end. The AGS working group meets regularly throughout the year, which helps to ensure that progress is made on these areas and to identify other areas where improvements are needed. The AGS for 16/17 will report on those areas that improvement is required.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. None for the purposes of this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. None for the purposes of this report.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The results of this report will be included in the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17, which will be completed by 31 May 2017, in accordance with the deadline for the Statement of Accounts.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no specific financial implications.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no specific legal implications.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. There are no specific human rights, equalities or community cohesion implications.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are no specific crime and disorder implications.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The risk management process is included in the improvement plan in Appendix 1. There are no health and safety implications.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

11.1 Appendix 1 – update on progress on AGS Improvement programme

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. The Annual Governance Statement 2015/16 was reported to Standards/General Purposes Committee on 30 June 2016. These documents do not form part of the report.

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