

# **Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee**

**23 July 2020**

**Part I**

## **Draft Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**

### **Report by Director of Law and Assurance**

#### **Executive Summary**

This report presents a draft Annual Governance Statement 2019-20. The Committee's views are sought on the current draft ahead of its finalisation. The final text will be brought to the meeting of the Committee in September.

#### **Recommendation**

The Committee is asked to comment on the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2019-20.

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The County Council is required pursuant to the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 to produce a broad based Annual Governance Statement.
- 1.2 The Annual Governance Statement is an important and integral part of the County Council's Corporate Governance regime, providing a review of the effectiveness of the County Council's internal control systems and gives assurances about how effectively they operate.
- 1.3 A draft of the Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 is at Appendix A.

#### **2. Draft 2019/20 Governance Statement**

- 2.1 The statement for 2019/20 addresses issues for governance arising from the Children's Commissioner's report published in December 2019 in so far as they affect the areas of assurance the Statement needs to address. This includes the 'good governance' review commissioned in response to those areas of concern and the Statement identifies areas for which action has been identified as output from the review.
- 2.2 The Statement for 2019/20 must be approved alongside the publication of the accounts, which is usually by the end of July. The finalisation of the accounts has been delayed to September due to the public health emergency and this year's Statement will follow that revised timetable. It has been updated to reflect some of the impact of the emergency on the Council's business. A draft Statement must be available prior to the start of the period of inspection of the Council's accounts (no later than the end of August). The final report will therefore be brought to the Committee for comment at its meeting in September 2020.

- 2.3 The outcomes of the previous year's action plan are being gathered as part of directors' assurance statements which are currently being collected so both sources will be used to inform the new action plan, which will be also presented in September.

### **3. Resource Implications and Value for Money**

- 3.1 None arising directly from this report.

### **4. Equality Duty**

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Report is not required for this decision as report dealing with internal or procedural matters only.

### **5. Risk Management Implications**

- 5.1 There are risks associated with services not addressing key recommendations arising from the Annual Governance Statement. As key initiatives within the AGS feature in the Strategic Risk Register each are monitored and assessed through the council's risk management processes.

#### **Tony Kershaw**

Director of Law and Assurance

**Contact:** Charles Gauntlett, Senior Advisor, 033 022 22524

#### **Appendices**

Appendix A- Draft Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

#### **Background Papers**

None