

Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee

14 March 2022

Annual Governance Statement Update

Report by Director of Law and Assurance

Summary

The Committee has oversight of the production of the Annual Governance Statement each year, its approval and monitoring of governance actions identified as part of the production of the Statement each year.

Recommendations

- (1) That the Action Plan update at Appendix A and the flowchart at Appendix C be noted.
 - (2) That the draft Statement for 2021/22 be supported subject to any comments from the Committee.
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Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations require the publication of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) by the County Council.
- 1.2 Corporate Governance is the system by which the County Council ensures and gives assurance that it is discharging its functions in the right way, in a timely and accountable manner.
- 1.3 The Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 was agreed by the Committee in November 2021 and was subsequently signed by the Leader and Chief Executive. The Statement contains a summary of required actions.
- 1.4 Initial preparation has been undertaken on the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22. Following a recent audit of the AGS process, a new flowchart has been produced to set out the process for the AGS and that is attached at Appendix C for information.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 An update on progress against the Action Plan for 2020/21 is attached as Appendix A. The Committee is invited to consider this progress and whether it requires further detail on any particular action for a future meeting.

- 2.2 The first draft of the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 is attached as Appendix B. The Committee is invited to comment on the draft and on any changes that it believes to be necessary. The Statement will then be finalised after the year end, following the further steps in the process.
- 2.3 It is hoped to present the final version to the Committee for approval in July 2022, subject to the timescale for comment from EY, the external auditor.

3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 3.1 Not applicable.

4 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 4.1 The external auditor was consulted on the draft Annual Governance Statement 20/21 and the auditor's comments were taken into account in the final version, which includes the items identified for the Action Plan. The flowchart sets out the range of internal consultation undertaken each year.

5 Finance

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
There are risks from services failing to deliver the action plan	Individual directorates, the Executive Leadership Team and this Committee monitor progress against actions.

7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 The Statement is aligned with the Code of Corporate Governance, a new version of which was agreed by the Governance Committee on 7 February 2022.

Tony Kershaw

Director of Law and Assurance

Contact Officer: Charles Gauntlett, Senior Advisor, 033 022 22524, charles.gauntlett@westsussex.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix A - Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2020/21 update

Appendix B – Draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

Appendix C – Flowchart setting out AGS production process

Background papers

None