

Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee

25 March 2019

Draft Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

Report by Director of Law and Assurance

Summary

The report outlines the requirements for the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19, which will be presented to the Committee in July 2019. It reminds the Committee of the significant governance issues raised in 2018.

Recommendation

That the plans for the 2018/19 Statement be noted and that the Committee be asked to raise any additional significant governance issues that it wishes to have included in the 2018/19 Statement at this stage.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations require the publication of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). This statement has been produced in line with the guidance issued in 2016 by CIPFA / SOLACE on best practice for developing and maintaining a locally adopted Code of Governance.
- 1.2 Corporate Governance is the process by which the County Council ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. It comprises systems and processes, cultures and values, by which the County Council is directed and controlled and through which we account to, engage with and lead our communities.
- 1.3 A Corporate Code of Governance was approved by the Governance Committee at a meeting on 12 September 2016.

2. Summary of main actions

- 2.1 The draft AGS for the County Council for 2018/19 will outline for the County Council:
 - the scope of governance responsibilities
 - the purpose of the governance framework
 - a description of the governance framework
 - arrangements for review of the effectiveness of the governance framework
 - Governance issues that need to be addressed.
- 2.2 Information is gathered from a number of sources, both internal and external. The information is analysed and a draft Statement is produced, discussed with appropriate senior managers, and any amendments identified are then made. The Executive Leadership Team will consider the wording of

the AGS and will see, comment on and agree a draft action plan. The final stage is the presentation of the AGS and Action Plan to the Regulation Audit and Accounts Committee in July for consideration and comment, in line with the approval of accounts. If the Committee is satisfied, it is asked to recommend the adoption of the Statement through the signatures of the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

2.3 The main Governance issues identified in last year's Action Plan were:

Principle A – Integrity and compliance

- Aligning officer Codes of Conduct with HR policies and procedures
- A refresh of the Whistleblowing policy
- Completion of a revised set of policies processes and systems to manage data protection and security
- Review of effectiveness of system for recording officer interests
- To review and revise Standing Orders on Contracts and procurement
- Revision to form, clarity and accessibility of Constitution

Principle B – Openness and Stakeholders

- Revision of the Forward Plan format
- Review to structure and effectiveness of Health & Wellbeing Board
- Consultation Q&A system effectiveness review

Principle C – Sustainability

- The actions to embed the priorities of the Sustainability Strategy
- To update the Council's Social Value Policy

Principle D – Optimising Interventions

- Review of the form and presentation of the Total Performance Monitor
- Refresh of formal decision report format

Principle E – Capacity and Capability

- No identified issues in 2017-18

Principle F – Risk and Performance Management

- A review of the Risk Management system and recording process
- Review and update of Financial Regulations and Procedures
- Adults Services – audit and Peer review actions
- DOLS – internal audit recommendations
- Business Resilience – internal audit recommendations
- Procurement – regulatory compliance check

Principle G - Transparency and Accountability

- No identified issues in 2017-18

2.4 The Committee received an update report on 5 November 2018 and another update report will be included as part of the papers for July 2019. The Committee is asked to comment on whether any other significant governance

issues should be raised for inclusion in the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 at this stage.

3. Resource Implications and Value for Money

3.1 None arising directly from this report.

4. Risk Management Implications

4.1 There are risks from services failing to deliver the outcomes from the Action Plan and individual directorates, the Executive Leadership Team and this Committee, monitor these risks.

5. Equality Impact Duty

An equality impact report is not required as the report does not have any direct customer impact. Any actions arising from the Statement that may have an impact on external customers will need to be informed by an equality impact report.

5. Crime and Disorder and Human Rights Act Implications

5.1 None arising directly from this report.

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Appendices

None

Background Papers

None