

**SUBJECT: ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2018/19**

**DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TOWN CLERK**

**REPORT AUTHOR: PAT JUKES, BUSINESS MANAGER, CORPORATE POLICY**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To inform Audit Committee that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) has been signed off by the Leader and CX as of the end of May 2019.

## **2. Executive Summary**

Following thorough investigation, the Senior Officers Group has found evidence of just one significant governance issue to report in the AGS.

As in previous years a small number of areas were identified as less serious, but areas that it would be wise to keep a watchful eye on progress. Suggestions on the way to monitor these have been made in the main body of the report.

## **3. Summary**

- 3.1 The AGS is completed annually, with a retrospective look back at how our governance plans worked in the previous year – in this case 2018/19, and whether any significant governance issues were identified as a result of the review
- 3.2 A Senior Officers group consisting of City Solicitor, Chief Finance Officer, Director of Communities and Environment and Audit Manager reviewed the levels of governance assurance provided for all services and projects, looking at a range of considerations
- 3.3 The review was conducted in three stages:
1. Audit and Policy gathered information from across the council, from a mix of interviews, audits, assurances, key summaries, performance and risk registers
  2. The group of Senior Officers then reviewed a summary of these findings and discussed each in detail, forming a recommendation to Corporate Management Team (CMT)
  3. CMT then had a final discussion and input into the final draft before sign off by the Chief Executive and the Leader for inclusion in the Annual Statement of Accounts
- 3.4 For 2018/19, there was just one significant governance identified – this is:
- The Disaster Recovery plan in place for IT arrangements is not sufficiently

aligned with the Business Continuity plans that are currently in place for restoring key services in terms of IT needs

For the last two years we have added a section to the AGS monitoring report after the significant issues section – called “ones to watch”

There is no constitutional requirement to do this and after discussion with CMT a decision has been taken to take the lesser concerns into the High Performing Service Board (HPS) and monitor them closely as part of the performance section. This would increase the visibility on these topics to CMT as they would then be discussed at a very senior level once a quarter as a minimum. They would also be reported to Performance Scrutiny as part of the HPS report.

3.5 In addition, as part of the draft AGS, a range of things that the council has completed /achieved in 2018/19 has been included as well as some key activities that it intends to pursue during 2019/20. This has been completed with the assistance of Assistant Directors and Service Managers.

3.6 The key documents are all attached as appendices with this report – they are:

1. Appendix A - The AGS itself, signed off officially by the CX and the Leader at the end of May

2. Appendix B – A glossary of terms used in the AGS

#### **4. Strategic Priorities**

This report supports the effective running and governance relating to ALL strategic priorities, but especially High Performing Services as it ensures our business will be conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, in an open, honest and accountable manner.

#### **5. Organisational Impacts**

5.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable) – n/a

5.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules – The report is aimed at ensuring our business will be conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, in an open, honest and accountable manner.

5.3 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights (including the outcome of the EA attached, if required) There are no implications on E&D or Human Rights from this report.

#### **6. Risk Implications**

6.1 (i) Options Explored – n/a

6.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach - n/a

#### **7. Recommendation**

7.1 Audit Committee is asked to review the contents of the Final Annual Governance

Statement with a view to monitoring progress on the significant issue identified over the coming year 2019/20

<b>Is this a key decision?</b>	No
<b>Do the exempt information categories apply?</b>	No
<b>Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?</b>	No
<b>How many appendices does the report contain?</b>	Two
<b>List of Background Papers:</b>	None

<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Pat Jukes, Business Manager, Corporate Policy Telephone (01522) 873657
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