

SUBJECT: ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2017/18

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 Chief Executive as of 25th May 2018.

2. Main Body of Report

- 2.1 The AGS is completed annually, with a retrospective look back at how our governance plans worked in the previous year – in this case 2017/18
- 2.2 A senior officers group consisting of City Solicitor, Chief Finance Officer, Assistant Director, Strategic Development, Finance Manager and Audit Manager has reviewed the levels of governance assurance provided for all services and projects, looking at a range of things from Internal Audits results, identified risks, to performance outturn.
- 2.3 As part of the AGS, there is included a range of things that the council has completed/achieved in 2017/18 as well as some key things that it intends to pursue during 2018/19. This has been completed with the assistance of Assistant Directors
- 2.4 The key documents are all attached with this report – they are:
1. The final AGS itself, signed officially by the Chief Executive and the Leader on May 25th
 2. Appendix A – The monitoring form, which comes to Audit Committee once a quarter with an update on progress of each defined issue and ones to watch
 3. Appendix B – A glossary of terms used in the AGS
- 2.5 In summary the changes from 2016/17 to 2017/18 are:

Issues that have been significantly progressed and have been removed:

- IT disaster recovery: Arrangements to cover major events are well underway with a secondary ICT location established and tested and fully functional at Hamilton House. A draft ICT Disaster Recovery Plan has been written and is now being tested against Corporate Business Continuity plans. The final plan needs to be agreed by the Business Continuity Group to complete this exercise.

One current significant issue will remain a focus for 2018/19

- **Information Management:** During 2017/18 significant progress has been made towards achieving the aim of being fully compliant with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) by the implementation date in May 2018. However there remain a number of areas still in progression and due to the seriousness of non-compliance, until these are completed, this area will remain a significant issue

2.6 New significant issues identified

There are no new areas designated as significant issues.

2.7 Other areas to retain a focus on – not considered significant issues as yet

- The council has minimal experience of the process of setting up a new partnership company (solely owned or a joint venture) and care needs to be taken to select the right governance framework arrangements, ensuring appropriate formal legalities and financial aspects are in place.
- Project management monitoring arrangements have been reviewed, with the Strategic Plan Implementation Team having been replaced by the new Capital Programme Group and additional responsibilities for the Programme Boards. This will remain on the list of areas to watch through 2018/19 to ensure governance quality is maintained.
- Western Growth Corridor to ensure that effective governance is maintained as the project develops further
- Continually ensure that appropriate and timely professional advice is sought on key projects, policies and decisions
- Ensure that the remaining Responsible Officer duties within the Housing services are fully rolled out during 2018/19

3. 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.

4. Organisational Impacts

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

4.2 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.

4.3 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights (including the outcome of the EA attached, if required) n/a

5. Risk Implications

5.1 (i) Options Explored – n/a

5.2 (ii) Key risks associated with the preferred approach n/a

6. Recommendation

6.1 Audit Committee are asked to review the contents of the Final Annual Governance Statement with a view to monitoring progress on the single issue and those areas designated as “ones to watch”

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? Three

List of Background Papers: None

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