

SUBJECT: ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT MONITORING

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TOWN CLERK

LEAD OFFICER: PAT JUKES, BUSINESS MANAGER, CORPORATE POLICY

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present a progress update on the areas identified as 'significant governance issues' as set out in the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Audit Committee has a role to review the Council's governance arrangements including the production of the Annual Governance Statement.
- 2.2 This report provides details of the monitoring arrangements for the significant internal control issues raised in the latest AGS.

3. Background

3.1 Monitoring of 2020/21 AGS issues

- 3.2 The updates on the significant issues identified within the 2020/21 AGS are summarised within **Appendix A**.
- 3.3 These are monitored by the Service Manager's Group and overseen by Corporate Leadership Team as well as monitored at the Audit Committee.

4 Summary of findings

- 4.1 Of the two significant issues, both are considered to have reduced in significance from RED status to AMBER status
- 4.2 **1. The IT Disaster Recovery plan alignment with current Business Continuity plans**

"The current IT Disaster Recovery plan needs to be reviewed to ensure that there is clarity of how, what and when we can recover all critical systems. This will enable us to create clear and workable links to the critical service business continuity plans"

This issue falls into two separate actions – the first relating to the completion of the updated ITDR plan and the second being the review of the Business Continuity plans to match what we are able to achieve in terms of recovery.

- 4.3 In relation to the completion of the Hamilton House recovery centre - significant progress has been made on delivering this part of the significant issue

In summary, the Hamilton House secondary data centre is now fully operational, further details of which can be found in the template attached (**Appendix A**). and work has now started on reviewing the IT Disaster Recovery plan.

The level of progress made has led to a downgrade from RED status to AMBER status.

- 4.4 Each year all Business Continuity plans are reviewed to ensure they meet the current environment – this year there is a full-scale review underway to reflect the changes in working practices. It is highly likely that some of the older requirements from the critical services plans will have changed following the actions taken during 2020/21 relating to many officers' ability to work from home rather than need alternative office accommodation.

Business continuity plans will be revised throughout 2021/22 so that they are in a position to be linked to the new ITDR when it is completed in March 2022.

- 4.5 **2. Vision 2025 needs to be re-profiled and communicated to a wider audience in the light of COVID-19**

“Plans for rolling out Vision 2025 were deferred due to the pandemic onset. Vision 2025 is published on the web, but to date there has been no formal launch. In addition a review of where and how the current Vision offers support in the area of ‘Health’ to the people of Lincoln has been requested, which may impact the roll out timing”

- 4.6 Significant progress has been made in drafting a new Annual Delivery plan for 2022/23, and a schedule is currently being developed to ensure that members are widely consulted before the Exec decision in February 2022

The level of progress made has led to a downgrade from RED status to AMBER status.

5. Strategic Priorities

This report does not focus specifically on any of the five Vision 2025 priorities but does contribute significantly towards One Council which underpins these aspirations.

6. Organisational Impacts

- 6.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report.

- 6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report

- 6.3 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity

- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

There are no direct Equality and Diversity implications arising as a result of this report.

7 Risk Implications

- 7.1 (i) Options Explored - n/a
 (ii) Key risks associated with the preferred approach n/a

8 Recommendation

8.1 The Audit Committee is asked to note the report and consider whether any of the following options are relevant:

- Report and make recommendations to the Executive if appropriate.
- Refer any matter under review they feel appropriate to the relevant Portfolio Holder, Scrutiny Chair or Committee.
- Accept the report and continue to monitor arrangements.

Key Decision No

Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply? No

Call in and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? One

List of Background Papers: None

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