

19 January 2021

Report of	Assistant Director of Policy & Corporate	Author	Hayley McGrath
Title	Interim Review of the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan.		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report reviews the implementation of the actions highlighted on the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which was reported to the Governance and Audit Committee in June 2020. The report included an action plan for issues to be resolved during the current financial year (2020/21).
- 1.2 The annual governance review should be an ongoing process; therefore, it is essential to ensure that issues identified in the AGS are monitored. Accordingly, these issues have been discussed with the relevant lead officers, and the action plan has been updated with the progress made. The updated action plan is included at appendix A.
- 1.3 The key messages are that there has been progress against all of the issues identified in the action plan, and the external audit of the final accounts for 2019/20 did not raise any concerns with the Annual Governance Statement or the action plan.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 Consider and comment on the work undertaken to implement the current Annual Governance Statement action plan.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 Part 2 (3 & 6) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires the Council to ensure that it operates a sound system of internal control and to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of its governance and internal control arrangements. The findings from this review, the Annual Governance Statement, must be reported to and approved by committee before being signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, and then published for public inspection.
- 3.2 The regulations require the statement to be accompanied by an action plan for improving any issues identified. The CIPFA/SOLACE 'Good Governance' guidance highlights that the annual governance review should be a robust ongoing assessment, not just an annual year end exercise. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that governance issues are considered during the year, and it was agreed that an interim report regarding progress against the action plan would be provided to this committee.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options to consider.

5. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 5.1 There are no equality, diversity or Human Rights implications as a result of this report.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The achievement of the strategic plan requires a sound system of governance to ensure the effective delivery of services. Therefore, improving on existing governance arrangements will help to ensure that the strategic plan objectives can be achieved.

7. Risk Management Implications

- 7.1 Risk Management is a fundamental part of the Governance process and a failure to implement the action plan may have an effect on the ability of the Council to control its risks.

8. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 8.1 There are no environmental or sustainability implications as a result of this report.

9.1 Other Standard References

- 9.1 There are no particular references to consultation, publicity considerations or financial, community safety or health and safety implications.

10. Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix A – Annual Governance Statement Action Plan for 2020/21, updated Dec 20.