



Audit and Risk Management Committee
Tuesday, 14 March 2017

REPORT TITLE:	AGS SIGIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUES UPDATE
REPORT OF:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides Members with a progress update on actions taken by officers to address items of concern identified in the Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16.

RECOMMENDATION

Members should note the report and if appropriate escalate any matters deemed relevant to Cabinet.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16 was presented to this Committee in September 2016. Following discussion by Members it was agreed that a standard agenda item be included for future meetings to allow for regular updates on matters of concern identified in the AGS to be presented.
- 1.2 To ensure that risks to the Council are managed effectively.
- 1.3 To ensure that the Council complies with best practice guidance identified in the CIPFA publication 'A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees'.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the meeting of this Committee in September 2016 the Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16 was presented. Following discussion by Members it was agreed that a standard Agenda item be added to future meetings of this Committee to provide a regular update on progress being made by officers to address key governance issues faced by the Council and to allow Members to escalate areas of concern to the Cabinet where required.
- 3.2 The body responsible for overseeing work in this area is the Council's Corporate Governance Group. This group agreed the formulation of a detailed plan of action that included the designation of responsible officers and timescales for action to address outstanding governance issues. This action plan is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The governance issues identified in the action plan comprise:
 - The one significant issue identified in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2015/16,
 - Follow up of the Ofsted improvement Plan,
 - Other Governance Issues including those reported in the AGS and any additional emerging issues.

PROGRESS

- 3.4 Progress is currently being made to address all issues identified in the action plan with clear targets, timescales and responsible officers having been identified and tasks allocated and work underway. Regular updates on actions being taken to address identified issues are scheduled to be reported to the Corporate Governance Group on bi-monthly basis by responsible officers and

an escalation process has been implemented for reporting issues arising including failure to achieve targets to the Strategic Leadership Team for appropriate action.

- 3.5 All actions identified are currently BRAG rated as 'Amber' or 'Green' indicating that work is in progress to achieve 'systems' and 'outcome' targets within agreed timescales.

4.0 FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There are none arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are none arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There is none arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Appropriate actions are not taken by officers and Members in response to the identification of risks to the achievement of the Council's objectives.
- 7.2 Potential failure of the Audit and Risk Management Committee to comply with best professional practice and thereby not function in an efficient and effective manner.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Members of this Committee are consulted throughout the process of preparing the AGS.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

Governance Issues Action Plan 2015/16

REFERENCE MATERIAL

CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Audit and Risk Management Committee	March/June/Sept/Nov 2016 and Jan 2017