



Audit and Risk Management Committee
Monday, 12 March 2018

REPORT TITLE:	AGS SIGNIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUES UPDATE
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND INVESTMENTS

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 2016/17.

RECOMMENDATION

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

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17 was presented to this Committee in June 2017. A standard agenda item is included for all meetings of this Committee 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 June 2017 the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17 was presented. Following discussion by Members it was agreed that the standard Agenda item continues to be included for all future meetings of this Committee to provide a regular update on progress being made 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 meets regularly throughout the year and has formulated a detailed plan of action that includes 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 significant issues identified in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2016/17.

PROGRESS

- 3.4 Progress is being made to address all issues identified in the action plan. Targets, timescales and responsible officers having been identified and tasks allocated and work underway. Regular updates on actions to address identified issues are reported to the Corporate Governance Group on a 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 Of the seven actions identified in the plan four are currently RAGB rated as 'Amber' indicating that work is in progress to achieve 'systems' and 'outcome'

targets within agreed timescales. Two actions are rated as 'Green' indicating that significant actions have been taken by senior management to address issues identified and one action relating to Essential Training Compliance is currently rated as 'Red' to reflect the current position regarding progress. The Corporate Governance Group and the Strategic Leadership Team are currently monitoring and facilitating actions by senior management to address the outstanding issue.

- 3.6 At the previous meeting of this Committee Members requested that additional information be provided within the attached action plan in respect of the OFSTED item and that the Director for Children be invited to attend this Committee to provide assurances regarding progress currently being made to address this issue. Both of these actions have been implemented.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 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 are 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

Significant Governance Issues Action Plan

REFERENCE MATERIAL

CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Audit and Risk Management Committee	All ARMC Meetings