

DECISION-MAKER:	GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE			
SUBJECT:	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2013-14			
DATE OF DECISION:	15 SEPTEMBER 2014			
REPORT OF:	CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER			
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>				
AUTHOR:	Name:	Peter Rogers	Tel:	023 8083 2835
	E-mail:	Peter.rogers@southampton.gov.uk		
Director	Name:	Andy Lowe	Tel:	023 8083 2049
	E-mail:	andrew@southampton.gov.uk		
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY				
N/A				

BRIEF SUMMARY

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations the Council is required to develop and publish an Annual Governance Statement ('AGS'). The AGS is a key corporate document that is intended to provide an accurate representation of the corporate governance arrangements in place during the year and to highlight any gaps or weaknesses in the current arrangements.

An important part of the process is for the Governance Committee to review and approve the draft AGS prior to the document being presented to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council for signing.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Governance Committee is asked to:

- (i) Review the draft AGS 2013-14 (Appendix 1) and to be satisfied that the statement is meaningful and that the system of internal control has operated effectively throughout the reporting period; and
- (ii) To note the status of the 2012-13 Action Plan (Appendix 2).

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Governance Committee has responsibility to provide independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control and reporting environment, including (but not limited to) the reliability of the financial reporting process and the annual governance statement.
2. This responsibility extends to receiving, reviewing and approving the draft AGS prior to the document being signed by both the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3. No alternative options have been considered.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

4. Regulation 4(3) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 requires that the relevant body must conduct a review at least once a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and to prepare a statement on internal control in accordance with proper practices.
5. The purpose of the AGS, which is published with the statement of accounts, is to provide an accurate representation of the corporate governance arrangements in place during the year and to identify or highlight those areas where there are significant gaps or where improvements are required.
6. The AGS is produced following a review of the council's governance arrangements. The review requires the systems and processes that comprise the Council's corporate governance arrangements to be brought together and reviewed.
7. The Committee will recall that, at the meeting on 14th July, Members were invited to comment on an early draft of the AGS. This new element of the process reflects a recommendation by CIPFA that "the AGS is first reviewed by members of the audit [governance] committee at an earlier stage to allow comments and contributions to be made. The AGS must be current at the time it is published, so the audit [governance] committee should review it again in September".
8. The draft AGS has been further reviewed since the July meeting primarily to reflect that both the City Strategy 2014-2025 and Council Strategy 2014-17 have now been approved and adopted.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

9. None

Property/Other

10. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

11. The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 require the Council to adopt Good Governance arrangements in respect of the discharge of its functions. The above arrangements are intended to meet those responsibilities.

Other Legal Implications:

12. None

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

13. None

KEY DECISION? No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	Not applicable
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Draft AGS 2013-14
2.	AGS 2012-13 Action Plan - Status Report

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None	
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