

DECISION-MAKER:	Governance Committee
SUBJECT:	Annual Governance Statement 2019-20
DATE OF DECISION:	16 November 2020
REPORT OF:	Chief Financial Officer

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director of Finance & Commercialism	
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Accounts and Audit Regulations require that the Council develop and publish an Annual Governance Statement ('AGS'). The AGS reports on the extent to which the Council has complied with its Code of Corporate Governance, including how it has monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the year and on any planned changes in the coming period.

In accordance with CIPFA Guidance, Audit [Governance] Committees should review and approve the final draft of the AGS prior to the document being presented to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council for signing.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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| (i) | Review and approve the draft 2019-20 Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 (Appendix 1) |
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REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 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 presented to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council for signing. |

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

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| 3. | No alternative options have been considered. The development and publication of an AGS is a requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations. |
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DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

4.	At the meeting on 27th July 2020, the Governance Committee were invited to comment on an early draft of the AGS. This is in accordance with CIPFA guidance which recommends that “the AGS is first reviewed by members of the Audit [Governance] Committee at an early stage to allow comments and contributions to be made. The AGS, which forms part of the Statement of Accounts, must be current at the time that it is published”.
5.	The most significant change to the revised draft 2019-20 AGS (Appendix 1) is the inclusion of an updated section regarding ‘The impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic on Governance’. The Committee will recall that the draft AGS presented to the Governance Committee at the July meeting included a holding statement regarding this issue. The updated section reflects CIPFA guidance in that the AGS is amended before the point of final publication to reflect the impact on Governance from March 2020.
6.	The other updates and amendment, as highlighted, provide additional supporting information, clarification or update.
7.	Subject to any further comments, the final draft of the AGS will be presented to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council for signing
8.	As per the process adopted in previous years, and in accordance with good practice, the Governance Committee will be provided with a mid-term update report in respect of the status of the ‘Planned Actions’.

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 2015 require that the Council must each financial year conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare an AGS for approval by a committee or members of the authority. The AGS must be approved in advance of the relevant authority approving the Statement of Accounts.

Other Legal Implications:

12. None

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

13. Failure to develop and publish an Annual Governance Statement would mean that the Council did not comply with a statutory requirement.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

14. None

KEY DECISION?	No
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WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	none
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Draft Annual Governance Statement 2019-20
Documents In Members' Rooms	
1.	n/a
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	No
Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
Other Background Documents	
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)
1.	n/a