

Central Bedfordshire Council

AUDIT COMMITTEE

27 JUNE 2016

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2015/16

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Purpose of this report

1. The report seeks the Committee's approval to the draft Annual Governance Statement.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to:

1. Approve the draft Annual Governance Statement attached as Appendix A.

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. The Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing the production of the Annual Governance Statement and therefore this matter has not been considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

Background

3. The Audit Committee's terms of reference include responsibility for overseeing the production of the Council's Annual Governance Statement.
4. The Annual Governance Statement adopts an established format that has been used by the Council over the preceding 4 years in line with recommendations. It is understood that new recommendations as to format will apply next year.
5. The Annual Governance Statement is intended to demonstrate how the Council has achieved the principles contained in the Code of Corporate Governance in the current financial year.

6. The draft Annual Governance Statement has been considered by the Corporate Management Team and identifies significant governance issues that the Council has had to manage during 2015/16. These are referred to in section 5 of the Statement.
7. The Audit Committee is asked to consider whether the draft Annual Governance Statement accurately reflects the governance arrangements and the management of risk.

Council Priorities

8. A sound system of corporate governance provides the framework and assurance within which the Council can deliver its priorities with confidence. The opening paragraph of the Code of Corporate Governance describes corporate governance as the means by which the Council ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. The Annual Governance Statement shows how the Council has complied with the Code in the relevant financial year, how the Council has monitored the effectiveness of its governance arrangements during the year and on any planned changes. Sound governance arrangements contribute to the achievement of all the Council's priorities.

Corporate Implications

Risk Management

9. The Annual Governance Statement identifies a number of significant governance issues and, where appropriate, these have been identified in the Council's Corporate Risk Register, together with mitigating action to reduce the level of the risk.

Staffing (including Trades Unions)

10. There are none.

Legal Implications

11. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the Council to conduct an annual review of its systems of internal control. The preparation of an Annual Governance Statement forms part of that process.

Financial Implications

12. The Annual Governance Statement will be reported alongside the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2015/16, but this report has no financial implications.

Equalities Implications

13. None arising directly from this report.

Conclusion and next Steps

14. If approved by the Audit Committee, the Statement will be submitted to the Leader and Chief Executive for formal sign off.

Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Annual Governance Statement

Background Papers

None