

Central Bedfordshire Council

AUDIT COMMITTEE

29 JUNE 2017

Annual Governance Statement 2016/17

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Purpose of this report

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

- i. 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 a new format in line with new guidance issued by CIPFA/Solace in 2016, "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework".
5. The Annual Governance Statement, should be read in conjunction with the Local Code of Corporate Governance (attached at Appendix B). The updated Local Code of Corporate Governance, effective for the 2016/17 financial year, was approved by the Audit Committee on 3 April 2017. It details the 7 core Principles upon which the Council's governance framework is based and describes corporate governance as comprising the arrangements (including political, economic, social,

environmental, administrative, legal and other arrangements) put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.

6. The Annual Governance Statement and the Code of Corporate Governance together show how the Council has complied with the Code in the 2016/17 financial year, how the Council has monitored the effectiveness of its governance arrangements during the year, any planned changes and also identifies any areas of significant risk or governance issues in the financial year.
7. The draft Annual Governance Statement has been considered by the Corporate Management Team. The significant governance issues that the Council has had to manage during 2016/17 are referred to in section 5 of the Statement.
8. 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

9. A sound system of corporate governance provides the framework and assurance within which the Council can deliver its priorities with confidence. Sound governance arrangements contribute to the achievement of all the Council's priorities.

Corporate Implications

Risk Management

10. 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)

11. There are none.

Legal Implications

12. 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

13. The Annual Governance Statement will be reported alongside the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2016/17, but this report has no financial implications.

Equalities Implications

14. None arising directly from this report.

Conclusion and next Steps

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

Appendices

The following Appendices are attached:

Appendix A – Draft Annual Governance Statement

Appendix B – Code of Corporate Governance

Background Papers:

None