

Central Bedfordshire Council

AUDIT COMMITTEE

30 May 2018

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2017/18

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Purpose of this report

1. The report seeks Committee's approval to the Council's draft Annual Governance Statement for 2017/18.

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 ('AGS').
4. The AGS is intended to demonstrate how the Council has achieved the principles contained in the Code of Corporate Governance in the current financial year and should be read in conjunction with the updated Code of Corporate Governance which is attached at Appendix B.
5. The draft AGS has been considered by the Corporate Management Team and identifies some key areas where the Council intends to take steps over the coming year to further enhance our governance arrangements - these are listed at the beginning of the AGS. Section 5 details previous significant governance issues which remain ongoing.

Developments from previous Annual Governance Statement

6. The Committee was informed last year when the previous Annual Governance Statement ('AGS') was approved that the AGS would be going through some progressive change year on year to reflect the CIPFA good practice. The changes are intended to make the document easier to read for the Public. Some of the technical content has been removed and it has been written in plain English as far as possible. Also some useful links to other key documents have been included.

Council Priorities

7. 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

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

Staffing (including Trades Unions)

9. There are none.

Legal Implications

10. 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

11. The Annual Governance Statement will be reported alongside the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2017/18, but this report has no financial implications.

Equalities Implications

12. None arising directly from this report.

Conclusion and next Steps

13. If approved by the Audit Committee, the AGS 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