

# ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019-2020

Governance and Audit Committee **22 July 2020**

Report Author **Director of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer**

Portfolio Holder **Councillor Helen Whitehead - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing & Community Services**

Status **For Decision**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All**

## **Executive Summary:**

To provide the Governance and Audit Committee with the draft Annual Governance Statement 2019/20.

## **Recommendation(s):**

Committee agree the draft Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 which will be shared with our external auditors for amendment (if necessary) prior to publication.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Financial and Value for Money</b>	There are no specific cost implications arising from this report which have not already been budgeted for.
<b>Legal</b>	Regulation 6(1)(a) of the Accounts and Audit regulations 2015 require the council to conduct a review at least once a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and include a statement reporting on the review with any published statement of accounts. Regulation 6(1)(b) of the Regulations require that the statement is the Annual Governance Statement.
<b>Corporate</b>	The Annual Governance Statement is a corporate document and as such should be owned by all senior officers and members of the authority. Failure to accept the AGS will diminish the council's governance arrangements.
<b>Equality Act 2010 &amp; Public Sector Equality Duty</b>	Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

	<p>Protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy &amp; maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage &amp; civil partnership.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> </table> <p>Engaging local communities including hard to reach groups meets a core principle of the CIPFA/ SOLACE guidance for good governance. The AGS supports the public sector equality duty directly.</p>	Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.		Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,	✓	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it	✓	Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	✓
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<b>CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant) ✓</b>	
A clean and welcoming Environment	
Promoting inward investment and job creation	
Supporting neighbourhoods	

<b>CORPORATE VALUES (tick those relevant) ✓</b>	
Delivering value for money	✓
Supporting the Workforce	✓
Promoting open communications	✓

## 1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The annual governance statement (AGS) is a statutory document which explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the council to carry out its functions effectively.
- 1.2 The statement is produced following a review of the council's governance arrangements and includes an action plan to address any significant governance issues identified.
- 1.3 Governance and Audit Committee will consider this draft AGS and assurance gathering process. The AGS will then be audited and the Monitoring Officer will make any necessary changes before final publication on the 31 August 2020.

## 2.0 The Draft Annual Governance Statement

- 2.1 The draft AGS, which is attached at Annex 1, should reflect the corporate governance environment of the council as detailed in the adopted Local Code of Corporate Governance. In essence, the AGS is the formal statement that recognises, records and publishes the council's governance arrangements.
- 2.2 The AGS is a key corporate document, and the Leader and Chief Executive have joint responsibility as signatories for its accuracy and completeness. In order to ensure that the AGS accurately reflects our Governance Framework, a number of sources of assurance are gathered to feed into the preparation of the document. It

has been consulted upon with the Leader, Chief Executive / Section 151 Officer and all members of Corporate Management Team.

- 2.3 An action plan will be developed to address the governance issues identified. This will be monitored through the council's monitoring system and an update report will be provided to Governance and Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.

Contact Officer:	Tim Howes, Director of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer
Reporting to:	Madeline Homer, Chief Executive

### Annex List

Annex 1	Draft Annual Governance Statement 2019/20
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### Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
CIPFA/SOLACE Good Governance Framework for Local Government 2016	Copy available from Director of Corporate Governance
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/234/pdfs/uksi_20150234_en.pdf">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/234/pdfs/uksi_20150234_en.pdf</a>

### Corporate Consultation

Finance	Matthew Sanham Financial Services
Legal	Tim Howes Director of Corporate Governance