

Joint report of the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer and the Executive Director

Corporate Governance Arrangements

1. Purpose of Report

To inform the Committee of action taken to develop and comply with statutory obligations regarding corporate governance, and to seek approval for the Annual Governance Statement for its inclusion in the Council's published Statement of Accounts for 2024/25.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

1. **RESOLVE** that the draft Annual Governance Statement be approved in principle for inclusion in the Council's Statement of Accounts.
2. **RESOLVE** that responsibility be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, to make any further amendments deemed necessary.
3. **NOTE** compliance with the Code on Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.

3. Detail

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require authorities to conduct a review, at least once in each financial year, of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and to include an Annual Governance Statement report on the review with its statement of accounts. To support this process, the Council follows proper practice as set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE publication *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework*. This Framework was initially produced in 2007 with a revised version published in April 2016.

The Statement includes an explanation of the Council's governance arrangements and an update on the implementation of previously identified improvement actions. It concludes with the draft Annual Governance Statement and the Significant Governance Issues Action Plan for 2025/26. Once approved, it will be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive prior to inclusion with the published accounts.

The Chief Audit and Control Officer has confirmed that he considers that the current internal control environment is satisfactory such as to maintain the adequacy of the governance framework.

4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

The production of the Annual Governance Statement is a key component of the Council's governance framework and part of the statutory requirements under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The approved Annual Governance Statement will be included in the latest Statement of Accounts.

5. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows.

6. Human Resources Implications

There were no comments from the Human Resources Manager.

7. Union Comments

There were no Union comments.

8. Climate Change Implications

The climate change implications are contained within the report.

9. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment

As this is not a change to policy or a new policy an equality impact assessment is not included.

11. Background Papers

Nil.