

## **Audit, Governance and Standards Committee**

**4th May 2021**

### **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2020/21 - UPDATED POSITION STATEMENT**

Report by the Head of the Shared Audit Partnership and General Counsel

#### **Purpose**

To update the Committee on progress against the Action Plan agreed in November 2020 to address the areas of improvement identified in the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement.

#### **Recommendations**

**To RESOLVE** that progress against the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan (2020/21) set out in Annex 1 to this report is noted.

#### **KEY POINTS**

- A. Local authorities are required to prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS), in accordance with Solace/CIPFA guidance published in July 2007, updated in 2012 and more recently in 2016. This is necessary to meet the statutory requirement set out in regulation 6(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
- B. The Audit, Governance and Standards Committee (A,G&S) considered and approved the 2019/20 AGS at its meeting on the 19th November 2020.
- C. The programme of work was drawn up and approved by the Committee to address areas of relative improvement in specific service areas and corporately that were identified in the AGS and this is recorded in the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan (2020/21).
- D. Progress against the Action Plan is monitored by the Corporate Performance and Risk Board (CP&R), SLT and this Committee on a regular basis and an update version is attached.
- E. Ordinarily, the AGS and Action Plan for the forthcoming year would be approved at the July Audit, Governance and Standards Committee alongside the accounts. As the accounts were delayed last year, the reporting of the Action plan also slipped to the November Committee meeting. The process for establishing, reviewing and reporting the AGS Action Plan is shown in Diagram 1 below:

Diagram 1: Process for establishing, reviewing and reporting the AGS Action Plan



**Action Plan and Assurance Activity**

1. The action plan developed to support the AGS is attached at Annex 1 to this report. It has been updated to reflect the progress in delivering the action as of March 2021.
2. Reasonable progress has been made in taking forward the various actions with the majority of actions nearing completion.
3. Table 1 below provides a summary of the AGS action plan items that have either been fully completed, the risk had been accepted or sufficient action had been taken and the area reassessed as no longer being a significant governance issue for the Council:

**Table 1: AGS Actions Completed**

AGS Action	Status
GDPR	Risk accepted/majority of actions complete
Management and Control of IT assets	Complete

4. Progress on the outstanding actions included in the Action Plan at **Annex 1** will continue to be reviewed and a final position statement will be provided within the 2020/21 AGS report in July 2021.

### **Environmental Implications**

There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report.

### **Timescale**

Implementation of the actions set out in the Action Plan will be monitored on an on-going basis with a progress report to the July Committee.

### **Resource Implications**

There are no particular resource implications arising from the implementation of the Action Plan.

### **Legal Implications**

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is produced on an annual basis to meet the statutory requirement set out in regulation 6(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

### **Background papers**

AGS report to the 19th November 2020 meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee.

AGS report to the 27th January 2021 meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee