Taunton Deane Borough Council

Corporate Governance Committee – 28th September 2015

Update on Annual Governance Statement Action Plan

Report of the Performance Lead
(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Richard Parrish)
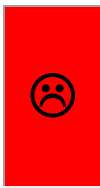
1.   Executive Summary

> This report provides an update of progress against the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan at September 2015.

2.   Background

2.1   The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is a statutory document which provides assurance on the governance arrangements in place within the Council. The statement is produced following a review of the council's governance arrangements by the Corporate Governance Officer Group.

2.2   The AGS includes an action plan to address any new governance issues identified by the Corporate Governance Officers Group; relying on reports from internal and external audit as well as their own understanding of the organisation. It also contains any AGS actions from the previous year which remain outstanding.

3.   The Action Plan

3.1   The action plan is set out in Appendix A. It consists of two parts. The first part contains new actions identified within the most recent Annual Governance Statement. The second part contains actions that were carried over from 2014/15.

3.2   The action plan uses the following key in order to report progress:

☺	Progress on track or action completed. No significant issues.	☺	Some issues or concern at progress but being actively worked on.	☹	Action significantly overdue and / or progress not being made.

3.3   High level overview of the status of the AGS Actions

GREEN ☺	AMBER 😐	RED ☹	TOTAL
4	6	0	10

4.   Finance Comments

4.1   None

5.   Legal Comments

5.1   None

6.   Links to Corporate Aims

6.1   No direct links.

7.   Environmental and Community Safety Implications

7.1   There are no direct implications.

8.   Equalities Impact

8.1   Equalities impact has been considered in relation to this report. It has been concluded that since this is an update report only an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

9.   Risk Management

9.1   There is the general risk that if the Council has inadequate internal governance and controls it could be exposed to many high level strategic and operational risks.

10.   Partnership Implications

10.1   None.

11.   Recommendations

11.1   The Committee is recommended to:

- note current progress in relation to completing the actions identified within the Annual Governance Statement.

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Issue	Action	Who	Progress	When	Status
Corporate Plan **1.** The Council's current Corporate Plan expires April 2016.	Refresh the Council's Corporate Priorities and Corporate Plan, re-focusing on the purpose of the Council and on outcomes for the community. Take through the democratic process and publicise through traditional and social media.	Richard Sealy	**Sept 2015:** Current there are two JMASS Phase 2 projects taking place, one is the Affordability Review, being led by Shirlene Adam, this is designed to examine our MTFP (with help from the LGA) and to get clarity regarding the size of our financial challenge. The second work stream is the Corporate Priorities Project. Five Member Workshops took place in August where Ward and Borough issues were raised and discussed. A "mop up" session took place on the 7 September where the information gathered from all the workshops has been amalgamated and common themes and priorities were relayed to the members. Members will then be asked to "sign off" the material enabling the project to progress to the next stage. The overall deadline is to have a Corporate Strategy in place by November 2015, which will steer the delivery of JMASS Phase 2 (Transformation)	Priorities – Oct 15 Plan – Feb 16	**Green**
Transparency **2.** There are currently delays in some committee meeting minutes being published on the Council's website which could impact upon the public's ability to effectively scrutinise decisions and hold the Council to account.	Publish minutes within 7 working days of the meeting – introduce an internal performance measure to track progress against this target.	Bruce Lang	**Sept 2015:** On the ACE Service Scorecard a measure to monitor the publishing of minutes has been agreed allowing the service manager to start monitoring and track progress against this target which will assist in eliminating any delays.	By end July 15	**Amber**
Transparency **3.** Requirement to meet increased transparency requirements.	Add further open data to the Council's website to meet the requirements of the Transparency Code 2015. To meet the Government's desire to place more power into citizens' hands to increase democratic accountability and make it easier for local people to contribute to the local decision, making process and help shape public services	Richard Sealy	**Sept 2015:** A significant piece of work has been undertaken to make sure the TDBC website meets the requirements of the Transparency Code 2015. This was subject to a "follow" up internal audit in July 2015 where a revised target date of 30 September 2015 was given for the website to be compliant. The only element of the code which is missing from the website is the Social Housing Data, which had a deadline of 1 September 2015. The Property Team are currently working on this data and hope to provide it to be uploaded on the website by the end of September.	By 1 September 2015	**Amber**
Developing ONE TEAM working. **4.** Ensuring staff have the knowledge and skills of key controls and governance process.	Develop a new staff Intranet, so there is a single repository of up to date policy and procedures which staff can easily access irrespective of their location.	Richard Sealy	**Sept 2015:** A new staff intranet site has been created and a soft roll out implemented. A development plan is currently in progress for overall role out and staff training. A job vancany for a ICT Project and Support Officer to deliver key ICT projects including the new OneTeam Intranet was advertised in late August 2015.	Ongoing	**Amber**
	Develop a robust staff induction process for all staff in the One Team ways of working and behaviour.		In progress - not yet due.	Dec-15	**Green**
	Deploy eLearning solution in order to deliver refresher training in DPA, FOI, Health and safety etc and have a real-time record of who has undertaken the training.		**Sept 2015:** Work is currently being under taken to get this up and running. All data has been gathered for modules and these are currently being reviewed and will be signed off by the relevant officers. The e-learning system has been demonstrated to managers on the 10 September and roll-out to all staff is anticipated in October.	Early Sept 15	**Amber**
Assurance **5.** Ensuring the 'basics' are in place within each team.	Initiate a process of assurance that the basics are in place across the One Team– for example regular team meetings, risk registers, appraisals etc	Richard Sealy	**Sept 2015:** We are currently working with All Assistant Directors to identify the current position of theirservice "basics". These "basics" include each Service Area holding updated Quarterly Performance "One Team" Service Scorecards, which would include a measure tracking regular team meetings and Service Level "One Team" Risk Registers and Project Risk Registers (as well as our current Corporate Risk Register) Over the coming weeks we are holding meetings with several AD's to assist in the updating and creation of new Service Scorecards and Service Risk Registers which will monitor the Services across the One Team. HR have also been working with AD's to assess the current position of Staff Appraisals/PREDS, currently 50% of staff have had their PREDS/Appraisals and HR have a plan scheduled to ensure that all are completed.	Oct-15	**Amber**

Action Plan 2014/15

The following actions were carried forward from the 2014-15 AGS action plan.

Issue	Action	Who	Progress	When	Status
Fraud **1.** Improve awareness of the approved Corporate Counter Fraud & Corruption Policy & Strategy	The council has approved an updated Corporate Counter-Fraud strategy in 2013, and has been successful in obtaining government grant to support the establishment of a new Southwest Counter-Fraud Partnership. The Partnership is planned to 'launch' in July 2015, and a key priority for 2015/16 will be for the Partnership to support the council through providing training and awareness raising of fraud risks and control systems.	Paul Fitzgerald	**Sept 2015:** The South West Counter Fraud Partnership (SWCFP) started on 1 August 2015. By 31 January 2016, SWCFP will deliver fraud awareness training to employees and Members to assist in the drive to prevent, detect and reduce fraud. This training will include information to improve awareness of TDBC's Corporate Anti-Fraud Policy. In addition, the HR Manager will be working with SWCFP to develop an e-learning option for Fraud Awareness.	01/07/2015 (partnership to be launched)	**Green**
Information Governance **2.** Introduce a confidentiality code of practice	In light of the significant organisational changes which took place in 2014/15 this action was not progressed. The aim is to progress this during 2015/16. Whilst the Council does not have a specific Confidentiality Code of Practice it has a requirement in place for all new staff when signing their contract to of employment to comply with the Council's Employee Code of Conduct Policy and sign an IT security agreement before they are allowed access to TDBC's applications.	Richard Sealy	**Sept 2015:** A Code of Practice will be drafted during 2015/16 - most likely October 2015.	2015/16	**Amber**
3. Equality and Diversity – compliance with requirements and duties. Monitor compliance and adherence to the TDBC Equalities Framework. Increase awareness of the TDBC framework and expectations (staff training and awareness).	Much of this obligation is met through ensuring that our staff and members are properly trained on equalities and Angela Summers will be liaising with HR to ensure that appropriate training is in place on general equalities (all staff and members) and more detailed training for those who are required to complete Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). There is an emphasis on all Assistant Directors (and our programme managers) to ensure that as we go about introducing transformation, new projects, savings plans, service changes etc that we properly consider the equalities impacts and make sure that we highlight those impacts so that members are clearly sighted on these when making their decisions and where possible we put in mitigating measures to reduce the impacts on groups with protected characteristics. Angela and her team will undertake a twice yearly audit of reports to Executive and Cabinet to quality check EIAs.	All AD's	**Sept 2015:** Ongoing – Action plan created which will be monitored and reported on a 6-monthly basis & included in the JMT performance management sessions	Ongoing	**Green**