

*Report Number: WSC 15/19*

# **West Somerset Council**

## **Audit Committee – 19 March 2019**

### **Draft Annual Governance Statement 2018/19**

**Responsibility: Leader of the Council, Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew**

**Report Author: Richard Doyle, Corporate Strategy & Performance Officer**

#### **1 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 Local authorities are required to prepare an Annual Government Statement (AGS) to be transparent about their compliance with good governance principles. This includes reporting on how they have monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of their governance arrangements in the previous year, and setting out any planned changes in the coming period.
- 1.2 This report includes a review of the actions set for 2018/19 and a proposed set of actions for the 2019/20 year.

#### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members of the Audit Committee are asked to review the draft Annual Governance Statement attached to this report and to recommend its adoption by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

#### **3 Risk Assessment**

- 3.1 No significant risks have been identified in respect of this report.

#### **4 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS)**

The Annual Governance Statement is usually approved around the same time as the annual statement of accounts. However the legislation supporting the creation of the new council requires WSC to approve their AGS by 31 March 2019. The S151 Officer will advise the relevant committee of the new Council, with responsibility for approving the legacy Councils Statements of Accounts, of any significant matters between the approval of the AGS in March and the approval of the Statement of Accounts (anticipated in July 2019).

The Corporate Governance Officers Group has led the 2018/19 review of the governance framework. The group includes the Head of Performance and Governance, the Monitoring Officer, the Section 151 Officer, the Internal Audit Manager, and the Corporate Strategy & Performance Manager.

The conclusions from this review are that overall the Council's governance framework is reasonable and fit for purpose.

The draft Annual Governance Statement is appended to this report.

## **5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

None in respect of this report.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

None in respect of this report.

## **7 Legal Implications**

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require councils to undertake an annual review of their governance. The Regulations require that an Annual Governance Statement prepared to fulfil this requirement should form part of the Council's Statement of Accounts. The report is therefore coming to the Committee to meet this purpose and that timescale. The Regulations also state that the Annual Governance Statement should be prepared in accordance with proper practices. Compliance with the CIPFA guidance *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)* fulfils this requirement and I confirm that the Statement put forward with this report is compliant with that guidance/framework.

## **8 Environmental Impact Implications**

8.1.1 None in respect of this report.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

9.1 None in respect of this report.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

## **11 Social Value Implications**

11.1 There are no Social Value implications associated with this report.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

12.1 None associated with this report.

### **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

13.1 None associated with this report.

### **14 Asset Management Implications**

14.1 None associated with this report.

### **15 Consultation Implications**

15.1 The Annual Governance Statement has been developed by the Corporate Governance Officers Group which includes the Head of Performance and Governance, the Monitoring Officer, the S151 officer, the Internal Audit Manager and the Corporate Strategy and Performance Officer.

#### **Democratic Path:**

- **Audit Committee – Yes**
- **Scrutiny – No**
- **Cabinet – No**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency: Annually**

#### **List of Appendices**

Appendix A	Draft Annual Governance Statement 2018/19
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