

Report Number: SWT 77/19

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Audit, Governance and Standards Committee – 25th September 2019

Annual Governance Statement Action Plan Update

This matter is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts

Report Author: Amy Tregellas, Governance Manager

1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To present the Committee with an update of progress against the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan for 2019/20 (Appendix A).

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the progress against the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan for 2019/20.

3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

- 3.1 Failure to have robust governance arrangements in place could impact on the Council's control environment and ability to operate in an economic, efficient and effective manner. This could lead to recommendations being made by Internal and External Audit.

4 Background and Full details of the Report

- 4.1 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is a statutory document which provides assurance on the governance arrangements and control environment within the Council.
- 4.2 The Statement is prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)/Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) guidance and a review of the Council's governance arrangements.
- 4.3 The Annual Governance Statement includes an Action Plan to address any governance issues identified by the Corporate Governance Officers Group and reports from internal and external audit.

4.4 In order to ensure that the actions are being delivered it is important that the Committee review progress against the Action Plan, hence this report.

4.5 The Committee are asked to note this report.

5 Links to Corporate Strategy

5.1 Having a robust, effective and efficient governance framework in place is a fundamental element of being a 'well managed' council and avoiding recommendations from Internal and External Auditors.

6 Finance / Resource Implications

6.1 None arising from this report

7 Legal Implications (if any)

7.1 None arising from this report

8 Climate and Sustainability Implications (if any)

8.1 None arising from this report

9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)

9.1 None arising from this report

10 Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)

10.1 None arising from this report

11 Social Value Implications (if any)

11.1 None arising from this report

12 Partnership Implications (if any)

12.1 None arising from this report

13 Health and Wellbeing Implications (if any)

13.1 None arising from this report

14 Asset Management Implications (if any)

14.1 None arising from this report

15 Data Protection Implications (if any)

15.1 None arising from this report

16 **Consultation Implications** (if any)

16.1 None arising from this report

Democratic Path:

- **Audit, Governance and Standards Committee – Yes**
- **Cabinet/Executive – No**
- **Full Council – No**

Reporting Frequency: Every 6 months

List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Appendix A	Annual Governance Statement Action Plan Progress Report
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Contact Officers

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Action Plan 2019/20 – Progress Report

Actions that were planned for 2019/20	Progress	Status
<p>Establish an effective Audit Committee for the new council through Member and Senior Officer Development and to adopt the principles set out in the Local Code of Corporate Governance</p>	<p>The new Audit, Governance and Standards Committee has been established and is working as per the Constitution. A forward plan has been established to cover the Committees work programme. As well as this an Action Plan is a standing item on each agenda to ensure that any resolutions or recommendations made by the Committee are delivered in a timely manner.</p> <p>Members of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee have been given induction training including from the Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and Internal and External Auditors. Further training will be available to the Committee as and when an appropriate course is available</p> <p>The Local Code of Corporate Governance was approved by the Committee on 26th June 2019.</p>	<p>Completed the establishment of the Committee and ongoing in terms of developing the effectiveness of the Committee</p> <p>Induction training completed and ongoing training for Councillors</p> <p>Completed</p>
<p>Develop and implement a risk management framework and meaningful culture within the new Council structure</p>	<p>The Head of Performance and Governance has reviewed and updated the Council's Risk Register. This is now being reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis as part of the Performance and Risk reports. Any new or emerging risks are identified as part of this process.</p> <p>The Governance Manager is drafting a Risk Management Strategy and this will go to the Senior Leadership Team before coming to the Committee in December 2019.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Actions that were planned for 2019/20	Progress	Status
	Training sessions for Officers and Councillors will be rolled out in January to March 2020.	To be commenced January 2020
To ensure the appropriate controls are in place with regards to the Council's new ways of working	<p>The work programme for delivering the new Council has been delivered and this included the production of key documents including a new Constitution, Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules.</p> <p>Internal Audit are doing an audit on the New Council's Governance Arrangements and the report is due in the near future.</p> <p>Further work is ongoing to review other non-key documents and Policies. A timetable has been produced and progress against this will be considered as part of the Annual Governance Statement review for 2019/20</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>