

Appendix 1

Extract from Minutes - Annual Governance Statement 2011-2012

Audit Committee – 20 June 2012

Annual Governance Statement 2011-2012 Draft

Ian Gibbons, Monitoring Officer, presented the draft Annual Government Statement for 2011-2012, a required part of the annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements, which would proceed to Cabinet, then Standards Committee, before returning to the Audit Committee for final approval.

The Monitoring Officer took the Committee through the report, highlighting key issues including the following:

- IT Control Environment;
- Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services
- Implementation of the Transformation Programme
- Managing reductions in Government funding and legislative changes.

A debate followed, during which the points including the following were raised:

- The extent of detail on the Health and Well Being Board and Police and Crime Panel;
- The inclusion of the positive statements from the recent Ofsted Inspection Report as well as the negative;
- More detailed information should be provided in the report regarding the implementation of the Transformation programme.
- There should be a concentration on IT for the Audit Committee in future.
- The Governance Assurance Group met monthly to consider governance issues and would report further details in September.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was,

Resolved:

To note that the draft Annual Governance Statement will be revised in light of the comments of the Committee and ongoing review work by the Governance Assurance Group, before being considered by Cabinet, then the new

Standards Committee, before final approval from the Audit Committee and publication by 30 September 2012.

Cabinet – 24 July 2012

Annual Governance Statement 2011-2012

Councillor John Brady, Cabinet member for Finance, Performance and Risk presented a report which sought Cabinet's comments on the draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2011/12. The AGS would also be considered by the Standards Committee on 30 July. The views of Cabinet and the Standards Committee would be considered by the Audit Committee as part of its final approval of the AGS on 7 September 2012.

Cllr Brady explained that the AGS demonstrated how the Council was meeting the six principles of good governance adopted in its Code of Corporate Governance.

Cllr Brady referred to the views of the Audit Committee when it initially considered the AGS at its meeting on 20 June 2012 as recorded in the minute of the meeting as presented. Cllr Brady explained that he was satisfied that the AGS had been amended in light of the comments of the Audit Committee.

Resolved:

- (a) That the draft Annual Governance Statement be supported.**
- (b) To note that the draft Annual Governance Statement would be revised in the light of any comments by Cabinet, the new Standards Committee, and ongoing work by the Governance Assurance Group before final consideration by the Audit Committee on 7 September 2012 and publication by 30 September 2012.**

Reasons for Decision

To prepare the Annual Governance Statement 2011/12 for publication in accordance with the requirements of the Audit and Accounts Regulations.

Standards Committee - 30 July 2012

Annual Governance Statement 2011-12

The Monitoring Officer presented the draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the period 2011/12 for the Committee's consideration and comment. The Monitoring Officer drew specific attention to the parts of the AGS which related to the work of the Standards Committee.

It was noted that the Council was required, as part of its annual review of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, to produce an AGS. This would be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Corporate Directors after final approval by the Audit Committee on 7 September 2012 and would form part of the Council's Statement of Accounts. The Audit Committee's comments on the initial draft AGS it had considered on 20 June had been incorporated into the draft now presented. The draft AGS had also been supported by Cabinet when it considered it on 24 July 2012.

During discussion, the following comments and suggested changes to the AGS were made:

- Paragraphs 20 and 62 – to update the sections to refer to the implementation of the new standards framework.
- That the Protocol on Councillor/Officer Relations be reviewed to ensure consistency with the recently adopted Code of Conduct.
- Include reference to the Committee's responsibility for the overview of corporate complaints handling and Ombudsman investigations.
- Paragraph 99 – under the heading of 'safeguarding and looked after children services' to correctly identify the scrutiny task group as the 'Safeguarding Children and Young People's Task Group'. Reference to the Improvement Board having met twice should be updated to have 'met a number of times'

Resolved:

- (a) That the draft Annual Governance Statement be amended as detailed above.**
- (b) To note that the draft Annual Governance Statement would be revised in the light of any comments by Cabinet, this Committee and ongoing work by the Governance Assurance Group before final consideration by the Audit Committee on 7 September 2012 and publication by 30 September 2012.**

