

**CABINET**  
**REPORT OF THE**  
**ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CHIEF DIGITAL OFFICER**

**K. JONES**

**23<sup>rd</sup> MAY 2018**

**SECTION C: MATTER FOR DECISION**

**WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

**TITLE OF REPORT:**

**ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2017/2018**

**Purpose of Report**

To present to Cabinet the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2017/2018 for approval.

**Executive Summary**

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2017/2018 (attached at Appendix 1) has been prepared by the Corporate Governance Group and complies with the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework: (CIPFA/SOLACE, 2016).

The AGS demonstrates the system of internal controls which have been in place within the Council for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 and provides examples of how the Council demonstrates compliance with good practice and meets the core and sub principles of effective governance. The AGS also provides details on the assurances taken during the year on the effectiveness of our governance arrangements.

## **Background**

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Annual Governance Statement forms part of the Statement of Accounts and reports on the extent of the Council's compliance with its principles and practices of good governance, including how the Council has monitored the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

The Statement is prepared by the Corporate Governance Group which is made up of Heads of Service who are directly responsible for governance aspects.

The Statement contains an update on the progress made during 2017/2018 against the improvement areas that were identified during the development of the 2016/2017 Statement and those improvement areas that are proposed for improvement during 2018/2019 following the development of 2017/2018 Statement.

## **Progress on improvement work undertaken during 2017/2018**

Overall, good progress has been made on most of the 12 improvement actions contained within the 2017/18 Improvement Action Plan. Progress includes:

1. Revising and updating the Council's existing Corporate Risk Management Policy and the Council's corporate risk management arrangements.
2. Ensuring the Council has discharged its statutory duties contained within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in terms of both corporate planning and partnership planning.
3. Ongoing implementation of the Welsh Language Standards.
4. Producing a draft Corporate Workforce Plan which is currently being reviewed to ensure alignment with the Council's recently published Corporate Plan 2018-2022.

5. Completing a review of the recently revised corporate performance appraisal process.
6. Rolling out of a programme of Data Protection training across the Council.
7. The Council's Information Strategy, Security and Governance issues were presented to Members via an All Member Seminar.

### **Improvement work proposed to be undertaken during 2018/2019**

1. Equalities – roll-out of training, implementation, review and evaluation of the revised Impact Assessment Tool
2. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – monitoring of arrangements
3. Information Management – update the Information Strategy and bring forward for approval
4. Code of Corporate Governance – review of assurances in place to fully comply with Core Principle A on Behaviours and Values.

Cabinet will receive a six month update on the progress made against the above proposed improvement work in the autumn.

### **Financial Appraisal**

The improvement work undertaken during 2017/2018 was delivered against a challenging financial backdrop.

No additional financial resources have been made available by the Welsh Government to implement the Welsh Language Standards.

Meeting the duties set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has created additional unfunded duties on the Council which have been met from the Council's base budgets.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

## **Workforce Impact**

The Council will be undergoing significant transformational and budgetary challenges over the next five years and as a Council, we need to focus our resources, particularly our employees, on successfully delivering our corporate objectives and priorities. During 2017/2018, the Council's draft Workforce Plan was developed which will enable the Council to keep pace with the workforce implications of the Corporate Plan 2018-2022 Shaping NPT and sets out actions to help achieve the Council's priorities and objectives.

## **Legal Impact**

The Council has a general duty under the local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions". In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions.

The Annual Governance Statement explains how the Council has met the requirements of Regulation 5(2) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 in relation to an annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's systems of internal control and the preparation and approval of an Annual Governance Statement.

## **Risk Management**

During 2017/2018, the Council has revised and updated the existing Corporate Risk Management Policy and the Council's corporate risk management arrangements to ensure they are robust and consistent across the Council.

## **Consultation**

There is no requirement in the Constitution for consultation on this item.

## **Recommended**

It is recommended that

1. Members note the progress made on the Corporate Governance improvement work undertaken during 2017/18
2. Approve the Annual Governance Statement 2017/2018 attached at Appendix 1.
3. Approve the proposed Corporate Governance improvement work to be undertaken during 2018/2019

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2017/2018

## **List of Background Papers**

None

## **Officer Contact**

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## **APPENDIX 1**