

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Cabinet**

**8 May 2019**

### **Report of Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer K.Jones**

#### **Matter for Decision**

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

#### **Annual Governance Statement 2018-2019**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To present to Cabinet the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2018-2019 for approval.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2018-2019 (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).
3. 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 2019 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**

4. 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.
5. The AGS 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 2019.
6. The AGS is prepared under the remit of the Corporate Governance Group, which is made up of Heads of Service who are directly responsible for governance aspects.
7. The AGS contains:
  - An update on the progress made during 2018-2019 against the improvement areas that were identified during the development of the 2017-2018 AGS.
  - Improvement areas proposed for 2019-2020 following the development of 2018-2019 AGS.

## **Progress on Corporate Governance improvement work undertaken during 2018-2019**

8. Overall, good progress has been made on the four improvement actions contained within the 2018-2019 Improvement Action Plan. Progress includes:
  - Equalities – an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) tool was developed and training delivered to relevant officers across the Council. The report template was revised to include considerations of the Integrated Impact Assessment and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The report template was rolled-out during April 2019.

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – the documentation in respect of GDPR is continually being rolled out to officers of the Council and work is ongoing ensure compliance with the same and to ensure the Council is meeting its legislative obligations. Training was developed and presented to elected Members. Officers are continuing to provide advice to departments on GDPR requirements.
- Information Management – the Information Strategy is currently under review in light of the change in the Council's obligations under General Data Protection Regulation legislation. Once this exercise is complete the updated strategy will be forwarded to the Corporate Governance Group for ratification before being presented to Members for approval.
- Code of Corporate Governance – a review of assurances in place to fully comply with Core Principle A on Behaviours and Values has been initiated and will be further progressed in 2019-2020.

**Corporate Governance improvement work proposed to be undertaken during 2019-2020**

- Integrated Impact Assessment – review and evaluate the revised Integrated Impact Assessment Tool
  - General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – monitoring of arrangements
  - Information Management – update the Information Strategy and bring forward for approval
  - Corporate Performance Management System – review system implementation
  - Undertake a review of the Council's collaborative / regional working arrangements
9. Cabinet will receive a six-month update on the progress made against the above proposed improvement work in the autumn.

## **Consultation**

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

## **Financial Appraisal**

11. The improvement work undertaken during 2018-2019 was delivered against a continuing challenging financial backdrop.

## **Integrated Impact Assessment**

12. There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

## **Workforce Impact**

13. The Council continues to contract as financial resources continue to reduce. In recognition of the scale of change affecting the workforce, a new Corporate Workforce Plan was developed last year to support the Council adapt to these changes and help deliver the Council's Corporate Plan objectives and priorities.

## **Legal Impact**

14. 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.
15. 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**

16. During 2018-2019, the Council continued to improve its Risk Management arrangements by implementing a new integrated corporate performance and risk management system (CPMS). CPMS enables a consistent approach to the recording and reporting of risks (both corporate and operational) across the Council. The revised arrangements will continue to promote an open, consistent and proactive risk management attitude and enable us to better monitor our risks over the short, medium and long term.

## **Recommendations**

17. It is recommended that :
  - I. Members note the progress made on the Corporate Governance improvement work undertaken during 2018-2019
  - II. Approve the Annual Governance Statement 2018-2019 attached at Appendix 1.
  - III. Approve the proposed Corporate Governance improvement work to be undertaken during 2019-2020.

## **Appendices**

18. Appendix 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2018-2019

## **List of Background Papers**

19. None

## **Officer Contact**

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