

**2019/20 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT****Report of the Corporate Governance Group****1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The attached document (Appendix 1) is the final version of the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2019/20. The final AGS has been considered by Corporate Leadership Team and the Corporate Governance Group. Material changes in governance issues arising from the Covid 19 pandemic have been highlighted in the statement.
- 1.2 The report has been prepared by the Corporate Governance Group in line with guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Finance Advisory Network and the changes highlighted in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
- 1.3 The Council's corporate governance arrangements are summarised in the Local Code of Corporate Governance. Levels of compliance with the Code are reviewed each year by the Corporate Governance Group to enable the Authority to measure its arrangements against the Local Code and identify areas where improvements are necessary as detailed in the Annual Governance Statement. This approach clearly demonstrates the current Authority position and proposed further remedial action to attain full compliance with the Local Code.
- 1.4 Combined with other formal assurances it also satisfies the legislative requirements (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (6)) to "...consider the findings of the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control".
- 1.5 Subsequent to approval by the Audit Committee, the Annual Governance Statement needs to be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.
- 1.6 This statement continues to outline the significant issues facing the Authority which need to be effectively managed and highlights areas where protocols are being developed to improve compliance with the Authority's Local Code of Corporate Governance. The document is intended to demonstrate the Authority's commitment to maintaining the highest ethical standards and levels of corporate governance.

**2. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Audit Committee is asked to approve the Annual Governance Statement prior to signing by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There are none.

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