

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020-21

Report of the Corporate Governance Group

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The attached document (Appendix 1) is the draft version of the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2020/21. The final AGS will be considered by Corporate Leadership Team and the Corporate Governance Group and, provided there has been no material change in governance issues, will be issued as final alongside the Annual Accounts.

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 recently revised and updated 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

Local Code of Corporate Governance

Anyone requiring further information should contact John Pearsall on telephone number 0161 474 4033 or alternatively email john.pearsall@stockport.gov.uk