

AUDIT COMMITTEE - Table of Outstanding Issues (March 2019) – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTIONS

| Governance Issue | Action | Current Position / Update |
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| <p>Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</p> <p>The Council adopted a new ten year approach to budgeting in 2017, aimed at maximising savings opportunities whilst delivering growth in underlying income to deliver a balanced budget over a ten year forecast.</p> <p>The plan depends upon the use of a reserve specifically established to support the long term financial plan which is estimated to provide up to £3.7 million of funding over the plan period.</p> <p>Risks exist to the plan should income generation schemes not materialise while using non-recurrent reserves to addressing budget gaps is not sustainable should austerity continue.</p> | <p>Continue to develop the long term forecast with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the robustness of assumptions used in financial planning/forecasting. • Prioritising resources whilst maintaining services wherever possible. • Develop a new way of reporting progress against the new long term forecast including an assessment of risk. • Delivery a balanced budget in 2019/20 in-line with the forecast. | <p>A revised approach to reporting the progress against the new long term forecast has been developed with reports presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis throughout 2018/19.</p> <p>The report brings together a number of strands of financial information in to one place. Detailed estimates and a comprehensive outturn position will continue to be reported to Members in February and May respectively each year.</p> <p>The long term financial plan remains based on a robust approach with no optimism bias built in and includes an assessment of risk that covers each line of the forecast.</p> <p>The detailed estimates for 2019/20 based on the revised approach adopted were agreed by Full Council in February 2019.</p> <p>Work remains in progress to deliver the next year of the long term forecast with two key areas being the identification of on-going savings and managing on-going cost pressures.</p> |
| <p>Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability</p> <p>Developing the entity's capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it</p> | <p>To develop a robust project management approach to governance arrangements and reporting against the expected benefits / outcomes of the Council's use of resources.</p> | <p>This action is nearing completion in terms of rolling out a revised business planning / project management approach as early as possible in 2019/20. The work carried out to date has been supported by the Acting Audit and Governance Manager and reflects the key elements of the recently approved Treasury and Capital Strategy and peer review recommendations.</p> |

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| <p>Council continuing to demonstrate Value for Money in the use of its resources and delivery of major projects, for example, Garden Communities and Jaywick Sands.</p> | <p>To enhance the business planning process to ensure mandates are achieved for initial scoping and developing business cases for deployment and profiling of resources.</p> <p>This will include a review of the Cabinet Report template and issue refreshed guidance on ensuring equalities implications and alternative options are fully incorporated through early considerations.</p> <p>Progress against associated projects to be reported via the Council's performance management framework</p> | |
| <p>Developing the entity's capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it</p> <p><i>(Continue the Delivery of the Transforming the Way We Work Project)</i></p> <p>There are four main strands to this project with work already underway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital • Customer Service/channel shift • Office Accommodation • People | <p>Continue to deliver against the project aims and objectives with regular reporting via the Council's performance management framework, including the establishment of Project Boards.</p> | <p>Delivery Boards are in operation and cover the major projects currently underway in the Council. Membership of the boards includes senior management along with the Acting Audit and Governance Manager.</p> <p>Updates against the key projects will continue to be reported via the Council's existing performance management framework.</p> <p>Reporting the delivery of outcomes / benefits will also form part of the new project management approach highlighted above.</p> |
| <p>Developing the entity's capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the</p> | <p>Embed and develop the new Committee Structure during</p> | <p>The new structure is fully operational and a number of meetings (including task and finish groups) have been</p> |

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| <p>individuals within it</p> <p>The Council's Committee Structure is reducing to two Overview and Scrutiny Committees focusing on external and internal arrangements</p> | <p>2018/19.</p> | <p>held this year. A review of the new arrangements is planned to commence in November this year.</p> |
| <p>Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</p> <p>Robust information security arrangements, including the implementation of GDPR</p> | <p>To implement and embed the new requirements introduced via the new responsibilities placed on the Council by the General Data Protection Requirements.</p> | <p>An audit approach was taken to identify the various areas of the Council where the new GDPR arrangements would have an impact with a full compliance gap analysis undertaken. An action plan has been developed which is monitored by the Council's Governance and Policy Group.</p> |
| <p>Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes</p> <p>Outcomes from Peer Review</p> | <p>To develop an action plan for implementation in response to outcomes from the recent review including effective reporting of progress against each action identified.</p> | <p>An action plan has been developed which was approved by Cabinet at its 18 May 2018 meeting. Further updates will be presented to Cabinet on a regular basis, the latest being considered by them at their 9 November 2018 meeting.</p> |