

Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

26 June 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

No

Annual Governance Statement 2016-17

Final Decision-Maker	Policy and Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. To review and approve the Annual Governance Statement 2016-17 and Local Code of Corporate Governance 2017 prior to submission to the Policy and Resources Committee on 28 June 2017.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all - Effective corporate governance arrangements ensure the council's priorities are understood and delivered
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough -Effective corporate governance arrangements ensure the council's priorities are understood and delivered

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Corporate Leadership Team	6 June 2017
Audit, Governance and Standards Committee	26 June 2017
Policy and Resources Committee	28 June 2017

Annual Governance Statement 2016-17

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Attached at Appendix A is the Annual Governance Statement for 2016-17, the purpose of the Annual Governance Statement is to provide assurance on the council's governance arrangements.
- 1.2 Attached at Appendix B is the Local Code of Corporate Governance, which has been rewritten to meet the requirements of the new CIPFA and Solace framework 2016.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each year we carry out a review of our Governance arrangements to ensure compliance with the Local Code of Corporate Governance. The purpose of the review is to provide assurance that governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively and to identify action which is planned to ensure effective governance in the future. The outcome of the review takes the form of an Annual Governance Statement prepared on behalf of the Leader at the Council and Chief Executive.
- 2.2 The Council produces an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) to accompany the statement of accounts. The Audit, Governance and Standards Committee is asked to consider this statement prior to submission to Policy and Resources and signing by the Leader and Chief Executive. The statement looks back at the governance arrangements for 2016-17 and identifies areas for action for 2017-18.
- 2.3 A new Local Code of Corporate Governance has been developed to reflect the 'Delivering Good Governance Framework' introduced by CIPFA/Solace in 2016. The format of the AGS has also been updated.
- 2.4 Action taken last year includes the introduction of a mandatory training module for data protection, new policies and guidance for all staff on information management. A new Member Sounding Board has been introduced and has met regularly to look at communication issues and how members can be engaged and informed. There were a number of web casting issues in 2016-17 these have now been resolved through the hard work of the Democracy Committee, democratic services team working with the provider.
- 2.5 Overall the governance arrangements are sound. However, there are a number of areas where improvements can be made, including contract management, areas that continue to have weak assurance following audit reviews and ensuring the council is prepared for the new General Data Protection Regulations.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to review the Annual Governance Statement and make amendments prior to submission to the Policy and Resources Committee.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to review the Annual Governance Statement and action plan and approve the areas suggested for improvement for 2017-18 prior to submission to Committees.
-

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Council's Corporate Governance Working Group has reviewed the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) the next stage is review by the Audit Governance and Standards Committee prior to submission to Policy and Resources Committee.
-

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The AGS and Local Code of Corporate Governance will be considered by Audit Governance and Standards Committee and then Policy and Resources prior to signing by the Leader and Chief Executive. Once approved the Code and Annual Governance Statement will be made available on our website and shared with our external auditors.
-

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Effective corporate governance arrangements ensure the council's priorities are understood and delivered	Head of Policy Communications and Governance
Risk Management	The AGS considers and gives assurance on the Council's approach to risk management	Head of Policy Communications and Governance
Financial	This report has no direct financial implications. The AGS is a requirement of statutory	Director of Finance and Business

	regulations and provides assurance about the Council's governance arrangements.	Improvement
Staffing	There are implications in relation to training and information management in the action plan for 2017-18	Head of Policy Communications and Governance
Legal	There are no legal implications, good governance ensures we meet statutory requirements.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	Good governance ensures the council is adhering to the public sector equality duty	Policy & Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	N/A	Head of Policy Communications and Governance
Community Safety	N/A	Head of Policy Communications and Governance
Human Rights Act	N/A	Head of Policy Communications and Governance
Procurement	N/A	Head of Policy Communications and Governance
Asset Management	N/A	Head of Policy Communications and Governance

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Annual Governance Statement 2016-17
 - Appendix B: Local Code of Corporate Governance 2017
-