

AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

21 November 2016

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

Yes

Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2016-17 Update

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

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. The Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2016-17 update be noted.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Audit, Governance and Standards Committee	21 November 2016

Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2016-17 Update

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 At its meeting on 11 July 2016 the committee approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2015-16 and action plan for 2016-17. The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with an updated action plan.
 - 1.2 The report provides an update on the actions that have been taken to improve governance.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The action plan attached at Appendix A was produced and published with the Annual Governance Statement.
 - 2.2 The actions arose from areas identified in the governance statement as requiring additional action and assurance.
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The committee could decide not to consider the action plan. Considering the action plan is however a key part of the committee's governance remit.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The committee is asked to consider the updated action plan attached at Appendix A, and make recommendations for further action as appropriate.

Areas of Action

- 4.2 A number of areas were identified for action including:
 - Training and communication on information management
 - Resident involvement in decision making
 - Risk Management
 - Audit Reviews with weak assurance
- 4.3 Action has been taken in all areas as set out in Appendix A.
- 4.4 A communication and engagement strategy has been agreed by Policy and Resources Committee focussed on promoting pride in the borough. A budget roadshow and on-line survey has been undertaken to gain residents' views on our front facing services. This will inform our budget proposals for 2017/18 and the strategic plan refresh.

- 4.5 Work has continued on risk management, including establishing risk appetite. The most recent update report went to Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 26 October. Audit Governance and Standards Committee members will be briefed on progress before the Committee's meeting on 21 November.
- 4.6 Audit recommendations arising from two out of the three reviews that identified weak assurance remain to be implemented, although action has been taken across all three areas covered by the reviews. The interim report from Audit on this agenda contains more information on these reviews.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The updated action plan has been reported to and informed by the Corporate Governance Group. The Committee is invited to consider the report.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The Annual Governance Statement and action plan are published on the council's website.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	High standards of corporate governance are integral to achieving our corporate priorities.	Head of Policy and Communications
Risk Management	The annual governance statement has identified actions on risk management	Head of Policy and Communications
Financial	Good governance is integral to good financial arrangements	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	The action plan includes ensuring staff are aware of our priorities.	Head of Policy and Communications
Legal	Good governance arrangements are essential in ensuring robust and lawful decision-making and therefore minimising the risk of legal challenge. The action plan focuses on specific area	Interim Deputy Head of Legal Partnership

	to ensure a programme of continuous improvement.	
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	No implications from this action plan	Head of Policy and Communications
Environmental/Sustainable Development	No implications from this action plan	Head of Policy and Communications
Community Safety	No implications from this action plan	Head of Policy and Communications
Human Rights Act	No implications from this action plan	Head of Policy and Communications
Procurement	No implications from this action plan	Head of Policy and Communications
Asset Management	No implications from this action plan	Head of Policy and Communications

8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix A: Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2016-17 Update

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None