

Resources
7 Newington Barrow Way
London N7 7EP

Report of: Corporate Director of Resources

Meeting of	Date	Agenda Item	Ward(s)
Audit Committee	30 January 2023		All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
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Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report provides Committee with the Council's 2021-22 Annual Governance Statement (AGS). In accordance with Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Council is required to undertake a review of its governance framework and publish an AGS as part of the Statement of Accounts.
- 1.2. The purpose of the AGS process is to provide a continuous review of the Council's governance framework, to provide assurance on its effectiveness and, where applicable, produce an action plan to address weaknesses identified. The process of preparing the AGS adds value to the corporate governance and internal control framework.
- 1.3. This report is intended to support the Committee in obtaining assurance that the Council has a sound framework of governance, risk management and internal control.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To approve the Annual Governance Statement attached at Appendix A.
- 2.2. To authorise the Corporate Director, Resources, in consultation with the Chair of the Audit Committee, to approve minor amendments to the Annual Governance Statement prior to the final signing of the statement of accounts.

2.3. To note that officers will report back on any amendments made to the Annual Governance Statement at a subsequent Audit Committee and provide a copy of any amended version of the Annual Governance Statement for the Committee's information.

3. Background

3.1. As in previous years, the production of the AGS has been led by the Head of Internal Audit, with contributions received from key officers across the Council in areas including Law, Finance, Strategy, People, Housing, and Environment. The Council's Corporate Management Board has also reviewed the AGS. The Chief Executive and Leader will sign the AGS following approval by the Audit Committee and once adjustments have been made as outlined in the recommendations at section 2 above

3.2. The Local 2021-22 AGS follows the guidelines encompassed in the CIPFA/SOLACE 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' framework (2016).

3.3. Section 3 of the AGS aligns with Chapter 7 of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework, which lists the key elements of the structures and processes that should comprise an authority's governance arrangements.

3.4 In line with the framework, the AGS is an assessment of the Council's performance across all of its activities and describes:

- The key elements of the Council's governance arrangements, covering all corporate systems and the range of activities for which the Council is responsible (Section 3)
- the processes applied in reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's governance framework, including the system of internal control (Section 4)
- other areas of assurance and governance (Section 5)
- the actions proposed to deal with any significant governance issues identified (section 6)

3.5 The Governance framework described in the AGS has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2022.

3.6 The statement was also shared with the Council's External Auditors, who reviewed the statement and provided comments.

4 Implications

Financial Implications:

4.5 A sound system of internal controls forms a significant part of the governance framework and is essential to underpin the effective use of resources.

Legal Implications:

- 4.6 Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires the Council to conduct an annual review of its system of internal control and, following the review, the Council must approve an Annual Governance Statement, prepared in accordance with proper practices in relation to internal control, before approving the statement of accounts.

Environmental Implications and contribution to net zero carbon by 2030

- 4.7 There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.8 The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.
- 4.9 A resident impact assessment has not been carried out since the contents of this report relate to a purely administrative function and there are no direct impacts on residents.

5 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations:

- 5.8 An approved Annual Governance Statement is a regulatory requirement and underpins good governance.

Appendices:

Appendix A 2021-2022 Annual Governance Statement

Background papers:

None

Final Report Clearance:

Signed by: Authorised by David Hodgkinson

Corporate Director of Resources

Date

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