

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	19 July 2017
Subject:	Annual Governance Statement 2016/17
Report of:	Corporate Governance Group
Corporate Lead:	Sara Freckleton, Borough Solicitor
Lead Member:	Councillor D J Waters, Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

Every Council must ensure that its business is conducted within the law and proper standards, public money is safeguarded and used economically, efficiently and effectively. Governance of the Council is reviewed regularly by the Corporate Governance Group, and is formally assessed through an Annual Governance Statement by that Group. The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is produced in accordance with CIPFA/SOLACE guidance ('Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016')

Recommendation:

To APPROVE the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17

Reasons for Recommendation:

Regulation 6 (1) (a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires an authority to conduct a review at least once in a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and include a statement reporting on the review with any published Statement of Accounts (England). Regulation 6 (1) (b) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires that, for a local authority, the statement is an Annual Governance Statement.

Resource Implications:

None arising directly from the report.

Legal Implications:

Contained in report.

Risk Management Implications:

If the Council does not produce an Annual Governance Statement then it is not compliant with legislation.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Significant governance issues will be subject to review throughout the year by the Corporate Governance Group and by the Audit Committee.

Implications for Biodiversity:

None

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 Every Council has to ensure that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk. Regulation 6 (1) (a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires an authority to conduct a review at least once in a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and include a statement reporting on the review with any published Statement of Accounts (England). Regulation 6 (1) (b) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires that, for a local authority, the statement is an Annual Governance Statement.

1.3 The Annual Governance Statement should normally be approved at the same time as, and certainly no later than, the Statement of Accounts. The Annual Governance Statement has been developed in accordance with 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)

1.4 The Good Governance Framework is based on seven principles of corporate governance which are set out below and which are underpinned by supporting principles and requirements.

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
- Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
- Managing the risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

2.0 REVIEWING THE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

2.1 The review is undertaken by the Corporate Governance Group and is based on the sources of assurance that are demonstrated in the diagram (Page No. 6 of the Annual

Governance Statement). The diagram succinctly demonstrates the wide coverage of the Council's governance framework. The significant areas for improvement are reflected in the Annual Governance Statement and the proposed action and timescale for these to be addressed has also been developed.

2.2 The documents, procedures and processes which have informed the Annual Governance Statement are summarised in diagrammatic form within the statement itself. The statement will be subject to review by the Council's external auditors to give assurance that it has been produced in compliance with guidance and is a fair reflection of 'where we are'.

3.0 TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2016/17

3.1 The draft Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17 is attached at Appendix 1 and identifies eight areas of governance that require improvement. These are detailed within the table on the last page of the statement. Progress in implementing the actions stated within the table will be reported to each Audit Committee.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 Corporate Governance Group and the Corporate Leadership Team.

6.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

6.1 Tewkesbury Borough Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance.

7.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

7.1 None.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

8.1 None arising directly from this report.

9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

9.1 None.

10.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

10.1 None.

11.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

11.1 None.

Background Papers: Delivering Good Governance in Local Government CIPFA / SOLACE
2007

Tewkesbury Borough Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance

Contact Officer: Sara Freckleton, Borough Solicitor
01684 272011 sara.freckleton@tewkesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Draft Annual Governance Statement 2016/17