

Subject: DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021/2022 - ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Report to: Audit and Risk Committee – 23 January 2023

Report by: Kaye Bate, Corporate Risk Officer



SUBJECT MATTER

This report seeks to inform members of the progress made in relation to further work identified / action required to address issues identified in the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 action plan for the following year.

RECOMMENDATION

That Committee receives and note the action taken to address the issues identified.

1 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Draft Annual Governance Statement was approved by Audit and Risk Committee on 25 July 2022.
- 1.2 The review process highlighted areas where further work was required to strengthen the governance and internal control environment. Detailed below is action taken to address the issues raised or proposed action to be taken.

2 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT – ACTION PLAN

- 2.1 The table below illustrates action taken to address the 9 key issues / actions raised in the action plan for 2022/2023.

	Further work / areas to be addressed	Responsible Officer	Due Date	Review Update
1	Internal Audit recommendations should be implemented within the agreed timeframe and adequately actioned by management to ensure we have robust internal controls environment to safeguard the council's assets in all service areas. COVID 19 has impacted on the delivery of recommendations by the agreed implementation date, although it is hoped that this work will start to be prioritised.	Management Team	31 March 2023	Work continuing to implement audit recommendations by the due date and progress is being made for those recommendations with future dates. Progress is also being made to implement outstanding recommendations. ELT and Audit and Risk Committee receive regular update reports. To ensure responsibility and accountability all recommendations are assigned to Heads of Service or Directors to ensure that the appropriate action is taken and where there are resource issues these will be discussed at ELT.

	Further work / areas to be addressed	Responsible Officer	Due Date	Review Update
				Work in Progress
2	The Officer Register of Gifts and Hospitality process is to be reviewed during 2022/2023 and further work is to be undertaken to raise awareness and ensure compliance.	Corporate Services Manager	31 March 2023	Register of Gifts and Hospitality to be held electronically, process currently under review. Due to limited resources within the team it has been difficult to progress with this recommendation however once the team is fully resourced this work will re-commence Work in Progress
3	Procurement and Contract Management - The contract management arrangements are to be reviewed by the Monitoring Officer to strengthen this area of governance.	Monitoring Officer	31 October 2022 Revised date: 31 March 2023	Areas to be addressed are to ensure that the Contract Register is updated to reflect the spend. Ensuring contracts are removed from the Contract Register when the contract has expired or ensuring followed contract procurement rules when a contract is due to expire. Work in Progress
4	Corporate Governance Internal Audit Report 2018/19 – The outstanding recommendation for site paper storage arrangements to be reviewed to ensure compliance with GDPR regulations is to be implemented.	Corporate Services Manager	30 June 2022 Revised date: 30 May 2023	Due to staff resources within the team it has been difficult to progress. Due to the winter period approaching a further review will be scheduled for April / May 2023. Work in Progress
5	Work to progress with the delivery of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Action Plan.	Head of Organisational Development	31 March 2023	Work on the action plan continues, a draft ED&I policy has been produced, staff briefings in October included an update to all staff on the strategy. There are a number of training programmes being developed by NCC, also for delivery to staff. Work in Progress
6	Work is progressing to ensure compliance with the accessibility regulations and standards for documents currently published and to be published on the website, Intranet and mobile apps to ensure that most people can use it without needing to adapt it, while supporting those that need to adapt things.	IMT Manager	Ongoing	Document Accessibility continues in line with the overarching project plan with an end date of 31/03/2023 for the documents highlighted under the Cabinet Office Audit. Our compliance level has increased from 78% to 95% based on the current SilkTide rankings. Ongoing work with the business to either delete/replace/amend current documents is ongoing to improve this position further. Work in Progress

	Further work / areas to be addressed	Responsible Officer	Due Date	Review Update
7	Counter Fraud and Corruption Internal Audit Report 2021/22 – work to progress with the implementation of the 2 urgent and 5 important audit recommendations.	Corporate Risk Officer	31 March 2023	Work is progressing to implement the recommendations. Due to staff resources have been difficult to progress with implementation of recommendations. Work in Progress
8	Environmental Services Internal Audit Report 2021/22 – work to progress with the implementation of the 2 urgent and 8 important audit recommendations.	Head of Environment and Sustainability	31 March 2023	2 important recommendations have been implemented. Due to staff resources have been difficult to progress with implementation of recommendations. Work in Progress
9	GYN Invoicing Internal Audit Report – work to progress with the implementation of the 6 urgent and 7 important audit recommendations.	Director of Housing Assets	31 March 2023	A number of financial controls have been implemented into the contract which addresses a number of the recommendations identified in the audit. To date, 6 actions are complete, and the remainder are work in progress and scheduled for completion in the year 23/24 with the publication of an options report on the future service delivery and the implementation of the NEC Housing Management System. Work in Progress

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICAITIONS

3.1 None

4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The report shows that action has been taken or progress is being made to address the issues where further work had been identified or action was proposed / being taken. Resource issues have had an impact on the delivery of the action plan.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 None

Areas of consideration: e.g., does this report raise any of the following issues and if so, how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation	No
Section 151 Officer Consultation	No
Existing Council Policies	No
Financial Implications within existing budgets	No
Legal Implications (including human rights)	No
Risk Implications	No
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment	No
Crime & Disorder	No
Every Child Matters	No