

Subject: Follow up on Annual Governance Statement 2019 /2020

Report to: Audit and Risk Committee – 15 February 2021

Report by: Kaye Bate, Corporate Risk Officer

SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

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 2019/2020.

It is recommended that the Committee:

Receives and note the action taken to address the issues identified.

1 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Annual Governance Statement was approved by Audit and Risk Committee on 21 September 2020.
- 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 COVID 19 pandemic has had an impact on the delivery of the action plan for 2020/2021. Work is continuing to ensure that there are robust governance arrangements, risk management and internal control measures in place within the Council. Policies and procedures have been reviewed and implemented throughout the Council to ensure the safety and wellbeing of officers, members and customers during the pandemic and preparation for returning to the office environment. Systems of internal control were required to be reviewed which resulted in revised working practices and processes at the start of the lockdown and the requirement to introduce alternative / additional control measures. Officers have been re-deployed to assist with the delivery of the service offered by the new Community Team and COVID 19 business grant.
- 2.2 The table below illustrates action taken to address the 7 key issues / actions raised in the action plan for 2020/2021.

	Further work / areas to be addressed	Progress update	Responsible Officer	Due Date
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	Work continuing to implement audit recommendations by the due date and progress is being made for those recommendations with future dates. Progress 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	Management Team	31/03/2021

	safeguard the council's assets in all service areas. COVID 19 may impact on the delivery of recommendations by the agreed implementation date.	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. COVID-19 has had an impact on the delivery of some recommendations by the due date. Work in Progress		
2	Further work will be undertaken to raise the profile to ensure compliance with Partnership Governance Framework and so all applicable governance and risk management arrangements are applied and consistently used across the organisation.	Partnership Governance Framework and Partnership Register has been approved by ELT and Audit & Risk. The Corporate Risk Officer will update in accordance with the review process documented in the Partnership Governance Framework. Action Completed	Corporate Risk Officer	31/03/2021
3	The Officer Register of Gifts and Hospitality process is to be reviewed during 2020/2021 and further work is to be undertaken to raise awareness and ensure compliance.	Work on the review of Gifts and Hospitality has not yet commenced due to staff within Corporate Services being redeployed to help during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff are now back within Corporate Services so work on this can now be progressed. Work in Progress	Corporate & Democratic Services Manager	31/03/2021
4	Procurement and Contract Management Audit Report 2018/2019 – The four outstanding important recommendations relating to updating the Procurement Strategy and Standing Orders, regular review of the Contracts Register and analysis of spend and finalising the arrangements for the Kerbside Green Waste Collection Service are to be implemented.	The updated Contract Standing Orders (CSOs) are due to be presented to the constitution working group in February 2021 ahead of presenting for approval by Council. Review of the associated procurement templates and guidance are underway and will be refreshed once the CSOs have been updated. Work in Progress	Finance Director	31/03/2020 Revised Date: 31 May 2021
5	Corporate Governance Internal Audit Report 2018/19 – The outstanding recommendation for site paper storage arrangements to be reviewed to ensure	A Methodical review of offsite records has commenced, this is being carried out in a controlled manner with the support and oversight of the Data Protection Officer. Work in this area has had to be paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to a 1/3 of the Council's staff including the Data Protection Officer being redeployed to work as part of a	Corporate & Democratic Services Manager	31/08/2020 Revised Date: 31 March 2021

	compliance with GDPR regulations is to be implemented.	coordinated response assisting the most vulnerable residents of the Borough. It was hoped that work could recommence from September 2020 however with current social distancing guidelines and protecting the health of Council staff being paramount this will not be possible. A review of the situation will be undertaken in March 2021 when it is hoped the situation will have improved to allow this work to recommence. Work in Progress		
6	Corporate Health and Safety Review - Recommendations made in the Internal Audit report regarding a variation to the GY Norse Contract to reflect Health and Safety contract responsibilities to be implemented.	GY1902 – Corporate health and Safety – all recommendations implemented. Action Completed	Head of Environmental Services	31/03/2020
7	A review of the impact of the coronavirus will be undertaken to ensure that applicable governance and control measures were in place and the impact on the delivery of the usual services and to assess the longer term disruption and consequences arising from the pandemic in particular the impact on the Medium term Financial Strategy.	Internal Audit requested to undertake a review to ensure that applicable governance and control measures were in place during the COVID 19 pandemic. GY2102 – Corporate Governance - 3 recommendation made (1 – Important and 2 Needs Attention). All recommendations to be actioned by 31 May 2021. Action completed	Finance Director	31/12/2020

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.

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:	No
Legal Implications (including human rights):	No
Risk Implications:	No
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	No
Crime & Disorder:	No
Every Child Matters:	No