

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Audit &amp; governance committee</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>16 July 2015</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Annual governance statement</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Director of resources</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Key Decision**

This is not an executive decision.

## **Wards Affected**

Countywide

## **Purpose**

To seek the views of the committee of the draft annual governance statement for 2014/15.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT:**

- (a) **the committee reviews and comments on the draft 2014/15 annual governance statement at appendix A.**

## **Alternative options**

- 1 The draft document is presented for comment; it is open to the committee to propose alternative actions for consideration.

## **Reasons for recommendations**

- 2 To inform development of the annual governance statement.

## **Key considerations**

- 3 The council has a responsibility for conducting at least annually a review of the effectiveness of the governance framework including the system of internal control. This is reported through the annual governance statement which is reviewed and

approved by the committee as an element of the annual statement of accounts in September. The annual governance statement also provides commentary on how the council's governance framework including the system of internal control can be improved. Whilst the statement by its nature is only signed off once a year, the process of review is continuous. Reports presented to the audit and governance committee inform the development of the annual governance statement, and the committee receives periodic progress reports on implementation of the action plan supporting the annual governance statement.

- 4 A draft statement is attached at appendix A, together with a draft action plan at appendix B; also attached for information, at appendix C, is the previous year's action plan update as reported to the committee in January. A final progress update on that plan will be reported to committee in September and – where appropriate, outstanding actions will be rolled forward to the current year's action plan.

## **Community impact**

- 5 The council is responsible for ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place to ensure that it operates effective governance arrangements and internal controls. The decisions the council makes have direct impact on the lives of residents of the county and therefore it is essential that the council have appropriate governance arrangements in place.

## **Equality duty**

- 6 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct ... prohibited by or under the act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7 Effective governance arrangements ensure that due consideration is given to the exercise of this duty in the decision-making and actions of the council.

## **Financial implications**

- 8 None arising directly from this report.

## **Legal implications**

- 9 The Accounts and Audit Regulations include requirements for all councils to produce an annual governance statement.

## **Risk management**

- 10 The statement itself identifies governance risks and the action plan provides mitigation to those risks.

## **Consultees**

11 None.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – draft annual governance statement 2014/15

Appendix B – draft action plan 2015/16

Appendix C – action plan 2014/15

## **Background papers**

- None identified.