

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL****AUDIT COMMITTEE 14th JULY 2020****THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019/20****JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER and THE MONITORING OFFICER****1 SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 For the Audit Committee to review and approve the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement to accompany the annual accounts.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That members of the Audit Committee approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20, attached as Appendix A (including Annex 1), and note the information in the report

**3 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

<b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b>	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	<i>The Governance Framework encompasses the whole Council and therefore all of the Council's priorities.</i>
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	
<b>TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE</b>	<i>Annual Governance Statement signed and ready to accompany the 2019/20 accounts.</i>	
<b>FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT</b>	No	<i>The governance framework includes several financial elements, including the Council's financial regulations, the budget strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy. These provide the financial parameters, systems, processes and guidelines within which the Council must operate and, as such, assist in the delivery of good governance. Strong financial management also supports the delivery of value for money in ensuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the Council's decision making and processes.</i>  <i>The Council's external auditors give an opinion on the financial statements of the authority and a value for money conclusion in their opinion on the accounts and in their Annual Audit letter each year which provides further assurance.</i> <i>KC 14/05/20</i>
<b>LEGAL ISSUES</b>	Yes	<i>The Council is required to comply with the requirements of the Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015. Regulation 6 of these Regulations sets out that the authority must undertake a review of the effectiveness of its internal control systems on an annual basis and prepare an annual governance statement. The annual governance statement must be approved in advance of the annual statement of account.</i> <i>AL – 14/5/2020</i>
<b>OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>	Yes	<i>Good governance supports the identification and management of risks and robust control arrangements.</i>

<b>IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS</b>	Yes	<i>Borough-wide impact</i>
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#### **4 INFORMATION**

- 4.1 Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 the Council is required to produce an Annual Governance Statement and it is best practice that the statement is signed by the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council. This statement should accompany the Annual Accounts.
- 4.2 The Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20 is attached at Appendix 1 and has been developed based on the requirements of the regulations and CIPFA/Solace guidance<sup>1</sup>. The statement includes an action plan (Annex 1) to ensure that we continue to improve our existing governance arrangements.
- 4.3 The action plan attached to the 2018/19 statement (implemented during 2019/20) has been reviewed and updated to reflect current progress. Any actions still on progress from the 18/19 plan have been incorporated into the 2019/20 action plan, see Annex 1 to this report.
- 4.4 The Annual Governance Statement and the Local Code of Good Governance outlines that the Council has a robust governance framework in place but that it is continually reviewing procedures to maintain and demonstrate good corporate governance. It is supported by risk management and sound systems of internal control which are paramount in these continuing times of financial constraint. The Council can be assured that during 2019/20, including during organisational and personnel changes, that the existing or revised governance arrangements have continued to support proper governance. Where required changes to procedures have been agreed by SMT and changes to the Constitution have been agreed by the Council, through the Council's Constitution Committee.
- 4.5 Assurance for the Annual Governance Statement is provided by all areas of the Council and externally by the following:
- a) Leader and Chief Executive – who sign the statement to acknowledge their responsibilities;
  - b) Senior management – Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Directors;
  - c) Chief Financial Officer;
  - d) The Monitoring Officer;
  - e) Members – Scrutiny arrangements, Standards Committee, Audit Committee and other Regulatory Committees;
  - f) Internal Audit;
  - g) Partners;
  - h) External Audit; and
  - i) Other external inspection agencies.
- 4.6 The 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement sets out adherence to the Council's governance arrangements that operated during the period – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and measures the effectiveness of them.
- 4.7 The Council's current Code of Good Governance was approved last June to reflect the CIPFA/SOLACE framework including revised principles and guidance but further application and good practice has been received during the year and the local code has therefore been updated further. The Code continues to reflect the Council's culture and values.

<sup>1</sup> Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016 Edition)

**5 IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

N/A

**6 PREVIOUS MINUTES**

6.1 Cabinet 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014; 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015; 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016  
Audit Committee 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015; 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2017, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

**7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Local Code of Corporate Governance May 2008  
CIPFA/SOLACE – Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016 Edition)  
KPMG Annual Audit Letter 2015/16  
External inspection reports 2016/17  
Annual Audit & Information Governance Report 2016/17

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