

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021-22

Executive Summary

The Annual Governance Statement demonstrates the effectiveness of the Council's corporate governance environment and incorporates the statement on internal control (SIC) requirements to demonstrate the Council has appropriate internal control mechanisms in place.

The evaluation of governance arrangements is based around the CIPFA/SOLACE governance framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' which brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes relating to the whole organisation.

The framework has seven core principles of governance focusing on the arrangements, systems and processes for the direction and control of the organisation and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and, where applicable, leads the community.

To assist in the assessment process CIPFA has produced a detailed matrix of questions for the statement in accordance with the framework's governance principles. This matrix has been used as the basis for the governance analysis attached at Appendix 2.

Arising from the assessment is a requirement to produce a Governance Statement and action plan to correct any identified problems in the governance arrangements. The Draft Governance Statement is attached at Appendix 1. The statement will be published separately on the internet as well as forming part of the Statement of Accounts.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the Draft Annual Governance Statement be received.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

Background Papers: None.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council conducts its business within a governance framework. It is an interrelated system that brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes.
- 1.2 Documents and processes that provide some of the boundaries to this governance framework include:
 - The Constitution;
 - Local and statutory Codes of practice, Policies and Strategies;
 - Management Arrangements and Scheme of Delegations;
 - Service and Performance Plans;
 - Performance Management Systems; and
 - Internal Control Processes.
- 1.3 In essence, the Annual Governance Statement is a formal statement that recognises, records and publishes an authority's governance arrangements as defined in the framework.
- 1.4 The Annual Governance Statement documents the corporate governance environment.
- 1.5 The CIPFA/SOLACE governance framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes relating to the whole organisation and sets out the fundamental principles of corporate governance. These are contained in 7 core principles.
- 1.6 To assist in the assessment process CIPFA has produced a detailed matrix of questions for the statement in accordance with the framework's governance principles. This matrix has been used as the basis for the governance assessment attached at Appendix 2.
- 1.7 To support the Annual Governance Statement, attached is a Local Code of Corporate Governance, which shall be included in the Council's Constitution during its review. The Code sets out for members and officers the main principles of good governance for Woking Borough Council. A Copy of the Code can be found at Appendix 3 to this report.

2.0 Implications

Financial and Risk

- 2.1 There are no financial implications of this work. The development of risk management and business continuity is an ongoing improvement for the Council.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 2.2 Ongoing training will be provided in order to ensure compliance with the governance and assurance framework.

Legal

- 2.3 The CIPFA/SOLACE governance framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes for the Council, which are documented in the Annual Governance Statement.

3.0 Corporate Plan

3.1 The assessment forms a part of the Annual Statement of Accounts and contributes to ensuring the effective use of resources by the Council, as one of the objectives of the Corporate Plan.

4.0 Engagement and Consultation

4.1 None.

REPORT ENDS