

# Gloucester City Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Audit and Governance Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>January 2022</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 Improvement Plan – Progress Report</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Head of Audit Risk Assurance (ARA)</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>No</b>
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<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1: Annual Governance Statement 2020/21</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide assurance to the Committee that the improvement areas and associated actions identified as part of the annual review of governance arrangements operating within the Council, have been or are being addressed.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Audit and Governance Committee is asked to RESOLVE to review and consider the actions taken to address the governance improvement areas identified.

### 3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council is required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to publish an Annual Governance Statement, in accordance with ‘proper practices’ in order to report publicly on the extent to which we comply with our own Local Code of Corporate Governance. This approach includes how the Council has monitored the effectiveness of our arrangements in year and on any planned changes to our governance arrangements in the coming year.
- 3.2 The Annual Governance Statement is signed by the Leader and Managing Director (Head of Paid Service) and must accompany the Annual Statement of Accounts.
- 3.3 Members approved the Council’s Annual Governance Statement 2020-21 (including the Annual Governance Statement 2020-21 Improvement Plan) at the July 2021 Audit and Governance Committee meeting.
- 3.4 This report updates Members on the Council’s progress (detailed in Appendix A) against agreed actions from the Annual Governance Statement 2020-21 Improvement Plan.

#### **4.0 Social Value Considerations**

4.1 There are no Social Value implications as a result of the recommendations made in this report.

#### **5.0 Environmental Implications**

5.1 There are no Environmental implications as a result of the recommendations made in this report.

#### **6.0 Alternative Options Considered**

6.1 There are no alternative options that are relevant to this matter.

#### **7.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 The Council is required to produce an Annual Governance Statement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Through the Council's Constitution, the Audit and Governance Committee has responsibility for review and approval of the Statement (including relevant Improvement Plans).

#### **8.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

8.1 The improvement actions identified as part of the annual review and included within the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 will be monitored by Senior Management and the Audit and Governance Committee during 2021/22. It is proposed that this will include an update report to Audit and Governance Committee in January 2022.

#### **9.0 Financial Implications**

9.1 There are no direct financial costs arising out of this report.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report).

#### **10.0 Legal Implications**

10.1 Nothing specific arising from the report recommendations.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation this report).

#### **11.0 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications**

11.1 Failure to deliver effective governance will impact on the ability of the Council to achieve its vision, priorities and key actions. It is important to recognise that the purpose of the Annual Governance Statement is not just to be 'compliant', but also to provide an accurate representation of the arrangements in place during the year and to highlight those areas where improvement is required.

## **12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:**

12.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

## **13.0 Community Safety Implications**

13.1 There are no Community Safety implications as a result of the recommendations made in this report.

## **14.0 Staffing and Trade Union Implications**

14.1 There are no Staffing and Trade Union implications as a result of the recommendations made in this report.

**Background Documents:** Council website links to supporting reports and documentation are made within the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 (**Appendix 1**)