

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

26 FEBRUARY 2024

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022/23 PROGRESS UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report includes an update on progress against the action plan contained in the Council's Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members note the progress of the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 action plan.

DETAIL

1. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require all authorities in England to conduct a review at least once a year of the effectiveness of its governance framework and produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) to accompany its Statement of Accounts. The AGS was presented to Audit and Governance Committee on 25 September 2023.
2. The AGS includes a high-level action plan detailing actions to be undertaken in 2023/24 and this report provides an update in Appendix A.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

3. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and Statutory Instrument 234/2015 require all English authorities to prepare an Annual Governance Statement and for it to accompany the Statement of Accounts.

RISK ASSESSMENT

4. None directly from this report.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

5. None directly from this report.

CONSULTATION

6. None directly from this report.

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APPENDIX A

ACTION PLAN

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	By When	Progress
Review and update the Risk management Strategy	Updated strategy and associated risk management processes	Assistant Director Procurement and Governance	End of 2023/24	New approach to Risk Management agreed at CMT. New Risk Register produced identifying strategic risks and emerging risks.
Deliver the Children Services Improvement Plan developed after the OFSTED Inspection	Improved OFSTED Rating	Good and Beyond Board	End of 2023/24	Ongoing delivery of the Improvement Plan – on track.
Review and update the hotel company governance arrangements	Updated arrangements	Monitoring Officer	End of 3 rd Qtr 2023/24	<p>A review of current hotel governance arrangements has been undertaken by Womble Bond Dickinson. Recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need to produce a comprehensive Shareholder Agreement that defines 'reserved matters' where the Council must provide consent to the Holding Company and Hotel Company for certain matters, • the requirement to provide both financial and operating information in respect of the hotel's operation on a regular basis, • the requirement to provide clarity and training for the Council's officer who is tasked with supporting the Council's role

				as shareholder – the Shareholder Representative, and <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide a mechanism for the Shareholder Representative to maintain a strategic relationship between Council’s Executive and the company.
Update the Schemes of Delegation to reflect changes in organisational structures.	New schemes in place	Head of Legal Services	End of 2023/24	A review of the departmental Schemes of Delegation has commenced.