

Report of	Meeting	Date
Monitoring Officer	Governance Committee	Tuesday, 25 January 2022

## Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 - Action Plan Update

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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### Purpose of the Report

- To update members on the progress of the agreed actions within the Annual Governance Statement action plan.

### Recommendations

- That the report be noted.

### Reasons for recommendations

- It is correct to report to members and update them on improvements delivered to address issues raised in the AGS. This provides assurance to the Committee that the governance framework is being maintained, and an opportunity to ask questions and test the works undertaken.

### Other options considered and rejected

- Not to report the works would remove the opportunity to provide assurance and for members to test the governance environment.

### Corporate priorities

- The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (please bold all those applicable):

<b>An exemplary council</b>	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

## Background to the report

6. In May 2021 Governance Committee approved in draft the Annual Governance Statement, which highlighted a number of areas, which whilst not significant failings required improvement. Members approved an action plan which provided details of the improvements required.
7. It is now approximately 6 months since approval and it is appropriate to update members on the works done to date and progress against the plan. The table below provides the theme and required improvement and an update.

Themes	Improvement Required	Update
Recruitment/Induction	<p>To ensure all new employees receive a comprehensive induction covering all core areas, the corporate induction will be updated to include welcome videos from the senior management, introduction to the borough and mandatory training covering core policies and health and safety.</p> <p>Continued focus on HR System transformation is required to ensure a robust administrative process is operational and suitable controls are in place for all aspects of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>	<p>A new online induction has been developed, tested and launched, providing a vastly improved experience for new starters. Managers have been briefed on the changes and their role in the induction process. The system will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any policy or process changes. The job application process has also been transferred to a new third party platform to ensure consistent collection of candidate data.</p> <p>All HR policies have now been reviewed and consulted on with staff. The shared HR policy framework is now complete. All managers will receive training on new policies processes and management best practice as part of the newly developed 'Passport to People Management' programme which has now been launched. A full schedule of mandatory training has been launched for all staff to cover key policies such as Safeguarding, Prevent and Equality and Diversity. The HR System project is progressing well with initial transfer of data into the new</p>

		system which will enable a shared payroll from April 2022. Further development will focus on staff self service functionality
Governance & Management	<p>Management Development Programme has been designed to establish a baseline level of management competency as well as providing ongoing support to maintain performance. The aim is to commence delivery with cohorts of managers from September 2021 through a range of methods including e-learning, which will also form part of the induction process for future managers.</p> <p>Introduce a standardised DMT agenda with agreed standing items to ensure a consistent approach is adopted across the Council. This will incorporate items of Corporate significance identified by the Communications team within their forward plan.</p>	<p>The new elearning platform has been launched.</p> <p>The Passport to People Management programme is being launched in January 2022.</p> <p>A standard Directorate Management Team agenda has been developed, shared and adopted by all directorates. The recorded use of the agenda can be evidence to support responses in the service assurance process.</p>
Fraud and Corruption	<p>Fraud awareness training to be delivered to all relevant officers using e-learning modules</p> <p>Fraud reports to be presented to Governance Committee</p> <p>Fraud risk register to be compiled and monitored on a regular basis</p>	<p>Mandatory training on Fraud and Corruption has been launched through the elearning hub and is required to be completed by end March 2022.</p> <p>The Fighting Fraud and Corruption checklist is being completed which will inform the compilation of the risk register.</p>
Corporate Information Source for Officers (Connect)	To improve the user experience for employees and ensure essential information is easy to access. The following	<p>Policies and Strategies are available on Connect.</p> <p>The proposed improvements (to establish</p>

	<p>improvements to Connect should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defined area on Connect for all core policies.</li> <li>• Service areas to review information they have published on Connect and to remove outdated material.</li> <li>• Create a manager zone within Connect to ensure all essential guidance and resources for managerial responsibilities are easily sourced.</li> </ul>	<p>a manager zone) will be implemented when Connect is relaunched later this year.</p>
Risk Management	<p>Ensure risk management is embedded throughout the organisation and within all Council activities.</p>	<p>Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally checklist being completed to compare the council's arrangements with best practice. – this will provide assurance over the council's approach to risk.</p> <p>Fraud reports being developed from the risks already contained within GRACE using fraud as the category. – such reports will confirm whether GRACE (the Council's risk management system) is being used which will demonstrate risk management being embedded within the organisation.</p>
Budget Monitoring	<p>To re-establish budget monitoring reports to aid budget holders after a further analysis of the report content is undertaken. Reports will be tailored to ensure that they meet the needs of the service area.</p>	<p>This work has been completed with reports being provided by Finance to budget holders and meetings to discuss taking place as necessary.</p>
GDPR	<p>The GDPR Leadership Group should undertake a full review to ensure that the register is up to date with</p>	<p>This review has been completed with relevant actions undertaken. The register has been updated</p>

	data responsibilities correctly defined and continue to monitor and expedite the outstanding data disposal actions to ensure they are implemented imminently.	and monitoring of data disposal is taking place.
Equality	The equality scheme should be revised and refreshed including revised equality objectives to ensure that it is up to date and fit for purpose	This review has been completed and the equality scheme updated and approved.
Key Corporate Policies	Devise and implement a corporate process to ensure all staff revisit key policies so a good level of awareness is maintained across the organisation.	This will be introduced as part of the development and implementation of a new intranet
Value for Money	Adopt an organisation wide Transformation Strategy & Programme incorporating a value for money elements to deliver efficient services through service reviews and shared services.	This has been completed with the Transformation Strategy developed, approved and in use aligned to the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
Inventories	Directors to ensure that inventories are compiled and maintained in accordance with the Councils guidance notes for service unit fixed assets registers.	Asset inventories have been prepared for 3 of the 5 directorates.  The remaining inventories are expected to be completed by the end of March 2022.
Transparency Act	Publish up to date information and include all mandatory criteria.	The follows actions have been completed:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publication of spend above £500</li> <li>- Publication of Contract Transparency register</li> <li>- Publication of up to date Structure Chart, Pay Policy and Senior Officer Salaries</li> </ul>

		The remaining actions will be completed before the end of the year.
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**Climate change and air quality**

8. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

**Equality and diversity**

9. There are no equality and diversity implications relating to this report.

**Risk**

10. The AGS action plan fulfils a risk management/ mitigation function, having identified areas which would improve the governance environment. Completing the actions serve to manage and mitigate risk.

**Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer**

11. There are no financial implications in this report.

**Comments of the Monitoring Officer**

12. It is not a legal requirement to deliver the action plan, however, to do so provides assurance to members that the governance environment is being improved and strengthened.

There are no background papers to this report

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