

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

19 JULY 2022

Report Title	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021/22			
Purpose of Report	To summarise Stroud District Council's corporate governance arrangements in place during 2021/22, via the publication of an Annual Governance Statement.			
Decision(s)	<p>The Committee RESOLVES to:</p> <p>I. Review and approve the Annual Governance Statement and the actions planned by the Council to further enhance good governance arrangements; and</p> <p>II. Agree that an update on actions taken to address the governance issues identified will be provided to the February 2023 Audit and Standards Committee meeting.</p>			
Consultation and Feedback	Strategic Leadership Team.			
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Options	There are no alternative options that are relevant to this matter.			
Background Papers	Reference and Council website links to supporting strategies, reports and documentation are made within the Annual Governance Statement.			
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22			
Implications (details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 There is a requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare an Annual Governance Statement.
- 1.2 As part of the Council's Constitution, it is the responsibility of the Audit and Standards Committee to approve this Statement.

2.0 MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 In April 2016, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and Society of Local Authorities Chief Executives (SOLACE) published 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016' and this applies to Annual Governance Statements prepared from the 2018/19 financial year. Guidance notes were

also published to assist Council Leaders and Chief Executives in reviewing and testing their governance arrangements against the revised seven principles for good governance.

2.2 The key focus of the Framework is on sustainability: economic, social and environmental and the need to focus on the longer term and the impact actions may have on future generations.

2.3 In response to the above, we therefore:

- I. Reviewed the existing governance arrangements against the revised principles set out in the Framework;
- II. Developed and implemented a refreshed local code of corporate governance, based on the principles, including an assurance framework for ensuring ongoing effectiveness; and
- III. Will report publicly, via the Annual Governance Statement on compliance with our code on an annual basis, how we have monitored the effectiveness of our governance arrangements in the year and on planned improvement areas.

2.4 The Annual Governance Statement is signed by the Leader, Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) and the Section 151 Officer. The Statement must accompany the Annual Statement of Accounts.

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 The Audit and Standards Committee are to consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement, to gain reasonable assurance that the governance arrangements are operating effectively within the Council and that the improvement actions identified will be implemented and monitored accordingly.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

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Risk Assessment:

Failure to deliver effective governance will impact on the ability of the Council to achieve its vision, outcomes and priorities.

4.2 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications in addition to those mentioned in the report.

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4.3 Equality Implications

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations made in this report.

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from the recommendations made within this report.