

GOVERNANCE ACTION PLANS PROGRESS

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Audit Committee with an update on progress made against the recommendations made in the internal Annual Governance reviews for 2012/13.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In compiling the Annual Governance Statement, the Council has regard to its Internal Control arrangements including Internal Audit and Risk Management, the outcomes of the annual Corporate Good Governance Review, any findings of the external auditor and other management arrangements. It further considers the processes applied in maintaining and reviewing the governance framework including those of the authority, the executive, audit and scrutiny committees, internal audit and other assurance mechanisms.
- 2.2 The statement for 2012/13, was first reviewed by Audit Committee on 21st June 2013, with the final version submitted for approval within this meeting agenda.

3. ACTION PLAN PROGRESS

- 3.1 Details of the issues arising from the Annual Governance Statement 2012/13 and the Good Governance Review 2012/13, including the responsible officer and progress to date are recorded in Table 1, Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Recommendations made by the External Auditor within their Governance Report 2011/12 have all been signed off as completed and therefore removed from this report. Any recommendations arising from their Findings report for 2012/13 (published in September 2013) will be included within the progress report provided to Audit Committee in January 2014.

4. FINANCIAL, EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENTAL & CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that Audit Committee note the progress to be made as detailed in Appendix 1.

For further information

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Background Papers from Audit Committee 21 June 2013

Review of Compliance with Local Code of Good Governance 2012/13 (Report A)

Annual Governance Statement 2012/13 (Report C)

Governance Action Plan Progress Update

The Council's Executive Management Team has responsibility for monitoring outcomes from the annual governance reviews. The 2012/13 Governance Action Plan was considered at their meeting of 17th September 2013. This document reports on progress in achieving required actions/outcomes. The action plan is also monitored by the Audit Committee.

The Action Plan incorporates required actions from the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), the annual Review of Compliance with the Local Code of Governance.

Table 1

Topic	Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline	Updated Progress as at 1.9.13
Financial Regulations (as uncompleted from 2011/12 AGS action plan)	To review and update Financial Regulations.	Executive Director (S151) in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services	30.9.13	Newly drafted Financial Regulations to undergo scrutiny with Senior Officers during September. The final version to be presented to EMT early October. Final approval to be sought from Cabinet and Council.
Employee Declaration of Interest	Following the update to the Bribery Act policy, policies and procedures surrounding Employee declarations of interest and Gifts and Hospitality should be reviewed and update where necessary	Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Head of Human Resources	31.3.14	Meetings held to review existing policies and procedures. In progress.
Strategic Risk - Economic conditions limit growth and employment	Review the Council's economic development strategy Engage with relevant Local Enterprise Partnerships to identify funding opportunities Develop a web based business portal to	Head of Leisure and Employment	31.3.14	Discussed at Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel, June 2013; paper circulated to all Members September and briefing due ahead of Council in October. Representation at both LEPs and serving on Solent LEP funding board.

	officer a single point of contact with the Council to support businesses within the district			Project Initiation Document agreed and delivery timescale set.
Strategic Risk - Continued financial austerity, lower levels of government funding and the introduction of legislative changes;	Develop a Medium Term Financial Plan including Service Review Programme that delivers the Council's priorities	Executive Director (S151)	31.3.14	MTFP in place and will be updated and presented to Cabinet.
	Fully implement the localised Council Tax reduction scheme and undertake a post implementation review	Head of Housing & Customer Services	31.12.13	Implemented Council Tax reduction scheme for 2013/14. Post-implementation review and consultation process for 2014/15 scheme currently in progress.
	Introduce Universal Credit for new benefit claims	Head of Housing & Customer Services	31.10.13	Government has not yet introduced Universal Credit for all new claims – pilots are underway in some areas.
	Monitor business rate growth and the impact on the Council's finances	Head of Housing & Customer Services	31.3.14	Procedures are currently being established to monitor business rate growth. Initial findings will be included in next Financial Monitoring Report to Cabinet.
Strategic Risk - Affordable housing does not meet the needs of the district;	Implement introductory tenancies for all new tenants	Head of Housing & Customer Services	31.3.14	Introductory tenancies for new tenants now in use
	Continue to acquire properties on the open market and construct new Council properties & Continue to work with partner Registered Providers to deliver additional homes in the District			36 acquired, 58 new affordable homes provided by Registered Providers, 89 empty properties brought back into use. Following agreed strategy to identify further

Appendix 1

				properties to acquire and commencing new build construction on council land including construction of 8 new properties in Totton and Milford.
Strategic Risk - Maintaining 5 quality Health & Leisure Centres	Monitor business performance to support current spending commitments	Head of Leisure & Employment	31.3.14	Year end monitoring to EMT completed. Financial performance exceeding targets. Contribution made to five year buildings financial planning which is in progress
Strategic Risk – Protection of the coastline	Have in place a coastal maintenance programme identifying priority projects Undertaking agreed coastal monitoring studies	Head of Property Services	31.3.14	The maintenance programme is in place and is being delivered. A Task & Finish Group has been set up to consider the strategy for dealing with changes to the funding regime.
Strategic Risk - External pressure for development	Deliver the Sites and Development Management Plan	Head of Planning and Transportation	31.3.14	Cabinet approved a strategy on 4 th September 2013 which should prepare the way for the Plan to be adopted in spring 2014