

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2014-2015

1 Purpose

This report proposes the approval of the Council's Annual Governance Statement for the year 2014/15, which was considered and approved by the Standards & Audit Committee on the 2nd July 2015, and is to be signed by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive.

2 Background

2.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended in 2006 and 2011) introduced the requirement for local authorities to:

- Conduct at least annually a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control
- Prepare an Annual Governance Statement
- Publish the Annual Governance Statement with the Statement of Accounts

2.2 The Regulations require councils to ensure that their financial management is adequate and effective and there is a sound system of internal control. This facilitates the effective exercise of that Council's functions including the management of risk and review of performance management.

2.3 The system of internal control includes more than just the financial aspects of the Council's business. It includes matters such as the establishment and monitoring of objectives, the arrangements for decision-making and ensuring compliance with established policies.

2.3 The Annual Governance Statement will be published alongside the Statement of Accounts by 30th September 2015. However, changes can be made to the Governance Statement after approval and before it is published.

3. Proposed Annual Governance Statement

3.1 CIPFA produced revised guidance in 2012 entitled "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" and a proforma statement, which the Council's Annual Governance Statement is based upon. A revised Local Code of Governance was adopted by the Council in 2014 and forms part of Part 5 of the Constitution.

3.2 The Statement is required to include notification of any significant internal control issues and an action plan to address them. No significant issues have been identified. A number of actions for the current year are identified and will be addressed during the year. Some of these actions were started during this

year but now have further actions identified to complete the various areas of work.

4 Recommendation

4.1 The Standards and Audit Committee recommend the Annual Governance Statement, attached as Appendix 1, to Cabinet for:

- Adoption, and
- Publishing alongside the Council's Statement of Accounts

Ann Greaves
Solicitor to the Council

Background information:

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003

CIPFA Guidance – Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2012

RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANNUAL CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2014/15

1 Scope of Responsibility

- 1.1 Rushmoor Borough Council (“the Council”) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which include arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3 The Council approved and adopted a revised Code of Corporate Governance on the 10th July 2014, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (based on the December 2012 Addendum). A copy of the code will be available on the Council’s website.
- 1.4 This statement explains how the Council has complied with the Code and meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, regulation 4(3), which require all relevant public bodies to prepare an annual governance statement.

2 The Purpose of the Governance Framework

- 2.1 The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and the activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective value for money services.
- 2.2 The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council’s policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
- 2.3 The governance framework has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2015 and up to the date of the approval of the Council’s statement of accounts.

3 The Governance Framework

- 3.1 The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Council’s governance arrangements are as described below and include arrangements for:

Identifying and communicating the authority's vision of its purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users

There is a clear vision of the Council's purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users communicated within the organisation and to stakeholders. This is set out in the Rushmoor Borough Council Corporate Plans 2014-15 and 2015-16 as "working with others to improve the quality of people's lives". This document has been informed by the Rushmoor Strategic Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2026 prepared by the Rushmoor Strategic Partnership, a non-statutory, non-executive organisation working within the boundaries of Rushmoor bringing together the skills of the public, private, voluntary and community sectors when working at a local level. This document sets out the partners' vision for the future and the key priorities for the future. The vision and priorities from the SCS have been reflected in the Corporate Plan.

Underpinning the Purpose in the Corporate Plan are five themes:-

- Leadership - Providing leadership to make Rushmoor the place where our communities want to live and work
- Prosperity - Sustaining and developing our local economy
- Place - Protecting and developing a safe, clean and sustainable environment
- People and Communities - Supporting our people and communities and meeting local needs
- Good Value Services - Ensuring quality services that represent good value for money

Reviewing the authority's vision and its implications for the authority's governance arrangements

The Cabinet reviews progress against the Corporate Plan on a quarterly basis by reviewing the targets that relate to what the Council has said that it will do in order to deliver the plans priorities. Details of these reviews are published and the 4th quarter review informs the measures and targets to be incorporated in the next years plan. The Council's Cabinet meeting of the 2nd June considered the 4th quarter and the end of year monitoring report. The same Cabinet meeting also endorsed the Rushmoor Corporate Plan 2015-16.

The Directors' Management Board and the Council's service heads also undertake regular and more detailed monitoring and performance against targets in the Corporate Plan and which can be scrutinised by member panels with specific remits. This acts as the key corporate performance monitoring process for the Council.

The Council has adopted a Code of Corporate Governance ("CCG") which identifies, in one document, how the Council ensures that it runs itself in a lawful, structured, ethical and professional manner. The CCG is administered by the Head of Democratic and Customer Services and the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council and is subject to an annual "light touch" review with any recommendations presented to the Standards and Audit Committee.

Measuring the quality of services for users, to ensure that they are delivered in accordance with the authority's objectives and for ensuring they represent the best use of resources

The Rushmoor Borough Council Corporate Plan Strategic and Performance Updates Quarter 4 2014-15 and End of Year Section 2 Corporate Health Measures sets out the monitoring

measures and the customer satisfaction results on the web site service, Customer Service Unit call statistics and customer satisfaction surveys.

The Council's Procurement Strategy and associated Contract Standing Orders, which form part of the Council's constitution, govern how the Council buys the supplies, services and works that it needs. The Council is committed to achieving Best Value from its suppliers and ensuring that goods and services are procured in the most efficient and cost effective way.

Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication in respect of the authority and partnership arrangements

The Council has a Constitution that sets out how it operates, how decisions are made (including Officers Delegated Powers contained in Part 3 of the Constitution) and the procedures followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these procedures are statutory whilst other are discretionary in nature. The Constitution is divided into 16 Articles and sets out the detailed rules governing the Council's business. It is published on the internet at

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/article/3625/The-constitution>

Developing, communicating and embedding codes of conduct, defining the standard of behaviour for members and staff

The Council's Constitution contains a Code of Conduct for Councillors, reviewed in 2014, and contains the statutory code relating to disclosable pecuniary interests, requirements relating to the disclosure of non-pecuniary interests and sets out the expected behaviour and standards to be adhered to by councillors. In addition, the Protocol for Member - Officer Relations, the Disciplinary Procedure, the Code of Conduct for Officers, the Whistle Blowing Policy and the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy set out the standards of service and conduct that are expected of employees.

Reviewing the effectiveness of the authority's decision making framework, including delegation arrangements, decision making in partnerships and robustness of data quality

The Council's Constitution details how the Council operates, including how decisions are made and the role of the Policy and Review Panels performing scrutiny and overview functions. It also includes the powers, duties and functions that are delegated to officers in Part 3 of the Constitution. The Head of Democratic and Customer Services, with advice from the Monitoring Officer, is conducting an ongoing review of the Council's constitutional arrangements in order to ensure that the arrangements are up to date and compliant with the Council's legal duties. Reports will be taken to the Standards and Audit Committee with any recommendations for revision and then considered by the Licensing and General Purposes Committee prior to submission to Council for adoption of any recommended changes

Reviewing the effectiveness of the framework for identifying and managing risks and demonstrating clear accountability

The Standards and Audit Committee has responsibility for providing independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control and reporting environment including (but not limited to) the reliability of the financial reporting processes and the Annual Governance Statement. In addition, the Committee needs to satisfy itself

that appropriate action is being taken on risk and internal control related issues identified by the internal and external auditors and other review and inspection bodies.

The Council has in place a Risk Management Policy which is currently under review and which sets out the Council's overall approach to managing risk. The Policy, which is formally approved by the Standards and Audit Committee, is to be subject to an annual review by a risk management group that will report to the Standards and Audit Committee to ensure that it continues to reflect good practice and remains aligned with current business processes and practices. The Council also has in place a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan, which is undergoing a refresh.

Ensuring effective counter-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are developed and maintained

The Council has in place an Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy that has been the subject of review this year and which is published on the internet as part of the Council's Constitution, reflecting the Council's approach and commitment to the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption.

Ensuring effective management of change and transformation

System Thinking - The Council continues to develop and deliver improvements using System Thinking Principles to improve the quality and efficiency of its services and the organisation through an intervention programme, shared learning, training and development activities. A Systems Thinking Learning Network has been developed.

A Channel Shift Project is in place, aimed at improving customer interaction and identifying efficiency savings. Additionally, linked to the 8-Point Plan, a wider digital strategy is being developed in consultation with elected members and partner organisations.

A Co-location programme has been developed to create an appropriate and effective working environment, which secures significant financial benefit and prepares the Council to meet future changes in services. A second phase of this successful programme is currently being worked upon to identify short and longer-term opportunities.

Shared Services – The Council has an existing programme of shared services and is now well advanced in developing a shared building control service between Rushmoor and Hart DC to secure resilience of the service.

The Eight Point Plan – Further work has been undertaken to deliver and develop the Council's 8-Point Plan, which is a strategy to ensure financial and service sustainability, by reducing net revenue spend over the medium to long term. During the course of this year, this plan has been revised and now contains eight projects, as follows:-

Point 1 – The Work Book

Point 2 – Efficiency and Transformation

Point 3 – Income Generation and Investment Opportunities

Point 4 – Better Use of Property and Assets

Point 5 – Financial Strategy

Point 6 – Organisational Structure

Point 7 – Better Procurement

Point 8 – Taxation Policies

Each project within the plan has a programme manager and a senior management programme board provides governance, oversight and the resources required by programme managers to enable the projects to move forward. The 8-Point Plan is “owned” by the Cabinet and all staff and councillors have been briefed upon the projects contained within the plan.

The Organisational Development Strategy, which is designed to support the service transformation and cultural change required for longer term financial sustainability continues to be developed with Action Learning Sets, mentoring and coaching initiatives and Crucial Conversations Training for senior and middle managers having been completed. This strategy and related programme is designed to shape a flexible, motivated and effective workforce fit for the future and to support the community leadership role of councillors.

The Programme Board – this officer board continues to provide effective monitoring of major projects with the application of project management principles.

Peer Challenge – in early 2015 the Council participated in a Peer Challenge supported by the LGA and is currently developing its response and action plan.

Options for future contract arrangements for refuse, recycling and grounds maintenance – the Council is currently engaged in competitive dialogue procurement to deliver this service to a high standard and, subject to the tendered outcomes, at a reduced cost.

Welfare Reform and Business Rates – the Council has continued to spend considerable time and effort during 2014/15 exploring, understanding and learning from two major change programmes – Welfare Reform and Business Rates Retention. The Welfare Reform Task & Finish Group continues to analyse the impact of Welfare changes on both the Council and its residents. This work has informed the design of the Council’s local Council Tax Support Scheme and ensured its effective implementation and has been recognised with a national Citizens Advice Bureau award. Work has continued on extracting data from our own systems and from the Valuation Office in respect of Business Rates, particularly regarding the impact of rating appeals. This has led to the development of a comprehensive appeals risk model which has ensured reliability of financial projections across the medium term and has being cited by CIPFA in a case study as an example of national best practice.

Ensuring the authority’s financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA “statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010)”

The Chief Financial Officer has responsibility for the proper administration of the Council’s financial affairs in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Council has designated the Head of Financial Services as the Chief Financial Officer. While this arrangement does not conform precisely to the requirements of the CIPFA Statement, it does not impact on the effectiveness of the Chief Financial Officer in undertaking her role.

The Head of Financial Services is a member of the Wider Leadership Team and has unfettered access to Directors’ Management Board, the Chief Executive and to Cabinet. A significant review of the Council’s senior management structure was undertaken in 2014/2015 with collaborate working by senior officers to establish an officer structure for the Council, which is fit for the challenges of the future. This review revised the role of Directors Management Board to enhance its strategic role and to devolve operational issues

to Heads of Service. The DMB now consists of two Corporate Directors and the Chief Executive. Directors no longer have direct service responsibility but manage a number of strategic projects, which cut across a number of different service areas within the Council. The Council's senior management team has been reviewed and reduced to eight Heads of Service' who, together with the members of the DMB, form the Senior Leadership Team for the Council. As part of this review, the responsibilities of some of the Heads of Service changed to make services more efficient or to bring services together in areas where there was synergy of services. Each Head of Service will be looking at the structure within their service area over the coming year.

Ensuring the authority's assurance arrangements conform with the governance requirement of the CIPFA "Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2010)

The Head of Internal Audit (HIA) occupies a critical position in the organisation, helping it to achieve its objectives by giving assurance on its internal control arrangements and playing a key role in promoting good corporate governance. The HIA reports directly to the Corporate Director who has strategic responsibility for this function and has unfettered access to the Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer, Directors Management Board and to the Standards & Audit Committee. The HIA works closely with the Wider Leadership Team in carrying out internal audit work, promoting good governance and more recently in providing project management expertise. The HIA also works closely with the independent, external auditor in order to use audit resources most effectively.

Ensuring the arrangements are in place for the discharge of the monitoring officer function

The Solicitor to the Council is designated as the Monitoring Officer with responsibility for ensuring compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulation, and reporting any actual or potential breach of the law or maladministration to the full Council and/or the Cabinet. The Legal Services Manager is the nominated Deputy Monitoring Officer.

Ensuring effective arrangement are in place for the discharge of the Head of Paid Service function

The Chief Executive is designated as the Head of Paid Service with responsibility for leading the Director's Management Board and the Wider Leadership Team and in driving forward the strategic agenda, set by Cabinet, improving the efficiency and performance of the council and ensuring that the community receives high quality, value for money services.

Undertaking the core function of an audit committee, as identified in CIPFA's Audit Committee – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities

The Council has a formally constituted Standards and Audit Committee that undertakes the core functions of an audit committee and operates in accordance with CIPFA guidance. It provides independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control and reporting environment, including (but not limited to) the reliability of the financial reporting processes and the annual governance statement. Currently the Council's Licensing and General Purposes Committee is also a body 'charged with governance' and that it is the combined effort of this Committee and the Standards and Audit Committee that fulfils the Council's governance function.

Whistle Blowing, receiving and investigating complaints from the Public

The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability and has in place a "Whistle Blowing Policy". This policy was revised in 2014 and reflects the legal framework and obligation on the Council to enable staff to raise concerns that may involve unlawful conduct, illegality, financial malpractice or dangers to the public, employees or the environment.

Complaints from the public are dealt with in accordance with the Complaints Policy. This policy has been revised this year to reflect the Ombudsman's guidance and will be coming forward for approval by Cabinet shortly and will then be published on the Council's website. There is a separate Policy in place in respect of dealing with complaints made about members, which is on the Council's website.

Identifying the development needs of members and senior officer in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training

The Council has developed and keeps under review a Member Training and Development Plan, which is aimed at providing a long-term view to learning and development whilst remaining sufficiently flexible to reflect changing priorities. The Council was awarded the South East Employers Charter for Member Development in 2013, following an assessment of the Council's training programme. The Cabinet has appointed a cross party Member Development Group to drive forward member development and support.

The Member Training and Development Plan currently include the following:-

- Induction programme
- Regulatory panel training
- Ward Member mentoring Scheme
- Skills training and workshops
- Personal development planning is offered and available
- Work shadowing front line services
- Scrutiny training
- Governance and Code of Conduct training
- A range of electronic resources and training

This year, the Council's appraisal programme has been refreshed with appraisal processes designed to suit individual services. The Council has introduced a guest theme into the appraisal process across the council as part of the organisational development programme, and this year the guest theme is the "Simple Rules".

The Council's Organisational Development Programme for staff is now moving into its third year and has been rolled out throughout the organisation to ensure that the Council is sustainable for the future. Action Learning Sets, Coaching Skills, System Thinking Learning Networks, Appraisal Champions groups, work on management development, review of some key policies and engagement with staff through the Chief Executive's briefing sessions, are all features of this programme for 15/16.

Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stake holders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation

The Council believes that all people should have the opportunity to voice their opinions on

issues that affect them and to this end developed a Community and Business Engagement Strategy, which is currently working with members to update. The Council actively seeks the views of customers and staff through customer satisfaction surveys, community consultations, events and exhibitions, social media and through its web site. The Council has a walk-in Customer Services Unit, where customers seek advice and access services.

The Council promotes how people can have their say in a number of ways. It publicises individual consultations through traditional media (media, posters, flyers, exhibition boards etc), email, social media and its website. The Council's Statement of Community Involvement guides Planning Policy consultations.

As part of the Council's work on organisational development, work has started with elected Members to understand their community leadership and representational roles and how these can be developed in the future.

The Rushmoor Borough Council website has a section devoted to enabling people to 'have their say', including an on-going survey about the Council and the local area and how to join the Big Aldershot Conversation. The website also provides information about the Rushmoor Business Network, the Senior Citizens' Forum, the Council's Citizens' Panel and the Rushmoor Youth Forum.

The purpose of these various groups and fora is to provide a systematic analysis of needs provision, opportunities and gaps in the Borough, based on accurate, relevant and up-to-date information that will inform collaborative work with partners and help deliver the priorities in the Rushmoor Corporate Plan. The Council also carries out an annual budget consultation exercise with its Senior Citizens' Forum, business ratepayers and the voluntary sector.

Enhancing the accountability for service delivery and effectiveness of other public service providers

Annually the Council produces a Corporate Plan. This plan sets out its future priorities and planned activities and actions to deliver on the Council's stated purpose of "working with others to improve the quality of people's lives". The Cabinet reviews progress against the Corporate Plan on a quarterly basis. The Directors' Management Board also regularly carries out monitoring and the Council's Senior Officers and Member Panels scrutinise performance on areas under their particular remit. This report acts as the key corporate performance monitoring process for the Council. The quarterly report contains detail of performance and identifies where targets are not being met or where slippage has occurred in delivering improvement measures.

A number of Council services are delivered in partnership with external service providers. A Contract Management team that provide a senior management interface between the Council and our partnership service provider manages these out sourced contracts. All such arrangements include a suite of key performance indicators and are based upon a culture of continuous improvement, recognising the need to achieve a balance between the Council's financial position and long term strategic aims.

Incorporating good governance arrangements in respect of partnership and other joint working as identified by the Audit Commission report on the governance of partnerships, and reflecting these in the authority's overall governance arrangements

The terms of all joint working arrangements with other authorities are set out in Joint Service Agreements, such as that of the North Hampshire Community Safety Partnership. In view of the gradual increase in joint working arrangements, the Council recognises the longer-term need to prepare and adopt a Partnership Code, which will form part of the Council's Constitution. This will ensure that sound governance arrangements are in place in respect of partner and partnership engagement and can be reviewed as partnership-working arrangements develop and evolve.

4 REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness is informed by the work of the Chief Executive and Directors within the authority, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Head of Internal Audit's annual report and by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

The review process applied in respect of maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:-

- The views of Internal Audit reported to the Standards and Audit Committee via the Internal Audit Progress Report that includes executive summaries of new reports published where critical weaknesses or unacceptable levels of risk were identified.
- The views of the external auditors, regularly reported to the Standards and Audit Committee, including regular progress reports, the Annual Audit Letter and Annual Governance Report
- The Chief Internal Auditor Annual Report and Opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control environment
- The Internal Audit Strategy and delivery of the annual operational plan
- The work of the Corporate Directors, the Chief Executive and Head of Democratic and Customer Services within the authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment
- The independent views of regulatory inspection agencies such as the OSC and Government Connect audit
- The Risk Management Strategy, the Risk Management Manual and the Corporate Risks Register supported by the work of the Risk Management Group
- The work of the Standards and Audit Committee in discharging its responsibility to lead on all aspects of corporate governance with the Licensing and General Purposes Committee retaining responsibility for the Council's Constitution.

The Standards and Audit Committee has advised us on the implications of the result of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework and that the arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

The areas already addressed and those to be specifically addressed with new actions planned are outlined below:

	GOVERNANCE ISSUE	PLANNED ACTION	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
1.	The Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy; Whistle Blowing Policy and Anti-Money Laundering Policy all have been updated and require monitoring to ensure that they are effective	Appropriate arrangements are to be made to communicate the updated policies to staff and responsibility for monitoring compliance with these policies will be undertaken by the Risk Management Group	Auditor
2	Contract Standing Orders have been revised and a training programme needs to be rolled out throughout the council to ensure compliance	Ensure all contracting officers attend training on the revised Contract Standing orders; procurement procedures and contracts register	Head of Strategy Engagement and Organisational Development
3	Revised Code of Conduct has been adopted covering interests other than DPI's	Ensure that councillors who have yet to attend the training sessions receive appropriate training	Monitoring Officer
4	Officer Code of conduct	This has been prepared and adopted but staff will need to be advised of the requirements of the code during 2015	Head of Strategy Engagement and Organisational Development
5	Partnership Code	Consider adopting a partnership code in view of increased partnership working	Monitoring Officer
6	Media guidelines for councillors	In view of the increased use of social media for communications and engagement, the Council will consider adopting social media guidance for staff and councillors as part of its new Communications (and Engagement) Strategy.	Monitoring Officer and Head of Strategy Engagement and Organisational Development
7	Confidential Information	Review need for protocol	Monitoring Officer
8	Complaints procedure	Complaints procedure has been reviewed in accordance with new regulators' code and following approval, staff need to be informed of revised procedures and the procedure promoted on the Council's website	Head of Democratic and Customer Services
9	Transparency Code	Complete the work required to comply with the Code of recommended Practice of Local Authorities on Data Transparency Dec 2014 in relation to land ownership	Monitoring Officer and Head of IT

10	Equality Objectives	Work towards “developing standard” of the Public Sector Equalities Duty across the council	Monitoring Officer
11	Fraud	Review the arrangements for investigating corporate fraud in response to the establishment of SFIS (Single Fraud Investigation Service) and potential transfer of benefit investigation officers to the DWP	DMB
12	Project management	Develop and implement a programme of improvement for Capital Project Management and projects generally	Head of Strategy Engagement and Organisational Development in consultation with Audit
13	Peer Review	Respond to the findings of the Peer Challenge and agree and implement an action/ improvement plan	DMB
14	Scheme of Delegation	Review the officer Scheme of Delegation	Head of Democratic and Customer Services
15	Risk Management	Review and update the Risk Management Policy and the Corporate Risks Register	Head of Finance

We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to enhance further our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the needs for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review

Signed.....
Leader of the Council

Signed.....
Chief Executive

Dated.....