

2017/18 Annual Governance Statement

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Purpose of the Report

This report has been prepared for the Audit Committee to approve the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2017/18.

Recommendation(s)

Audit Committee approves the 2017/18 Annual Governance Statement.

Background

As a local authority SSDC is required to demonstrate compliance with the underlying principles of good governance and that a framework exists to demonstrate this. One of the Council's requirements in demonstrating this is to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) provide guidance on the processes for the establishment, operation and review of the system of internal control. Their guidance also provides help on the format and content of the AGS.

Annual Governance Statement

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 includes a requirement to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The regulations require authorities to carry out in each financial year a review of the effectiveness of their system of internal control and may include an Annual Governance Statement in the annual accounts. This is to provide assurance that SSDC has a sound internal control framework in place to manage the risks that might prevent achievement of its statutory obligations and organisational objectives.

The statement also reflects the compliance with the "Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government (2016) and the CIPFA statement of the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2010)." This is evidenced within the Annual Governance Statement where the authority meets with best practice.

The Annual Governance Statement is required to be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

The Statement also reflects Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). The Standards also require a Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme which has been included within the Review of Internal Audit and will be monitored by the Audit Committee.

In producing the Annual Governance Statement, reports from SSDC's external auditors, South West Audit Partnership, a review of the effectiveness of internal audit, the annual review of the Assistant Director of SWAP, and a review of all Statements of Operational Service Internal Controls have been undertaken. The review has been completed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) comprising the Chief Executive, Directors, Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer.

There are no significant issues to be addressed. Significant issues are issues that would be highlighted through SLT in carrying out its Corporate Governance function, the S151 Officer, by Internal Audit as a risk score of 5, or highlighted through the work of External Audit. The action plan included within the Annual Governance Statement will further strengthen the control framework.

The style of presentation of the Annual Governance Statement will be reviewed during 2018 to reflect requirements and good practice in latest guidance.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with these recommendations.

Background Papers: *None*
