

## **Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022-23**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report has been prepared to enable the Audit Committee to consider if the Council's Draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2022-23 properly reflects the corporate governance arrangements in place for the year to date.

### **Recommendations**

- a) That Audit Committee approves the 2022-23 Draft Annual Governance Statement and recommends it for approval by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.
- b) That the 2022-23 Draft Annual Governance Statement is recommended to the new Somerset Council for approval alongside the South Somerset District Council Statement of Accounts 2022/23.

### **Background**

2. 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. A key element of this is the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).
3. The Council has adopted a Code of Corporate Governance that is consistent with the CIPFA Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (2016). The AGS explains how the Council has complied with the requirements of the Framework and its Code, which was adopted in October 2019.

### **Draft Annual Governance Statement**

4. The Annual Governance Statement is required by Regulation 6(1)(b) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015. Its purpose is to provide assurance that SSDC has a sound internal control framework in place to manage the risks that might otherwise prevent achievement of its statutory obligations and organisational objectives.
5. The normal process is for a Council to approve an Annual Governance Statement each year and append it to the Statement of Accounts. This Draft Annual Governance Statement is the last AGS for South Somerset District Council prior to the transfer of its functions to the new Somerset Council on 1 April 2023 under the provisions of The Somerset (Structural Changes) Order 2022. It has been prepared before 31 March 2023 so that it can be approved through existing arrangements. The assessments and

comments throughout the draft AGS reflect the information available at the time of preparation in March 2023 so are not representative of the full year and approval will be on that basis. It will be for the new Somerset Council to decide if further work is required prior to the consideration of the Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 when this is available.

6. In producing the draft AGS, reports from the Council's external auditors, South West Audit Partnership, a review of the effectiveness of internal audit, and the annual review of the Assistant Director of SWAP have been taken into account.
7. There are no new or on-going significant issues to be addressed. Significant issues are issues that would be highlighted through SLT in carrying out its Corporate Governance function, by the section 151 Officer or the Monitoring Officer, by Internal Audit as a risk score of 5, or highlighted through the work of External Audit.

### **Financial Implications**

8. There are no financial implications associated with these recommendations

### **Legal implications (if any) and details of Statutory Powers**

9. There are no legal implications associated with these recommendations

### **Risk Matrix**

10. Risk considerations are included in the contents of the report.

### **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

11. There are no carbon emissions and climate change implications associated with these recommendations

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

12. There are no equality and diversity implications associated with these recommendations

### **Privacy Impact Assessment**

13. There are no privacy impact implications associated with these recommendations

### **Background Papers**

None

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