

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title:	Approval for Publication of the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement
Meeting/Date:	Corporate Governance Committee – 22 July 2021
Executive Portfolio:	Strategic Resources: Councillor J A Gray
Report by:	Chief Finance Officer
Wards affected:	All Wards

Executive Summary:

The Council is required by statute to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS, **Appendix A**) . This document is produced in line with statutory regulations and are required to be approved by ‘those charged with governance’ and published on or before 1st August 2021.

In respect of the AGS, the main themes for 2020/21 are:

- Housing affordability
- Morbidity/growing number of years of ill health
- Wider economic environment
- Skill levels and educational attainment
- Partner agency operational pressures
- Environmental pressures

Recommendations:

1. Approve the Annual Governance Statement (**Appendix A**) and authorises the Executive Leader and Managing Director to sign the Statement on behalf of the Council.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To complete the processes for finalising and publishing the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2020/21.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Corporate Governance Committee is designated as 'those charged with governance' and consequently it is required to approve the AGS prior to publication by the statutory deadline 1st August.

3. APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

- 3.1 The Committee, on behalf of the Council is required to review once a year the effectiveness of its system of internal control and following that review approve the AGS. The AGS will be published alongside the AFR and is shown at **Appendix A**.

- 3.2 A copy of the draft AGS has been previously circulated to all Committee members and no comments has been received.

- 3.3 The governance statement includes 6 significant themes:

- Housing affordability
- Morbidity/growing number of years of ill health
- Wider economic environment
- Skill levels and educational attainment
- Partner agency operational pressures
- Environmental pressures

- 3.4 These issues notwithstanding, the governance arrangements and the internal control environment are considered to be operating effectively.

- Achieved underspend of £0.248m against a budget of £17.282m
- Net contribution to reserves of £1.210m
- Continued to maintain General Fund Reserves at 15% of net expenditure
- Delivered acquisitions of £11.418m in relation to the Commercial Investment Strategy as a part of the on-going £30m business plan

- 3.5

4. KEY IMPACTS

- 4.1 Paragraph 3 above outlines the control observations and the associated management comments.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 5.1 Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led Council – to become more business-like and efficient in the way we deliver services. The production of the AFR is also a statutory requirement.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 In line with the Account and Audit regulations for 2020/21.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There is a specific budget for the Audit Fees.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

9.1 The process that has been followed in preparing the AGS has been thorough and in line with statutory regulations.

9.2 The issues that have been identified for inclusion within the AGS are referenced within the statement and are a reflection of the current situation.

10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Annex A – 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement (Draft)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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