

**ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE ON CORPORATE GOVERNANCE
(Report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer)**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Panel to a Statement of Assurance in relation to arrangements for and the exercise of the Council's corporate governance arrangements in 2004/05 and its completion by authorised signatories.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Statement of Assurance was introduced in 2003/04 following on from the adoption by the Council of its Code of Corporate Governance. The Statement is regarded as an essential element in assuring proper corporate governance practices by local authorities in the conduct of their business, in safeguarding the use of their resources and in engendering confidence in their accountability and integrity on the part of the electorate and other stakeholders.
- 2.2 Last year the Statement was reported in conjunction with the Reports and Accounts, but bearing in mind the advancement of the timescale for preparation of the Annual Statement of Accounts, those arrangements have now changed. However, and as is mentioned in the report on the Code of Corporate Governance tabled elsewhere on the Agenda, the Statement of Assurance will continue to be published in conjunction with the Statement of Accounts.

3. CONCLUSIONS


- 3.1 The Statement of Assurance for 2004/05 reviews the Council's corporate governance arrangements and their exercise during the course of the year. It details specific issues which were addressed and identifies others for consideration in 2005/06.
- 3.2 As in August 2004, it is envisaged that the Statement will be signed by the Chairman of the Panel and the Chief Executive on behalf of the Council.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Panel is recommended to —
- approve the Statement of Assurance on Corporate Governance for 2004/05; and
 - authorise the Chairman of the Panel and the Chief Executive to sign the Statement on behalf of the Council.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Council's Code of Corporate Governance, updated as at September 2005.
The Annual Statement of Assurance on Corporate Governance, August 2004.
CIPFA Finance Advisory Network: Statement on Internal Control: A Rough
Guide for Practitioners.

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