

AUDIT COMMITTEE: 30 January 2018

SENIOR MANAGEMENT ASSURANCE STATEMENT REVIEW

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE

AGENDA ITEM: 7.1

Reason for this Report

1. This report has been prepared to provide Audit Committee with a summary of the completed Senior Management Assurance Statements (SMAS's) for the mid-year position in the financial year 2017/18.

Background

1. Good governance is being open and transparent in our affairs, highlighting areas of concern at a corporate level and setting out effective arrangements for their management.
2. Directors have been asked to complete a Senior Management Assurance Document (SMAS), which feeds into the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which forms a part of the Council's Statement of Accounts. The purpose of the AGS is to provide a true reflection of the governance arrangements in place within the Council.
3. Completion of the SMAS requires each Director to engage with their management teams in an evidence-based review. The assessment rating system is a 5-point maturity assessment, ranging from 'not in place', 'limited application', 'mixed application', 'strong application' to 'embedded'.
4. This evidence-based approach was introduced during 2016/17 and has been carried forward to 2017/18. The aim is to demonstrate more clearly the different levels of achievement across directorates, and to facilitate proportionate priority actions for directorates, where required. The rating system is aligned to the Audit Committee Self-assessment scale which is used for annual review purposes, in order to make the assessment more understandable and comparable.

Issues

5. There were 23 assurance statements answered by each Director, following engagement and review by their respective management teams. The results of the statements, summarised within 9 categories are included in Appendix A.
6. The results continue to show an overall 'strong' application of good governance across the assurance areas. The greatest maturity was identified in relation to internal control environment, risk management, fraud, financial impropriety, and compliance, performance management, programme and project assurance, monitoring, and maintaining a challenging budget position. These areas were assessed as strong or above at rates between 71% and 100%.

7. Partnership & collaborative governance is an area which has been identified as 36% Strong+ with the majority of directorates identifying mixed application. Opportunities have been identified to enhance the discipline of partnership governance particularly in respect to service delivery over the forthcoming year through inclusion of partnership activity within the overall monitoring reports to SMT.

Legal Implications

8. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Financial Implications

9. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. That the Committee notes the content of the report.

IAN ALLWOOD
HEAD OF FINANCE
30 January 2018

The following Appendix is attached:

Appendix A – Summary of Senior Management Assurance Statements 2017/18 (Mid-Year)