

**Agenda Item No:** 4

**Report To:** Audit Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018

**Report Title:** Annual Governance Statement – Progress on Remediating Exceptions

**Report Author & Job Title:** Charlotte Hammersley, Compliance and Data Protection Manager

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Shorter  
**Portfolio Holder for:** Finance & IT



<b>Summary:</b>	This report updates on the progress made towards the areas of review highlighted by the 2017-2018 Annual Governance Statement
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**Key Decision:** NO

**Significantly Affected Wards:** N/A

**Recommendations:** **The Audit Committee is asked to note the progress made towards the areas of review highlighted by the Annual Governance Statement as detailed in this report.**

**Policy Overview:** Each year the council must produce and approve an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The ASG is designed to summarise for Members and residents, the council's approach to governance and show how the council fulfils the principles for good corporate governance in the public sector.

**Financial Implications:** None

**Legal Implications** None

**Equalities Impact Assessment** Not required as this is a monitoring report which doesn't propose any change to the council's processes or procedures.

**Other Material Implications:** None

**Exempt from Publication:** NO

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## Annual Governance Statement – Progress on Remedying Exceptions

### Introduction and Background

1. Each year the council must produce and approve an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The ASG is designed to summarise for Members and residents the council's approach to governance and show how the council fulfils the principles for good corporate governance in the public sector. The AGS draws conclusions, based on evidence throughout the past year, about the effectiveness of the council's arrangements.
2. The 2017-2018 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) was agreed at the June 2018 meeting of the Audit Committee and identified three areas for continued work and review which are set out in the table below:

Governance Area	Responsible Department	To be delivered by
Extend the use of Modern.Gov to include management team meetings and officer delegated decisions taken	Legal and Democratic Services	December 2018
Development of an action plan arising from the Peer Challenge review	Directors / Management Team	September 2018
Implementation of the Contract Management project plan	Legal and Democratic Services	March 2019

3. This report provides updates on the progress made towards these areas of review highlighted by the 2017-2018 Annual Governance Statement.

### Purpose of this report

4. To update on the progress made towards the areas of review highlighted by the 2017-2018 Annual Governance Statement.

## **Progress to Date**

### **Extending the use of Modern Gov**

5. Much progress has been made with the Modern.Gov project. The system is now used to publish agendas and minutes on both the council website and intranet. Management Team meetings are now hosted on the system and it is working well. The process for recording Officer delegated decisions is on course to be completed by the end of 2018. An assessment of the most effective system to deliver this action is currently taking place.

### **Local Government Association Peer Challenge Action Plan**

6. In April 2018 the council welcomed a team of councillors and senior officers from Local Government Association (LGA) member authorities to complete a peer challenge of the council's corporate governance. The peer challenge team made a report containing a number of recommendations. The report was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 13 September 2018 together with an action plan to implement the recommendations.
7. The peer challenge process includes a light touch follow up visit expected to occur within two years of the original visit. In response to this, the majority of actions within the action plan are intended to be underway or complete within this timeframe.

### **Implementation of the Contract Management Project Plan**

8. Following a comprehensive review of the council's contract management arrangements, a proposal was constructed to implement improvements in contract management.
9. A report was made to the 27 September meeting of this Committee detailing the progress to-date and the forward plan to develop a more proactive category based procurement and contract management lifecycle approach, to improve the structure, management and delivery of contracts. A number of workshops have been held across the Council and others are planned over the forthcoming weeks and months.
10. The forward plan has been phased to ensure the work can be progressed as quickly as possible, some actions within the plan have taken place including the analysis of contract and spend and the segmentation of contracts.
11. A new Contract Officer has been appointed. The remainder of the actions within the forward plan are scheduled to take place over the coming months, with a framework in place by the end of this calendar year. The remaining actions include an Organisational Review for procurement and contracts and the development of a Contract Management Strategy. The new post holder will further develop this service in the coming calendar year.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

12. The action plan responding to the LGA Peer Challenge has been developed and approved by the Cabinet so the Annual Governance Statement action can be considered complete.
13. Work continues to implement the Contract Management Project Plan and extend the use of Modern.gov and further updates will be provided at future meetings of this Committee until they are complete. This is to be expected – being the first quarterly update against the council's compliance (and still in advance of each area's 'to be delivered by' date).

## **Contact and Email**

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