

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Annual Governance Statement Action Plan

27th November 2024

Report of Monitoring Officer

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with an update on the Action Plan referred to in the AGS in connection with other governance issues identified.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the progress and steps yet to be taken on the Action Plan be noted.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 In July 2024 the Council issued its Annual Governance Statement (AGS) following the Audit Committee's consideration of the document on 31 July 2024. The AGS identified various issues to be addressed. These are split into two categories – (a) Other Governance Issues and (b) Significant Challenges for 2023/24 and beyond. This report deals with the first category. That is the issues identified as "Other Governance Issues".

1.2 As set out in the AGS, an Action Plan has been put together to address the areas identified. The remaining issues covered by the Action Plan include:

(a) Policy review/updating

(b) Information on the Council's website

(c) Review of Festival Market Management

1.3 Good progress is being made against the Action Plan. Although, more work is yet to be done.

Work undertaken/to be completed

Policy Review / Updating

- 1.4 There are currently 173 policies on the Council's Central List of Policies. The list has been created from looking at LCC's website and intranet. Managers were contacted in August 2023 and asked to supply the following for each policy:
 - a. date of creation,
 - b. date of review and
 - c. details of the decision maker.
- 1.5 With regards to known policies:
 - a. 79 are current
 - b. 33 are overdue
 - c. 39 have unknown due dates
- 1.6 Reminders are issued every 3-4 months to each policy owners when polices are overdue or coming up for renewal. Work continues to ensure that all polices are current and contain relevant audit and review data.

Information on Website

- 1.7 It has been noted that Information is sometimes difficult to find on the Council's website. This is a vague observation in the Minor Governance Issues Action Plan and has therefore been difficult to make specific improvements.
- 1.8 The Council's Communication Team has been investigating replacing the technology/system which underpins the website. A request for 'growth bid' regarding the new technology/system has been requested. The request has not yet been determined. There are no timescales set for this work currently.

Review of Festival Market Management

- 1.9 Following a matter raised under the Raising Concerns Policy the Monitoring Officer has requested that a review of the festival market trading practices be undertaken by the Chief Officer Sustainable Growth to ensure suitable financial management has been, and is being, undertaken.
- 1.10 The review of the Festival Market is now part of the Council's Auditors' work. This work is ongoing.

Conclusion

- 1.11 Audit Committee members are asked to note the progress and work yet to be done under the Action Plan on the other governance issues identified in the AGS.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):

The Council must keep its governance processes under review and must ensure that it take steps to ensure that its processes are kept up-date and relevant. Good governance ensures that resources are properly used for the community it serves. Implementing the action plan on other governance issues helps ensure the Council's good governance.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No direct financial implications arising from this report

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces

No direct resource implications arising from this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The S151 officer has seen this report and has no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has helped draft this report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Annual Government Statement – July 2023

Contact Officers: Monitoring Officer

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Ref: N/A