

**NON EXEMPT**

## **HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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**GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND FINANCE BOARD**

**29 JULY 2020**

**ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019-20: DRAFT**

**FOR INFORMATION**

**Portfolio: Governance, Cllr Inkster**

**Chief Finance Officer: Lydia Morrison**

**Key Decision: No**

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### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** Good business practice is to ensure robust policies and systems are in place and that annual reviews of governance arrangements take place. This report is submitted to the Governance, Audit and Finance Board for information on the draft of the Annual Governance Statement 2019-20.

### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1** Governance, Audit and Finance Board is recommended to note the draft copy of the Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 at Appendix A and provide any comments for editing before the final version is brought to Governance, Audit and Finance Board for approval.

### **3.0 Executive Summary**

- 3.1** The CIPFA/SOLACE framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' urges local authorities to review the effectiveness of their existing governance arrangements against their Local Code of Corporate Governance, and prepare a governance statement in order to report publicly on the extent to which they comply with their own code on an annual basis, including how they have monitored the effectiveness of their governance arrangements in the year, and on any planned changes for the coming period.
- 3.2** The draft Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 at Appendix A details the governance framework, including the key elements of the Council's governance arrangements, a review of the framework outlining the annual review process and overall opinion, and further improvement areas.

3.3 In terms of overall corporate governance it is the Chief Executive's and Chief Finance Officer's opinion that the overall governance arrangements of the Council are sound. The Annual Governance Statement is informed by the self-assessment of compliance against the principles by the Governance Manager, the Annual Governance Questionnaire (a survey made available to all staff), and the work of internal audit and external audit. The Havant Borough Council Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 will be published with the Annual Statement of Accounts.

3.4 Part of the Governance, Audit and Finance Board's remit is to assess the effectiveness of internal controls, risk management, and governance arrangements in place and this includes to be satisfied that the authority's assurance statements, including the Annual Governance Statement, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it, and demonstrate how governance supports the achievements of the authority's objectives<sup>1</sup>

#### **4.0 Additional Budgetary Implications**

4.1 None

#### **5.0 Background and relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Directorate Business Plan/s**

5.1 Corporate governance comprises the systems and values by which Havant Borough Council is directed and controlled and through which it is accountable. To demonstrate compliance with the principles of good corporate governance, Havant Borough Council must ensure that it does the right things and in the right way. The Council must also ensure that this is done in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

#### **6.0 Options considered and reasons for the recommendation**

6.1 A new 'CIPFA/SOLACE Framework' was published in 2016 to ensure it remains fit for purpose, which applies to Annual Governance Statements prepared for the financial year onwards. The revised Framework defines the seven core principles of good governance.

6.2 The Framework urges local authorities to review the effectiveness of their existing governance arrangements against their Local Code of Corporate Governance and prepare a governance statement and report compliance on an annual basis.

#### **7.0 Resource Implications**

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<sup>1</sup> CIPFA guidance note for local authorities 'Audit Committees' (2013)

- 7.1 Financial Implications - none
- 7.2 Human Resources Implications - none
- 7.3 Other Resource Implication - none

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 None. The publication of the Annual Governance Statement details the governance framework, including the key elements of the Council's governance arrangements.

## **9.0 Risks**

- 9.1 The document is a vital part of ensuring that Council business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 9.2 Failure to produce and report the document would carry the risk that the Council was failing in its duty to evidence that it was operating in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for.

## **10 Consultation**

- 10.1 The Annual Governance Statement has been shared with relevant Heads of Service, Executive Board and Corporate Governance Board.

## **11 Communication**

- 11.1 Once approved by Governance, Audit and Finance Board, the Annual Governance Statement will be published on the HBC website alongside the Statement of Accounts 2019-20.

Appendices: Appendix A – draft Annual Governance Statement 2019-20

Agreed and signed off by:  
Monitoring Officer: 02/06/20  
S151 Officer: 02/06/20

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