
REPORT TO:	AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 10
DATE OF MEETING:	18th JUNE 2014	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	LEGAL and DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	ARDIP KAUR (01283 595715) ardip.kaur@south-derbys.gov.uk	DOC: u/ks/governance/AGS/2014/committee report1314
SUBJECT:	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2013/14	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: AS04

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 To recommend to Finance and Management Committee the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the year ended 31st March 2014 and its publication within the Statement of Accounts for 2013/14.
- 1.2 To authorise the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive Officer to sign the Annual Governance Statement.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To submit the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2013/14 in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended).

3.0 Detail

Background

- 3.1 Governance is about how South Derbyshire District Council ensures that it does the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open and accountable manner. As such, it comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which the Council is directed and controlled and through which it accounts to, engages and leads its local community.

Annual Governance Statement

- 3.2 The AGS is the formal statement that records and publishes a council's governance arrangements; it is a statutory requirement to publish an AGS on an annual basis.
- 3.3 Guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) states that the production and publication of the AGS, are the final stages

of an on-going review of governance and not activities that can be planned and viewed in isolation. Compilation of the AGS involves the Council in:

- reviewing the adequacy of its governance arrangements
- knowing where it needs to improve these arrangements
- communicating to stakeholders how better governance leads to best quality public services

3.4 The proposed AGS for 2013/14 is attached. It is led by the Council's Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Council's Chief Officers. The AGS has been produced in accordance with the CIPFA guidelines and includes commentary on:

- the governance environment and how this is reviewed to determine its effectiveness; and
- issues of significance that require addressing as part of the review of effectiveness

3.5 A Work Plan, considered and approved by the Committee in June 2013, was progressed during 2013/14 to address some issues identified to maintain and strengthen the governance environment. These were:

- Continuing to review the Local Code of Corporate Governance half yearly
- A new Leadership and Development Programme for Officers
- An on-going review of Members Training and the induction process
- Application of the new Internal Auditing Standards for the Public Sector
- Introduction of E-committees to make greater use of IT in local democracy
- Introducing a policy for developing Neighbourhood Plans in local communities
- Updating the Scheme of Delegation to reflect the new Council structure
- Reviewing the Whistleblowing Policy following new legislation that was expected in October 2013

3.6 The proposed plan for 2014/15 is also detailed in **Appendix 1** of the AGS. These actions have been identified to maintain robust Governance and to ensure arrangements keep abreast of a changing environment. The work programme includes:

- Expanding the publication of "open data" in accordance with the Government's new Transparency Code for Local Government.
- Implementing a Data Management Policy to provide a consistent process corporately, to ensure that data handled at the Council is kept secure and then stored and destroyed in accordance with regulations.

3.7 Primarily, these areas have been highlighted from a review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance, audit work during 2013/14, the Council's improvement programme, together with changes in legislation. The work plan will be monitored through the Local Code.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None directly.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 Corporate governance affects the whole authority, and all members of senior management have been consulted and made aware of its contents.

5.2 The AGS itself will be signed by the Council's Leader and most senior officer, the Chief Executive. This emphasises that corporate governance goes to the heart of the leadership and management of South Derbyshire District Council.

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 The AGS is designed to act as a public assurance statement that the Council has a sound system of corporate governance, designed to help deliver services in a proper, inclusive, open and accountable manner.

7.0 Background Papers

The Annual Governance Statement and Rough Guide published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.