



GA.63 15/16

Governance & Audit
Committee

Date: 14th April 2016

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Subject: Periodic review of the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2014/15

Report by:

Ian Knowles, Director of Resources

Contact Officer:

Business Improvement & Corporate Governance
Manager

Purpose / Summary:

To review the progress with the Annual
Governance Statement 2014/15 Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) That Members seek assurance that the current position of the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan for 2014/15, will result in the completion of all relevant actions by July 2016.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: The Annual Governance Statement details compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (amendment) (England) Regulations 2011.

Financial: FIN 136/16 Actions included in the Annual Governance Statement will be covered by existing resources.

Staffing: The action plan details the staff that are responsible for specific actions

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights: None

Risk Assessment: Risk management arrangements are part of corporate governance and issues raised under the arrangements were included within the Annual Governance Statement for this period.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: None

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Annual Governance Statement and Action Plan file in Business Improvement.

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

Yes

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No

X

Key Decision:

Yes

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No

X

1. Information

- 1.1 The Annual Governance Statement is the formal statement of the quality of the Council's governance arrangements, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.
- 1.2 The Governance and Audit Committee in September 2015 agreed the Annual Governance Statement for 2014/15 and noted that an action plan would be put in place and monitored by the Committee to address the significant issues.

2. Significant Issues 2014/15

- 2.1 The significant issues that were identified for development were:
- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
 - Asset Management
 - Review of Risk Strategy
 - Development Management Improvements
 - Review of Constitution & Streamlining of Decision Making
 - Corporate Plan 2016-2020
 - Delivery of Finance Matters 2

- Member Induction & Development
- Contract Management

3. The Action Plan

- 3.1 The Action Plan is attached and shows the current position with work designed to resolve the issues that have been identified.
- 3.2 Members will note that good progress has been made with four of the nine actions now completed; these being:
 - The Corporate Plan
 - Review of Risk Strategy
 - Asset Management
 - Review of Constitution and Decision Making
- 3.3 Members are pointed towards the actions relating to Finance Matters II and Member Induction and Development. Both have been classified as 'amber' in nature but assurance has been obtained that there is negligible risk of not achieving overall delivery within the revised timescales.
- 3.4 The current positions relating to the remaining three actions are detailed within the Plan.
- 3.5 The action relating to the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan will roll forward into the action plan for 2015/16 as it has a completion date of 31st December 2016.
- 3.6 At this stage it is envisaged that actions relating to Development Management Improvements will also roll forward for the reasons detailed within the accompanying action plan table.
- 3.7 Work to complete the actions relating to Contract Management are nearing completion. We are awaiting the outcomes of a follow-up audit into this subject prior to signing off as complete.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Work is ongoing to ensure that the remaining issues are addressed and are not identified as significant governance issues in the Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16.

Title	Description	Action	Current Position	Date Due	Officer	BRAG	Revised Date
Central Lincolnshire Local Plan	To oversee the completion of the Local Plan by end of 2016 and ensure that West Lindsey's growth needs are considered and addressed through working with partners on the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee	To work with officers of the partner councils to - Identify the evidence base needed to support the preparation of the local plan. Review the proposed policies to ensure that the evidence supports the policy and that the policy meets the development needs of West Lindsey in terms of delivering housing, jobs, economic growth and a quality environment. Hold the partners to account to ensure that the local plan is adopted by the end of 2016. The council will also play its part in ensuring that the residents of West Lindsey are engaged in the production of the local plan and the views of West Lindsey District Council are communicated to the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee at each formal consultation stage in the process of preparing the local plan.	The local plan has currently been considered through two stages of public engagement and the council has made comments at each stage. At the Further Draft Stage (November 2015) the council supported the local plan as helping to facilitate the growth of homes, jobs, economic development and the delivery of a quality environment the District required. The plan has now been approved to proceed to the submission draft consultation stage which will start in April 2016 and lead to the Examination in Public in September 2016.	31/12/2016	Mark Sturgess	Green	
Review of Risk Strategy	To ensure it is aligned with new structures within the Council	1. Prepare draft strategy 2. Review of strategy by CLT/Internal Audit 3. Staff workshop held 4. Strategy presented to G&A Cttee and approved	1. Draft strategy produced 2. Strategy reviewed by Internal Audit & Member Risk Champion 3. Staff workshop held on 25th November 2015 4. Strategy reviewed by CLT December 2015 5. Strategy due at G&A Cttee 19th Jan 2016 6. Strategy approved at G&A Cttee on 19th Jan 2016	31/01/2016	Ian Knowles	Black	
Development Management Improvement	To systematically improve the performance of the development management service so that: It is outcomes focused and recognises its role on delivering the objectives of both the Corporate Plan and Local Plan. Puts the customer first in the way it operates and streamlines systems and processes so the they focus on the delivery of decisions on planning applications at the point the decision is ready to be issued. Ensures that its staff are trained and led in a way that allows them to focus on delivery of their objectives. Costs are identified and that staff understand the overall costs of delivering the service as well as the unit costs involved in processing individual planning applications. Performance is visible across the service - from the performance of individual officers, to the performance of the team as a whole and in comparison to other development management services (bench marking). It takes account of the political environment and the requirements of elected Members. It has a fit for purpose ICT system that is capable of supporting the delivery of that outlined above.	Establishment of a cross council development management improvement group. Peer Challenge commissioned & completed. Draft Improvement Plan to be produced.	Findings of Peer review received and reviewed. Draft Improvement plan to be considered in CLT on 14 December 2015. Draft Improvement plan to be considered by C&I Committee in early 2016. Recruitment of Team Manager underway. Improvement programme being developed. Quick wins implemented. Phones open. Electronic application files. Individual elected members notified about applications in their wards. Member training programme agreed (first session delivered). Agents' Forum re-established (first one held). Performance across range of indicators is improving. Member training programme has been agreed and is being implemented (including joint training with parish councils in line with a recommendation from the peer challenge). Team Manager post has been advertised twice and it has not been possible to recruit a suitable person - alternative solutions are now being looked at. The process for the selection of a new ICT system is still underway.	31/03/2016	Mark Sturgess	Green	31/08/2016
Review of constitution and streamlining of decisions	To ensure it supports new structures, governance and decision making frameworks; supports commercial aspirations and identifies and removes unnecessary bureaucracy	Review Constitution Implement any actions from audit into Effective Decision Making	Constitution reviewed and reflects requirements of the Council. Decision making has been audited and a finding of 'substantial assurance' achieved. A small number of identified actions have been worked through.	31/05/2016	Alan Robinson	Black	

Corporate Plan 2016-2020	New Plan to be produced to reflect changing issues facing the District and the priorities of the new Administration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify Member priorities 2. Identify actions/programmes of work to address issues 3. Feedback proposed actions to Members to finalise programmes 4. Collate draft Plan for review by CLT and Committees, culminating at Council 5. Arrange launch event for Plan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Priorities identified by Members. 2. Workshops held with Strategic Leads/Directors to identify required actions 3. Draft of priorities, actions and outcomes fed back to Leader and Deputy Leader 4. Draft Plan presented to CLT, LP, PC and CPR Committees. Due at Full Council on 3rd March 2016 5. Plan approved by Council on 3rd March 2016 	31/03/2016 Ian Knowles	Black	
Delivery of Finance Matters 2	To design and implement a further finance related training programme to further develop staff in line with the Council's commercial and entrepreneurial ambitions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design training programme and method of delivery 2. Roll-out training to relevant colleagues 3. Evaluate feedback and outcomes 	Capacity issues have delayed progress but service now at full complement Content and design of training programme in development.	31/01/2016 Ian Knowles	Amber	30/07/2016
Member induction and development	To ensure an effective democratic framework and appropriate skills on the part of newly elected and returning Members	<p>Develop appropriate induction programme and evaluate. Create a development programme for Members that meets all identified needs. G&A to agree development programme</p>	<p>Induction programme completed and evaluated with positive feedback Member training needs assessment being collated Draft report prepared for G&A Cttee in April 2016</p>	31/12/2015 Alan Robinson	Amber	30/07/2016
Contract Management	To ensure we have a functional database upon which to record all contract related information and documentation and that contract management is regarded by relevant officers as an essential component of day to day management duties	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback contents of Contract Mgt Audit report to SLT 2. Arrange one to one sessions with contract owners to populate contract register and add associated documentation 3. Liaise with Procurement Lincs re CPR revisions and update our CPRs 4. Express our requirements of the contract database and establish whether current provider can meet these 5. Prepare for follow-up audit 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contract database can meet our requirements and provider is updating functionality 2. One to one meetings on-going with contract owners leading to greater quality of contract related documentation 3. Advice obtained from Procurement Lincs re CPR revisions and feedback to CLT to inform our own arrangements. CPRs presented to G&A Committee for approval Jan 2016 4. CPRs updated and revised ACoP presented to SLT 17th Feb 2016 5. Follow-up audit commenced 22nd Feb 2016 	31/03/2016 Ian Knowles	Green	
Asset Management	To produce a relevant and effective Asset Management Plan for WLDC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To obtain approval for WLDC's Property & Land Management Strategy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval obtained from Corporate Policy & Resources Committee in September 2015 for the Council's Property & Land Management Strategy 	30/06/2016 Penny Sharp	Black	