

# Report to Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

**22 February 2024**

<b>Subject:</b>	Annual Governance Statement 2021-22
<b>Director:</b>	Brendan Arnold Interim Section 151 Officer
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Mike Jones Monitoring Officer, Assistant Director – Legal & Assurance <a href="mailto:mike_jones1@sandwell.gov.uk">mike_jones1@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

## 1 Recommendation

- 1.1 That the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee review the Annual Governance Statement for 2021-22.

## 2 Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 To inform the committee of the contents of the council's Annual Governance Statement for 2021-22.



### 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The council has adopted a code of corporate governance which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government and underpins the Corporate Plan. The framework requires the council to prepare an Annual Governance Statement in order to report publicly on the extent to which it complies with its code of governance on an annual basis, including how it has monitored the effectiveness of the annual governance arrangements in the year, and on any planned changes in the coming period. Every local authority must prepare a governance statement to accompany its Statement of Accounts.</p>
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### 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The council is responsible for ensuring that its 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.
- 4.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, the council is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 4.3 The council has adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government and completes and publishes a governance statement with its statement of accounts.
- 4.4 The statement is signed by the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council, who have a responsibility to ensure that the document is supported by reliable evidence and accurately reflects the council's internal control environment.



4.5 The governance statement has been prepared using the assurances provided from a variety of sources including external and internal audit, the strategic risk register, and the various other external reviews that took place during 2021-22 and subsequent years.

4.6 As a result of delays in the completion of the council’s 2021-22 Statement of Accounts, the governance statement for 2021-22 can only now begin to be finalised, as such a statement should continue to operate up to the date of the approval of the Statement of Accounts which are now nearing completion. A further review of the statement will be carried out prior to their completion in order to ensure the statement remains valid.

## 5 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	The council is required to prepare a governance statement to report publicly on the extent to which it complies with its code of governance, including how it has monitored the effectiveness of the governance arrangements in the year and on any planned changes in the coming period. The council’s governance statement must accompany its Statement of Accounts.
<b>Risk:</b>	The Annual Governance Statement takes into account the whole of the council’s risk management framework.
<b>Equality:</b>	It was not necessary to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	There are no direct health and wellbeing implications from this report.
<b>Social Value</b>	There are no direct social value implications from this report.



<b>Climate Change:</b>	There are no direct climate change implications from this report.
<b>Corporate Parenting:</b>	There are no direct corporate parenting implications from this report.

## 6. Appendices

Annual Governance Statement 2021-22

## 7. Background Papers

None

