

This report will be made public on 24 February 2021



Report Number **AUG/20/20**

To: Audit and Governance Committee
Date: 4 March 2021
Status: Non-Executive Function
Director: Charlotte Spendley, Director of Corporate Services and Amandeep Khroud, Assistant Director Governance and Law

SUBJECT: ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTIONS –UPDATE ON 2020/21 ACTIONS

SUMMARY: This report presents the current position on progress towards achieving the 2020/21 actions set out in the Annual Governance Statement.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The committee is asked to agree the recommendations set out below to note the position and the progress towards achieving the actions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report AuG/20/20.
2. To note the progress towards achieving the actions in the Annual Governance Statement (Appendix 1).

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20 was considered by the committee on 30th July 2020 (report AUG/20/03).
- 1.2 The governance statement identified significant governance issues that were likely to arise during this year. This report sets out progress against those actions.

2. THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTIONS - UPDATE

- 2.1 The Annual Governance Statement identified actions for 2020/21 (See Appendix 1) which are necessary to improve the overall effectiveness of its governance arrangements.
- 2.2 In addition to the formal action plan, the following steps have been taken on governance during the year:

- **Otterpool Park:** In May 2020, Cabinet approved the structure and activities of the Otterpool Park Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) to progress with the long term development of the garden town project. The LLP is governed by a board of directors and is underpinned by an established members' agreement that provides limits and qualifications on what it is able to do in terms of governance and decision-making. The members' agreement also requires the LLP to report to cabinet an update to the agreed business plan annually. In addition on 20 January 2021 Cabinet considered and agreed a paper on the Otterpool Park Business Plan which committed to the development of an Assurance Framework which will be considered and agreed by the Statutory Officers.
- **Housing Service:** The control of the council's housing stock was transferred successfully from East Kent Housing (EKH) back to the council on 1st October 2020. A comprehensive management structure is in now place for the service covering strategic and operational housing as well as assets & development. The service has established a Housing Management Team (HMT) and a forward programme of monthly meetings to report operational and financial performance. A number of training sessions have also been delivered to members and officers to provide background context to housing & asset management and also the regulatory environment of the service. In addition work in well underway on the Tenant Engagement Strategy to ensure the tenant's voice is well represented and heard.
- **Corporate Plan:** Significant progress has been made on the development of a new Corporate Plan which incorporates the recovery priorities. The plan which sets the Councils strategic

direction over the coming 9 years is to be considered by Full Council in February.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

3.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Actions contained within the Annual Governance Statement, are not addressed effectively	Medium	Low	Progress to be reviewed and monitored regularly by the Monitoring Officer, Policy and Improvement Officer and the Audit & Governance Committee.

4. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

4.1 Legal Officer's Comments (AK)

There are no legal issues arising from this report.

4.2 Finance Officer's Comments (CS)

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

No diversities and equalities implications.

5. CONTACT OFFICER AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting:

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The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Annual Governance Statement Actions - Progress Update

