

Updated Annual Governance Statement 2024/2025	
Executive Summary	The Annual Governance Statement was previously presented to the Committee in draft form on 9 September 2025. This report seeks approval of the updated Annual Governance Statement, reflecting the updated position.
Options considered	<p>Option 1 – Approve the Annual Governance Statement</p> <p>Approves the updated Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25, reflecting completion of the audit process and enabling statutory sign-off of the Statement of Accounts.</p> <p>Option 2 – Do not approve the Annual Governance Statement</p> <p>Would delay statutory approval and publication of the Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts.</p>
Consultation(s)	Section 151 Officer Monitoring Officer Chief Executive
Recommendations	<p>Option 1</p> <p>That the Committee approves the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2025, to be signed by the Chief Executive, and leader of the Council.</p>
Reasons for recommendations	Approval of the Annual Governance Statement enables statutory sign-off and publication and confirms the Committee's oversight of the governance matters identified during the 2024/25 audit and the actions in place to address them.
Background papers	None

Wards affected	None
Cabinet member(s)	Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services
Contact Officer	Daniel King, Assistant Director Finance & Assets

Links to key documents:	
Corporate Plan:	A strong, responsible and accountable Council
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	Linked to the MTFS through the requirement for robust financial governance and statutory financial reporting.
Council Policies & Strategies	Annual Governance Statement, Local Code of Corporate Governance

Corporate Governance:	
Is this a key decision	No
Has the public interest test been applied	N/A
Details of any previous decision(s) on this matter	9 September 2025

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. To present the updated Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2024/25 to the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee for approval.

2. Introduction & Background.

- 2.1. The Annual Governance Statement sets out the Council's assessment of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2025 and supports the approval of the Statement of Accounts. The AGS was previously presented to the Committee in draft form earlier in the year. This report presents the updated version, reflecting the near completion of the external audit and consideration of matters arising.

3. Proposals and Options

- 3.1. The Committee is asked to consider and approve the updated Annual Governance Statement 2024/25. The AGS reflects the Council's governance framework and includes reference to governance issues identified during the audit, together with confirmation that actions are being taken to address those matters through an agreed action plan. Approval of the AGS will enable statutory sign-off and publication alongside the Statement of Accounts.

- 3.2. Option 1 – Approve the Annual Governance Statement. This Approves the updated Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25, reflecting completion of the audit process and enabling statutory sign-off

- 3.3. Option 2 – Do not approve the Annual Governance Statement. This would delay statutory approval and publication of the Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts.

4. Corporate Priorities

- 4.1. Approval of the Annual Governance Statement supports the Council's Corporate Plan priorities relating to A strong, responsible and accountable Council, and underpins effective financial management set out within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5. Financial and Resource Implications

- 5.1. None immediately as a result of approving the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25.

5.2. Should the AGS not be signed, and the statutory backstop not met, there may be additional costs incurred as a result of additional internal & external assurance work required.

Comments from the S151 Officer:

This is a statutory report required for the approval of the Statement of Accounts.

6. Legal Implications

6.1. No legal implications as a direct result of the approval of the Annual Governance Statement.

Comments from the Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer (or member of the Legal team on behalf of the MO) will complete this section. They will outline any legal advice provided.

7. Risks

7.1. Approval of the Annual Governance Statement supports effective governance and transparency. Failure to approve the AGS would delay statutory sign-off and publication of the Statement of Accounts and could undermine assurance over the Council's governance arrangements. No additional operational risks arise from approval of the AGS.

8. Net Zero Target

8.1. The approval of the Annual Governance Statement is a statutory governance and reporting matter and has no direct impact on the Council's Net Zero 2030 Strategy or Climate Action Plan.

9. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

9.1. The approval of the Annual Governance Statement is a statutory governance and reporting matter and does not give rise to any direct equality, diversity or inclusion impacts. The Council has had due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment is not required.

10. Community Safety issues

10.1. The approval of the Annual Governance Statement has no direct impact on community safety.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Option 1 – Approve the Annual Governance Statement. This Approves the updated Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25, reflecting completion of the audit process and enabling statutory sign-off