



AGENDA NO: 6

INDEPENDENT AUDIT COMMITTEE: 29 OCTOBER 2020

FOIA OPEN

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT TIMETABLE FOR THE 2020-21 YEAR

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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

The purpose of this report is to present the timetable for the completion of the Annual Governance Statement for the 2020-21 year.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is produced each year as part of the financial statements.
- 1.2 The purpose of the AGS process is to provide a continuous review of the effectiveness of the governance arrangement, and where appropriate to produce an action plan to address any identified weaknesses in those arrangements.
- 1.3 The AGS process follows the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework' published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) 2016 edition. There are separate updated guidance notes for Police Bodies.
- 1.4 The framework enables each organisation to test its governance structures against a set of principles, whilst recognising that no two organisations arrangements will be the same.
- 1.5 There are three key elements to the process:
 - 1. Reviewing existing governance arrangements
 - 2. Developing and maintaining an up-to-date 'local code' of governance including arrangements for ensuring ongoing effectiveness.

3. Reporting to the public on an annual basis about compliance with local code, how effectiveness of the arrangements have been monitored against any planned changes
- 1.6 It is accepted that in practice the local code may comprise of a series of documents that describe the various elements of the structure.
- 1.7 Whilst the local codes may be different, they are still required to comply with the seven principles of good governance.
 - Ethics and Integrity
 - Openness and stakeholder engagement
 - Defining outcomes
 - Determining interventions
 - Developing leadership
 - Managing risks and monitoring performance
 - Demonstrating effective accountability
- 1.8 Guidance recommends that the AGS for each body is a high level, strategic document. It is written in an open and readable style using innovative features such as diagrams to communicate messages and reduce the need for text to facilitate a briefer and more user friendly statement.

2. AGS PRODUCTION FOR THE 2020-21 YEAR

- 2.1 Opportunity has been taken to reflect on the process for the production of the AGS for the 2019-20 year and build lessons learnt into the process and timetable for production for the 2020-21 year.
- 2.2 The overarching timetable for this year is attached at Appendix A. Timetables that are more detailed exist for both Forces to reflect their respective meeting structure.
- 2.3 The first draft of the AGS will be presented to the Audit Committee at the April 2021 meeting.
- 2.4 It should be noted that the publication deadline for the 2019-20 final accounts was delayed. No formal guidance has yet been issued relating to the publication deadlines for the 2020-21 financial accounts. Therefore the original timetable will continue going forward.
- 2.5 The final AGS will be presented with accounts at the July meeting of the Independent Audit Committee.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to review the timetable for the production of the AGS and consider whether it is sufficient to support the wider responsibility of the committee to determine whether the AGS properly reflects the governance, risk and control environment

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