

# Council

13 October 2020

## 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement

### Recommendation

That Council approves the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement.

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for consideration at the Appendix.
- 1.2 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the authority to conduct a review, at least once in a year, of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and to prepare an AGS. The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic led to an April 2020 amendment to the Accounts & Audit Regulations, altering the statutory timetable for the production and publication of the AGS alongside the Financial Statements by 30 November.
- 1.3 We have also followed CIPFA guidance issued in April 2020 to include relevant areas of governance impact arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. These are captured in Section 3 (delivering governance principles) and Section 5 (Governance Issues) of the AGS.
- 1.4 It has been assessed, as a result of the AGS evaluation and assurance gathering process, that there are no significant governance issues or governance failures to report. The Council's key areas of strategic risk are presented as governance challenges in Section 5, along with planned and proposed mitigation.

### 2. Financial Implications

None

### 3. Environmental Implications

None

#### **4. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps**

- 4.1 The results of the review and the draft AGS were initially considered and endorsed by the Audit and Standards Committee at its meeting on 20 July. The draft AGS was also provided to External Audit for review in July and then to Cabinet in September, with no updates required.
- 4.2 The proposed AGS was then presented with the financial statements to the Audit & Standards Committee 28 September meeting. The AGS was recommended for approval, subject to an update to recognise the governance challenges of HS2 and the Council's response to this. The Statement has been updated to reflect this (Appendix 1 p.16).

### **Appendix**

Draft 2019-20 Annual Governance Statement

### **Background Papers**

None

|                    | <b>Name</b>                                  | <b>Contact Information</b>       |
|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Report Author      | Chris Norton                                 | chrisnorton@warwickshire.gov.uk  |
| Assistant Director | Assistant Director,<br>Finance               | andrewfelton@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Lead Director      | Strategic Director for<br>Resources          | robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk    |
| Lead Member        | Portfolio Holder for<br>Finance and Property |                                  |

The report was not circulated to members prior to publication