



## London Borough of Enfield

<b>Report to:</b>	General Purposes Committee
<b>Report title:</b>	Annual Governance Statement 2023/2024
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	27 March 2024
<b>Director:</b>	Terry Osborne
<b>Report Author:</b>	Terry Osborne
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	N/A
<b>Key Decision Number</b>	Not a Key Decision
<b>Implementation date, if not called in:</b>	N/A
<b>Classification:</b>	Part I Public
<b>Reason for exemption</b>	N/A

### Purpose of Report

1. The preparation and publication of an Annual Governance Statement ('AGS') is a statutory requirement. The AGS is a public statement that describes and evaluates the Council's overall governance arrangements during a particular financial year.
2. This report seeks approval from the General Purposes Committee of the Council's Annual Governance Statement covering the financial year of 2023/2024 (set out in Appendix 1).

## Recommendations

- I. That the General Purposes Committee considers and approves the Draft Annual Governance Statement as set out in Appendix 1.

## Background

3. The Council is required by statute to review its governance arrangement at least once a year. It is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively.
4. The AGS is a public statement that describes and evaluates the Council's overall governance arrangements during a particular financial year. It includes a self-assessment of the effectiveness of the governance arrangements, across all areas of activity, together with a statement of the actions being taken or required to address any areas of concern.
5. The Statement is required to include notification of any significant internal control issues identified and include an action plan to address them. Significant governance issues are covered in section 7 including the Action Plan being worked on during the current financial year 2023/2024.
6. This report focuses on the recommendations for the AGS. The statement reinforces the importance of the Annual Governance Statement and its use to identify failings of governance and provide an opportunity internally to improve and thereby reduce risk. It should normally be approved at the same time or no later than the statement of accounts i.e., 31 May 2023 and should be regarded as a vital tool by those charged with governance and the leadership team.
7. The Council has undertaken an assessment of governance issues and actions to address them. The AGS includes an update on issues identified in last year's statement and actions taken as well as details of any additional governance issues identified in 2023-24.
8. The committee are asked to note and comment, if appropriate, on the governance issues outlined in the statement.

## Relevance to Council Plans and Strategies

9. The purpose of the AGS is to consider the effectiveness of the Council's governance framework and its system of internal control. These are the means by which the Council manages its risks to within its risk appetite and ensures that the aims of the Corporate Plan are deliverable; without effective governance, risk management and control, the likelihood of failure to achieve the aims of the Corporate Plan increases.

## **Financial Implications**

10. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **Legal Implications**

11. Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 ('The Regulations') requires the Council to conduct a review of the effectiveness of its internal control and to prepare an Annual Governance Statement each financial year.

12. The CIPFA delivering good governance in Local Government Framework 2016 edition states that the Annual Governance Statement should be included with the Council's Statement of Accounts.

13. The Statement of Accounts should be signed and dated by the Council's section 151 Officer (the Executive Director of Resources) by no later than 31<sup>st</sup> May. Once approved, the AGS will be included with the Statement of Accounts.

## **Equalities Implications**

14. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

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## **Appendices**

*Appendix 1- Annual Governance Statement for 2023/2024*