AUDIT COMMITTEE
15 JANUARY 2013

AGENDA ITEM: **8**

PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN

Portfolio Holder   Cllr Neal Davey
Responsible Officer   Head of Communities & Governance

Reason for Report: To provide the Committee with an update on progress made against the 2011/12 Annual Governance Statement Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION(S): The Committee note the progress update and request that progress against any outstanding actions be reported to their next meeting on the 19 March 2013.

Financial Implications: None.

Legal Implications: Failure to meet the statutory guidance in relation to the Council's governance arrangements.

Risk Assessment: None arising from this report.

1.0   Introduction

1.1   The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Committee with an update on the progress that has been made against the actions in the Annual Governance Statement action plan.

1.2   The action plan is attached as Appendix A and progress updates have been noted on the document.

1.3   The next update of any outstanding recommendations will be presented to the Committee at their meeting on 19 March 2013.

Contact for more Information: Amy Tregellas
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Circulation of the Report: Management Team and Cllr Neal Davey

List of Background Papers: None

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2011/2012
ACTION PLAN

Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress	
Corporate and Business Planning				
Communicate the New Corporate Plan to Officers and Members	Head of Communities and Governance	End October 2012	Completed - The full Corporate Plan was published on the Council's website, with a press release issued to the local paper on 4 May 2012. A summary leaflet was attached to both Officers' and Members' October pay slips	🙂
Consider developing a Council mission statement to provide direction for staff	Head of Communities and Governance	End September 2012	Agreed at Management Team on the 18th September that a Mission Statement be considered as part of the next update of the Corporate Plan. Therefore this action will be carried forward to 2014 when the next review of the Corporate Plan will take place. **Action to be carried forward to new AGS action plan and a new target date of 31st December 2014 set**	🙂
Review and improve the Business Planning process and template to ensure that there is a golden thread and that all service areas can see how they link into the overall objectives of the Council. Translate this into diagrammatic form for ease of reference	Head of Communities and Governance	End December 2012	A research exercise has been undertaken to establish best practice in the Business Planning Process A proposed new Business Plan template will be consulted on with Management Team and the Senior Officers Forum in early 2013 before being circulated to all Service Managers for completion. **New target date: 31st March 2013**	😐

Key: 🙂 = target met or completed   😐 = action started but target date slippage   ☹ = action not commenced & way off target

Performance Management

Action	Responsible	Target Date	Comment	Status
Produce an annual report to be published alongside the Corporate Plan on performance Indicators and delivery of key objectives and how services have performed against their business plans	Head of Communities and Governance	End October 2012	Completed - The annual report has been produced and a template has been set up to do an annual report for 2012/13 by the end of June 2013.	🙂
Produce performance management guidance for officers and members	Head of Communities and Governance	End October 2012	The Performance Management guidance is in the process of being drafted and will be completed in conjunction with the Business Planning Process **New target date: 31st March 2013**	😐

Risk Management

Action	Responsible	Target Date	Comment	Status
Ensure that all Service Managers and other relevant officers and Members who haven't completed risk management training in 2011/2012 receive training in the 2012/13 financial year	Head of Communities and Governance	End March 13	A schedule of Risk Management training has been organised by Learning and Development. Workshops have been held on 2 October 2012 and 6 November 2012. Planned dates are 23 & 31 January 2013 and 25 February 2013	🙂
Work with Heads of Service and Service Managers to get their risks on the SPAR.net system	Head of Communities and Governance	End March 13	Generic Health and Safety Risks have been added to SPAR.net, along with the strategic risks as outlined in the Constitution. The Audit Team Leader and Business Support Officer for Communities and Governance ran two SPAR.net presentations for Service Managers in August 2012 and circulated Risk guidance documents.	🙂

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	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress	Status
			The Business Support Officer is in liaison with Heads of Service and Service Managers regarding training. Specific service risks (both strategic and operational) as identified on Business Plans will be added to SPAR at these training sessions.	(green)
Communication				
Put together a formal communication strategy incorporating internal and external communications	Communications and Reputation Manager	End December 2012	This is happening in two stages. The Communications and Reputation Manager has drafted an informal Internal Communication Strategy, to be used as an internal guidance document. A full (formal) Communication Strategy will be drafted in September 2012, covering both external and internal communications. This action is on schedule for the Strategy to be published by end December 2012. However the Communications Manager has confirmed that due to workload the formal communication strategy has not yet been completed. **New target date: end of February 2013**	:-| (amber)
Constitution				
Complete an annual review of the register of interests and gifts and hospitality register	Monitoring Officer	End September 2012	Following the appointment of the Head of Communities & Governance as the Monitoring Officer an article was included in the Link on 7 January 2013. An annual review of the Registers was completed by Internal Audit in July 2012 and the next annual review for the 2012/13 financial year will take place in early 2013/14	:-) (green)
Ensure that all members of Management Team complete an annual register of interests	Monitoring Officer	End October 2012	Following the appointment of the Head of Communities & Governance as the Monitoring Officer – information passed to each Member of Management Team to complete at the start of the new 2013 calendar year	:-) (green)

Key: (green) = on target or completed   (amber) = action started but target date slippage   (red) = action not commenced & way off target

Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress	Status
Ensure that the Constitution is updated following the changes to the Standards Regime	Monitoring Officer	End January 2013	Audit Committee received (and approved) a report from the Chief Executive at their meeting in November which outlined changes that the Monitoring Officer would make to the Constitution and then refer to the Constitution Working Group. The group is due to meet on 16th January 2013 to review the minor changes.	🙂
Review the responsibility of Cabinet Members as there are some cases where there is overlap e.g. internal communications (Working Environment) and external (Leader) and Member Services	Monitoring Officer	End December 2012	The Cabinet have met and completed their review of the list of responsibilities for Cabinet Members. This list will now be incorporated within the Constitution as part of the work on the Constitution working group – first meeting on 16th January 2013.	🙂
Financial Regulations and Policies				
Review and update the Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules (including procurement process) and present them to the Audit Committee for approval	Head of Finance	Target November 2012 meeting	The first part of the Financial Rules went to the Audit Committee on 20th November and the full draft is currently being reviewed by Management Team prior to them being presented to the Committee on 19 March 2013.	😐

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Whistle-blowing Policy				
Take a report to Scrutiny Committee on a half yearly basis on the number of instances reported via the Whistle-blowing policy	Head of Communities and Governance	October and April meetings each year	Completed - The half yearly update was given to the Scrutiny Committee on the 15th October 2012 and the next report is scheduled to go to Scrutiny Committee on 15 April 2013.	☺
Use the Link and staff induction process to make staff aware of the Whistle-blowing policy	Head of Communities and Governance	Following update of policy then quarterly	Completed - The Head of Communities and Governance attends Officer and Member Inductions to give an overview of The Whistle-blowing Policy (officer induction on 19 September 2012). The next update of the Whistle-blowing Policy is scheduled for March 2014. A quarterly update in the Link was done on 7 January 2013.	☺
Procedural Guidance				
Develop "Event Planning" guidance for officers – e.g. charging schedules, risk assessments and consideration of accessibility and equalities issues	Head of Communities and Governance	End March 2013	Research has been undertaken and drafts prepared for charging schedules, terms and conditions, risk assessments (form and guidance). A standard "event safety" guidance document has been drafted and is being reviewed by relevant officers before this is available as a point of reference for officers and the general public (via the website).	☺

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Business Continuity Plan

Action	Owner	Target Date	Progress	Status
Update the Business Continuity Plan ensuring that there is an overarching plan for the whole Council and produce a schedule of scenario exercises on the Business Continuity Plan	Head of ICT	End September 2012	A meeting was held on 25 September 2012 where the project of updating the BCP was scoped out. Work has commenced on this project plan and will continue into 2013. The Head of ICT has, in liaison with the Chief Executive agreed a confidential schedule of scenario exercises which will take place in 2013. **New target date for completion: End March 2013**	🙂 (amber)

SharePoint

Action	Owner	Target Date	Progress	Status
Conduct a review of SharePoint and develop an action plan to include all key strategic documents in one easily accessible place and changes to the Management structure	Head of ICT	End September 2012	Research and discussions with users of Sharepoint has been carried out and feedback has indicated that this is a larger project not just focusing on content but to look at the functionality of Sharepoint. Therefore a working group will now deliver this project. **Action to be carried forward to new AGS action plan and a new target date of 31st March 2014 set**	🙂 (amber)

CRM System and Complaints

Action	Owner	Target Date	Progress	Status
Review and amend the complaints policy in relation to vexatious complainants	Customer First Manager	End September 2012	Completed - The Customer First Manager has updated the Complaints Policy to include a section on persistent, unreasonable and vexatious complaints.	🙂 (green)

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Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress	Status
Produce a reminder note for all staff who use the CRM system to ensure that they improve the way the CRM system is used in relation to complaints and provide refresher training or a guidance note – upheld, not upheld or comment noted. Complete the field to say lessons learnt and what has changed as a result	Customer First Manager	End December 2012	Once the revised Complaints Policy was agreed relevant staff were briefed/trained on the changes. Further training will be given to staff on any further changes following the system update work which is due to be completed by September 2013.	😐
Remind all officers that any relevant documents that are sent to customers are saved on the CRM system	Customer First Manager	End December 2012	The CRM system is not currently able to save documents and this will require a system update work which is due to be completed by September 2013. **New target date: 31st September 2013**	😐
Recommendations from review of Internal Audit against the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit				
Review and update the internal audit customer survey	Audit Team Leader	End September 2012	The Audit Team Leader has liaised with other Devon Audit Group colleagues and developed a draft survey based on best practice. This is now being piloted during the audit process and will be finalised from the start of the 2013/14 financial year.	😐

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