



Audit Committee	Tuesday, 09 July 2024	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Annual Governance Statement (2023/24)**

Report Author(s): **Sal Khan (Interim Strategic Director)**

Purpose of Report:	To approve the draft Annual Governance Statement 2023/24
Report Summary:	<p>Each year the Council is required to conduct a review of the effectiveness of its systems of internal control and approve an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).</p> <p>The Council's review is provided within the AGS and is appended to this report. It concludes that the Council is satisfied that appropriate governance arrangements are in place however it remains committed to maintaining and where possible improving these arrangements, by proactively addressing the cost pressures which have been identified and those issues identified in undertaking the annual review.</p> <p>The Council will continue to seek to enhance and strengthen governance arrangements within these areas for improvement and monitor progress made as part of our next annual review.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That Members approve the Council's Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Sal Khan (Interim Strategic Director) 0116 257 2635 sal.khan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1)
Vision and Values:	Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Regulatory Governance (CR6) Other corporate risk(s) Failing to publish an AGS would breach accounts and audit regulations
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	

Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Leadership Team.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. OWBC Annual Governance Statement (2023/24)

1. Background and Scope of Responsibility

- 1.1 The Council is responsible for ensuring 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. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement on the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council must make proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and for facilitating the effective exercise of its functions including the management of risk.
- 1.3 The Council has previously approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. This statement shows how the Council has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, regulation 6(1)(b), which requires each English local authority to conduct a review, at least once a year, of the effectiveness of its systems of internal control and approve an annual governance statement (AGS).

2. Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 The AGS is included at **Appendix 1**. Section 3 of the AGS includes details on the Council's governance framework and a fundamental review of the effectiveness of the governance framework including the system of internal control is provided within Section 4.
- 2.2 The AGS links with the Internal Audit opinion for the year and sets out areas that require attention following the detailed assessment.
- 2.3 The assessment is included within the AGS and the areas of improvement which were identified during 2023/24 are detailed in Table 2.
- 2.4 The Council goes further than just carrying out a review of its internal control system and has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) joint annual guidance on corporate governance, which encourages Local Authorities in going beyond consideration of the internal control environment to look at wider arrangements for supporting sound corporate governance.
- 2.5 This further assessment is detailed within the Assurance Review of the AGS which is used to support the overall opinion and conclusion.
- 2.6 The overall conclusion is that the Council is satisfied that appropriate governance

arrangements are in place however it remains committed to maintaining and where possible improving these arrangements, by proactively addressing those issues identified in undertaking the annual review. The Council will continue to seek to enhance and strengthen governance arrangements within these areas for improvement and monitor progress made as part of our next annual review.

- 2.7 Following approval, the AGS will eventually be published alongside the draft Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 on the Council's website.