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| Audit Committee | Thursday, 17 July 2025 | Matter for Information and Decision |
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Report Title: **Annual Governance Statement (2024/25)**

Report Author(s): **Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer/S151 Officer)**

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| Purpose of Report: | To approve the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25. |
| Report Summary: | <p>Each year the Council is required to conduct a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls 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 improving these arrangements.</p> <p>The Internal Audit report has given an opinion of Significant Assurance in the Councils Governance arrangements.</p> |
| Recommendation(s): | That the Members approve the Councils Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25. |
| Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s): | <p>Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer/S151 Officer) (0116) 257 2759 colleen.warren@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> |
| Strategic Objectives: | Our Council (SO1) |
| Vision and Values: | <p>"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Proud of Everything We Do (V2) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)</p> |
| Report Implications:- | |
| Legal: | There are no implications arising from this report. |
| Financial: | There are no implications directly arising from this report. |
| Corporate Risk Management: | <p>Regulatory Governance (CR6) Other corporate risk(s) Failing to publish an AGS would breach accounts and audit regulations.</p> |
| 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:- | |

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| 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: | Senior Leadership Team |
| Background Papers: | None. |
| Appendices: | 1. Annual Governance Statement (2024/25) |

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, effectively and efficiently. 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.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council must make proper arrangements for proper 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 CIPFA/SOLACE framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. This statement shows how the Council has complied with the code and also meets The Accounts and 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 the 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 Councils Governance framework and a fundamental review of the effectiveness of the governance framework including the system of internal control is provided in 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 Council goes further than 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.
- 2.4 This further assessment is detailed within the Assurance Review of the AGS which is used to support the overall opinion and conclusion.
- 2.5 The overall conclusion is that the Council is satisfied that appropriate governance arrangements are in place, however it remains committed to maintaining and improving these arrangements.
- 2.6 A draft version of the AGS has been published alongside the Statement of Accounts for 2024/25 in line with Audit requirements on the Councils website. A final version will be published

upon approval.