

Agenda Item

REPORT OF **Service Improvement Officer**
To: **Audit and Governance Committee**
Subject: **AGS - Review of Evidence**
Date: **5th December 2017**

Reference:

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To satisfy the Committee that the AGS Supporting Evidence reflects the governance framework

1. INTRODUCTION

Paragraph 6(1) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2016 requires the Council to conduct a review at least once a year of the effectiveness of its control environment and to publish this in the Annual Governance Statement.

The Annual Governance Statement refers to a Code of Corporate Governance which was last approved by Audit & Governance Committee on 29th November 2016 (the 2018 Code of Governance is being presented for approval on 5th December 2017).

The Annual Governance Statement was last approved by Audit & Governance Committee on 22nd August 2017.

A process is in place for Members of the Committee to review the evidence to support the Statement on a rolling basis.

2. REPORT

At the meeting on 29th November 2016 it was agreed that the Council should continue to look at governance evidence topics on a random basis, chosen by the Chair prior to each meeting. The Chair has chosen principle G1 for review at the meeting on the 5th December 2017.

Principle G is about **implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.**

Section G1 is about **implementing good practice in transparency.**

A copy of this section of the database is included in Appendix A and Members are invited either before, during or any time after the meeting, to select items for further interrogation, to satisfy themselves that the evidence accurately reflects the governance framework.

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

There is a legal requirement as part of approval of the annual statement of accounts

Financial Implications

None



Human Resources Implications

None

Sustainability/Biodiversity Implications

N/A

Equality/Diversity

Equality Impact Assessment prepared

Risk Management

The evidence supporting the Annual Governance Statement reviews the Council's governance arrangements including risk management and identifies areas for improvement that are identified in the action plan.

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

Approval and adoption of the Annual Governance Statement is a key aspect of demonstrating that Torridge District Council has undertaken an annual review of its governance framework

Ward Member and Leader Member Views

Consultation date – Chair of A&G, Councillor Philip Hackett, on 26th October 2017.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The Committee having reviewed the evidence to support the Annual Governance Statement will then make suggestions to address any areas identified for improvement.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- The evidence contained in section G1 of the supporting database be noted.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultations: Jenny Wallace, Head of Paid Service
Jamie Hollis, Monitoring Officer
Steve Hearse, Statutory Finance Officer
Councillor Philip Hackett

Contact Officers: Chris Dobbs, Service Improvement Officer

Background Papers: Supporting Database



G1 Implementing good practice in transparency				100%
G1.1	Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in a fair, balanced and understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate	Website	Committee agendas are published on the website and include copies of all officer reports and supporting information for decisions to be taken	
			Full Council Agenda - October 2017	
			Report Writers Protocol and Guidance	
			The council sets out on its web-site how it complies with the Local Government Transparency Code	
			Information guides and datasets on the Website	
		Constitution	The Council's Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.	
			Constitution 2016	
		Freedom of Information	The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations gives rights of access to all types of recorded information held by Public Authorities. In 2016/17 Torridge processed 99.8% of FOI requests within the statutory 20 days.	



G1.2	Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny whilst not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand.	Annual Report	Torrige's Annual Report provides details of the council's performance against targets and reports on the financial performance for the year. The report also sets out the vision for the council along with the key achievements.	
			Annual Report - 2017	
			The Government encourages local authorities to publish information on their spending. To aid this transparency we publish information on payments over £500.	
		Land and Property List	All Spends over £500	
			Each year the Council published a list of all its property and land	
		List of all Council Grants	Torrige District Council Property Data April 2017	
			The Council is required to publish annually and thereafter quarterly, data relating to grants to voluntary, community and social enterprises.	
		Fees and Charges	Grants	
			Any charges made by Torrige are routinely published to ensure they justified and transparent	
		Officer Delegated Decision are listed on the website and planning decisions can be reviewed by keying in the planning application number to the planning portal	Fees and Charges 2017-18	
			List of Officer Delegated Decisions	
			Planning Portal	

