

Agenda Item

REPORT OF **Service Improvement Officer**
To: **Audit and Governance Committee**
Subject: **AGS - Review of Evidence**
Date: **24th July 2018**

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 5th December 2017.

The Annual Governance Statement was last approved by Audit & Governance Committee on 12 June 2018.

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 principles B3 and C2 for review at the meeting on the 24th July 2018.

Principle B is about **ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement**.
Section B3 is about **engage with individual citizens and service users effectively**

Principle C is about **defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits**

Section C2 is about **provide sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits**

A copy of these sections 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 4th July 2018.

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 sections B3 and C2 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



B3 Engage with individual citizens and service users effectively				90%
B3.1	Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve communities, individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.	Record of public consultations	Communications Strategy - January 2017	
			Consultation Strategy - July 2017	
			Consultation and community engagement toolkit available on the Intranet to all staff	Needs to be reviewed - out of date
			Torrige have a petition scheme and provide a template for the public to use and petitions collecting a set number of signatures are presented to Full Council	
			Petition Scheme & Template	
			The results of public consultations are summarised in the Annual Report	
		Annual Report - 2018		
		Partnership framework	The Partnership Protocol provides a guide to the key processes that should be followed when establishing and maintaining effective partnerships.	is more needed?
B3.2	Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement	Communication Strategy	Communications Strategy - January 2017	
			Consultation Strategy - July 2017	



			Media Policy - July 2017	
			Social Media Policy Aug 2017	
B3.3	Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future use	Communication Strategy	Press releases advertise consultation events and additional press releases provide details of outcomes of consultations.	
			The views of stakeholders who work with hard to reach/vulnerable groups are specifically targeted during the consultation process	
			Customer 10/10 feedback surveys are carried out by service areas and improvement ideas are taken onboard by Operational Managers. Results are summarised in the Annual Report.	
			Building Control - summary of 10-10 results	
			Annual Report - 2018	
			Attendance at local Agricultural shows	
			Strategic Plan Consultation - Stakeholders	
			Joint Strategic needs assessment	Devon Joint health and wellbeing Strategy 2016-19
			Equality Policy 2017-20	



			Equality Impact Needs Assessments	
			Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment	
			Economic Viability Assessment (with North Devon)	
B3.4	Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how views have been taken into account	Communication Strategy	TDC attends rural events, such as the local agricultural shows, to promote and ensure that all citizens have equal access to its services.	
			Torridge at the Woolsery Show	
			There is a public participation scheme to allow the public to speak at committees	
			Public Participation scheme	
			The External and Internal Overview and Scrutiny committees and the Community & Resources Committee have Independent Members who provide an independent and impartial presence	
			Example External O&S Agenda October 2017	
			The website has facilities for customers to submit suggestions, compliments and complaints. A 28 day service standard is in place for handling complaints.	
			Complaints and Suggestions on Website	



2.3.5	Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity	Process for dealing with competing demands within the community, for example a consultation	The analysis of public consultation results are sub-divided to show the views of different stakeholder groups. We rely on Councillors performing a 'community champion' role and acting as the major interface between the public and the Council. Councillors regularly enter the office to discuss verbal or written interaction with ward constituents.	
2.3.6	Taking account of the impact on future generations of tax payers and service users	Reports	Torridge Strategic Plan 2016-20	
		Joint Strategic needs assessment	Devon Joint health and wellbeing Strategy 2016-19	
			Torridge Profile October 2017	
			Joint Local Plan Supporting Material	



C2 Provide sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits				100%
C2.1	Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies and plans when taking decisions about service provision	Capital investment is structured to achieve appropriate life spans and adaptability for future use or that resources (e.g. land) are spent on optimising social, economic and environmental wellbeing:	The MTFS is supported by detailed analysis of customer prioritisation, risks and inflation factors. The Medium Term Financial Strategy is regularly reviewed and reported to and debated by Members.	
		Capital programme	Budget 2018-19 & MTFS & Capital Programme - Full Council Report Approved Capital Programme	
		Capital investment strategy	Budget 2018-19 & MTFS & Capital Programme - Full Council Report	
C2.2	Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints	Discussion between Members and Officers on the information needs of Members to support decision making	Lead Members are consulted on and provide comments for Committee reports 2017-18 Audit Manager's Opinion - covering report	
		Record of decision making and supporting materials	Officers provide reports to support key decisions by members; reports include risk management, legal, and financial implications. All Committee minutes are on the website and decisions are recorded in minutes and decision notices are published on the website. All of the above items are published one week in advance of committee meetings. The reason for any Part II items is set out on the agenda. Officer delegated decisions are also published on the website	
			Report to C&R Village Green 2017	
			C&R Minutes - October 2017	
			C&R Decision Notice - October 2017	
		C&R Minutes Aug 2017 showing Part 2 Items		



C2.3	Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs	Record of decision making and supporting materials	Torridge Strategic Plan 2016-20	
			Officers provide reports to support key decisions by members; reports include risk management, legal, and financial implications. Decisions are recorded in minutes and decision notices are published on the website. All of the above items are published one week in advance of committee meetings. The reason for any Part II items is set out on the agenda.	
			Report to C&R Village Green 2017	
		Protocols for consultation	Constitution Part 2 - Articles	
			Where key decisions will have a direct affect on local communities, consultations have been carried out to obtain stakeholder input and views and to ensure local community involvement. Results are presented to Committee as appropriate.	
			Communications Strategy - January 2017	
		Consultation Strategy - July 2017		
C2.4	Ensuring fair access to services	Protocols ensure fair access and statutory guidance is followed	Reports all require a consideration of financial, legal, HR, equality implications etc. Reports cannot be included on an agenda unless cleared by SFO or nominated finance staff	
			Report Writers Protocol and Guidance	

