

Appendix 4(a) - Annual Governance Statement 2015-2016 Mid-Term Review

Issue	Actions	Progress	Responsible Officer
Further embed arrangements in place relating to conduct and behaviours to raise awareness and ensure compliance.	Raise awareness of the whistleblowing policy to employees, Elected Members and the public.	<p>The Members Training Panel has approved the roll-out of whistleblowing awareness training for all Elected Members and the training is currently being developed by Democratic Governance.</p> <p>A Whistleblowing Policy is in place and HR will liaise with the Communications Team to put a news item on the Hub and an article in the Employee Newsletter to raise awareness.</p> <p>A facility is available on the Council's website to anonymously report cases of fraud to the Corporate Fraud Team for investigation.</p>	Chief Executive
	Further promote the Council's values and embed the Leadership Charter.	<p>The Leadership Charter has been drafted following a number of sessions with the Senior Leadership Team to discuss potential areas to include. All managers across the Council have now been consulted with, in terms of the draft charter.</p> <p>It is intended that the Leadership Charter will be formally launched and embedded as part of the 2017/2018 Individual Performance Appraisal Process.</p>	
	Review the Ethical Principles to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.	The Ethical Principles have yet to be reviewed.	
The Council needs to review the way in which it consults with residents and ensures that data collected through	When implementing different approaches to engage with the community, such as the Council Couch, there is a need to ensure that Elected Members are appropriately	A new approach is being developed including listening sessions with targeted and identified interest/ community groups and in-depth workshops to engage with the Community and Third Sector groups. This is	Chief Executive

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the consultation process is adequately considered.	consulted with and that senior managers engage in the process.	<p>based on the lessons learned from the Council Couch and are designed to create a ‘dialogue’ approach to the engagement with communities in Blackpool.</p> <p>A programmed series of interviews by ward will also allow for Members to be consulted, inform and develop the initiatives around community engagement in the widest sense.</p> <p>To further explore the role and involvement of Elected Members in community engagement, the Community Engagement Team is conducting an in-depth exercise, involving interviews with all Elected Members by electoral ward. This process is aimed to identify current good practice, barriers to improvement and ways in which Members can be better supported in this role.</p>	
	The data which the Council collates in relation to the thoughts of the community should be more effectively used to inform decisions relating to service delivery.	Outcomes and issues raised through consultation will be sent to Corporate Leadership Team for comments, as well as an ongoing consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members to ensure the process of engagement is relevant and appropriate to the communities of Blackpool.	
	New ways to consult with residents who do not ordinarily engage in consultation exercises should be considered and there is a need to ensure that consultation exercises are appropriately timed.	<p>Engaging with those in our communities who may not normally be consulted or involved, has led to pilot and ‘field test’ other participatory methodologies, techniques and models of engagement.</p> <p>The new process will allow for the first time a structured mechanism for the key issues within groups, such as LGBT and the disabled community, to</p>	

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		<p>feed directly into key decision making in the budget setting process.</p> <p>All information collated through the engagement process will be presented to Corporate Leadership Team and the relevant Cabinet Members, prior to being cascaded to the appropriate departments for consideration to inform service delivery and development.</p>	
	<p>Improved coordination with partner organisations in relation to data collection could better inform service delivery decisions and avoid potential duplication in consultation processes.</p>	<p>Information will be sent through the Corporate Delivery Unit for consideration and where appropriate, to support and supplement the collection of quantitative and qualitative data whilst seeking to improve the management data available across the Council and with Partners.</p> <p>Partner Agencies will be included through Boards, Officer Groups or working groups, but it is suggested to look at a network to bring those agencies who have a role in community development or engagement together to avoid duplication, share resources and improve coordination. Through the remainder of 2016/2017 it is proposed to look at an internal network of officers focused on community engagement and development to be trialled to understand the possible benefits and shortcomings of such an approach.</p>	
	<p>Assess the data which the Council makes available to the community to ensure that it contains an appropriate level of detail and is</p>	<p>Information to the community will be presented in different formats to ensure that the community is informed in plain, straightforward manners. This may</p>	

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	presented in an accessible way.	include info graphs, community proofed language (this is the development of 'youth proofing', where young people are asked to review information to ensure that it is appropriate to them, that it is not patronising, nor excessively filled with Council 'jargon') and face to face discussions with officers. Reports can be presented to the community through the Council Website as part of the feedback loop to develop dialogue with communities.	
Performance management should be more robust and the data more accessible.	There is a need to review the performance data available to the community to ensure that it is relevant, understandable and empowers residents.	There is a corporate review underway within the Delivery Unit to identify a better, more robust set of indicators to report progress against the Corporate Plan. The development of this data will also include a review of what information is available to the public and how it is presented.	Chief Executive
	The process for setting performance targets should be improved and there is a need to strengthen appropriate intervention in cases of low performance where outcomes may not be achieved.	The development of performance targets is included on the work programme of the Delivery Unit and will be considered as part of the work identified above. A target setting scrutiny panel has already met in 2016/2017 to review how this can be improved in scrutiny reports.	
	The Delivery Unit should be implemented to ensure services deliver appropriate outcomes and improve the quality of performance management data.	A work plan is now in place for the Delivery Unit. The team has been strengthened in its resource to deliver better evidence and evaluation against key projects.	
	The Policy Framework should be reviewed to ensure that all appropriate policies and strategies are in place and any gaps are	The Policy Framework has been reviewed and has been approved by the Executive. This will be	

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	addressed.	reviewed at quarterly points throughout the year.	
Corporate Policies and Procedures need to be consistently applied.	There is a need to raise awareness of the Corporate Policies and Procedures in place and ensure that all members of the Senior Leadership Team are compliant.	A Compliance Calendar is currently being produced that will clearly set out the timescales for key actions which managers need to perform. It is intended that a 'manager's quick guide' will be developed and published on the Hub for all items included on the Compliance Calendar.	Chief Executive
	As the Council continues to transform, there is a need to ensure that adequate internal controls are maintained, particularly as there is an increasing move to self-service and reduced resources results in less capacity to maintain controls.	System development is underway to implement a process to help ensure compliance with key procedures across the Council. This will be a useful tool for managers to see what they need to do but will also be used to identify non-compliant areas so that remedial action can be taken. The Internal Audit Service continues to deliver its plan which includes a combination of risk based and compliance audits to ensure that effective controls are maintained. The Internal Audit Service can also provide advice to managers when developing changes in systems and processes. The Audit Committee is holding Chief Officers to account where the need for control improvements have been identified.	
	Workforce planning needs to more closely aligned to the business planning process to ensure that workforce pressures are effectively managed and the Council can continue to deliver its statutory duties.	A refreshed Business Planning approach will be adopted for 2017/2018 which will ensure that the budget cycle, business planning and workforce planning are more closely aligned.	
It is increasingly challenging to set a legal budget due to the	The Corporate Leadership Team need to ensure effective monitoring of the	The annual savings programme is monitored on a monthly basis by Corporate Leadership Team, the	Director of

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austerity measures faced by the Council.	achievement of saving and income targets and balance this with demand pressure for services.	Executive and Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee. A budget timeline has been agreed for the 2017/2018 efficiency plan and increased consultation with the Senior Leadership Team has been undertaken.	Resources
	Effective financial administration needs to be consistently applied across all services including the accurate and timely raising of sundry debt and the prompt payment of creditor invoices.	<p>The creditors and debtors systems are subject to quarterly compliance testing by Internal Audit and any failings identified are reported to the relevant services. Risk based audits are also regularly undertaken in these key financial areas.</p> <p>An Income and Debt Strategy Group is in place which is chaired by the Director of Resources and targets those services which have aged debt or are not effectively managing the income collection process. A Corporate Income Management Group is also in place with cross-directorate representation to oversee the income management process.</p>	
Continue to develop and strengthen the challenge to governance arrangements by the Audit Committee.	Consider the benefits of introducing the role of an independent member, with relevant skills and experience, to be represented on the Audit Committee.	The Chairman of the Audit Committee and the Leader of the Council have been consulted about the potential of introducing an independent member onto the Audit Committee and steps will be taken to address this in time for the new Committee Calendar year.	Director of Governance and Partnerships
Effectively manage risk with reduced resources and ensure that risk management is built into all decisions as the climate for taking riskier	The Senior Leadership Team needs to consider risk management in the context of opportunity in order to transform the way in which the Council delivers its services.	Managers are being encouraged to take some risks in order to transform the way in which services are delivered. A Risk Management Strategy and a Risk Management Toolkit are in place to help managers effectively manage the risks that they are taking.	Chief Executive

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decisions grows.		<p>Risk Services have re-written the Risk Management iPool course and this is now with the Organisational and Workforce Development Team for implementation.</p> <p>A Corporate Risk Management Group is in place which is supported by Directorate Risk Management Groups and Thematic Risk Management Groups (Property, Driving at Work and Highways), where risks can be taken and discussed.</p> <p>Risk Services is able to advise managers on effective risk management and facilitate risk workshops where appropriate to do so.</p>	
	The Senior Leadership Team need to ensure that risk management is embedded into in all decisions taken.	Risk management has been built into the decision making process and all decisions should include a section on risk management considerations.	
Ensure that all Elected Members feel empowered when carrying out these duties.	Enhance the development programme for Elected Members to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and knowledge to empower them to carry out their duties.	<p>A Members Training Plan covering the period of 2016-2019 is in place, which sets out the member training priorities for this term of office.</p> <p>A Member Training Panel is also in place which meets several times a year. This is a cross-party group that meets to look at learning and development for members.</p>	Director of Governance and Partnerships
	Raise Elected Members awareness of the policies and procedures in place which enable all Members the opportunity to scrutinise, challenge and contribute to the Council's activities.	A training calendar outlining all Member training is in place and is sent to members each month. The calendar lists upcoming training for the next three months.	