

Title of Report **Members' Assurance Statements 2023/24**

Report of: **Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital**

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform the Committee of the opinion of Members of the Cabinet on the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements to feed into the Annual Governance Statement.

Background

- 2 The Audit and Standards Committee agreed on 7 March 2024 an assurance framework which would provide evidence for the completion of the Annual Governance Statement. Assurances from Members of the Cabinet on the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements are fundamental within the framework.

Governance Framework

- 3 The Council has a Local Code of Governance, which was originally presented to the Audit and Standards Committees in April 2007. This was last updated and agreed by the Audit and Standards Committee on 24 April 2024. This Code defines how the Council complies with the principals of good governance as set out in the Local Code of Governance developed by CIPFA, Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework. The principles of good governance in the framework are:
 - Behaving with integrity;
 - Ensuring openness and comprehensive engagement;
 - Defining sustainable outcomes;
 - Determining interventions;
 - Developing capacity;
 - Managing risks and performance; and
 - Implementing good practices in transparency.
- 4 The Council's governance framework is consistent with these principles which ensure they are fully integrated in the conduct of the Council's business.
- 5 The Council's Constitution sets out the role of the Cabinet as follows:

- To lead change and make recommendations for change to the Council, in consultation with a range of stakeholders;
 - To ensure that the Council's priorities within the policy framework and budget are implemented, making decisions within that framework where appropriate;
 - To monitor the implementation of the budget and policy framework through taking a lead role on Best Value and through co-ordination with the Overview and Scrutiny role; and
 - To provide a public face on specific issues.
- 6 Assurance was sought from Councillors who served in the Cabinet during 2023/24, in the form of a self assessment statement, on the effectiveness of the Council's corporate governance arrangements, by reference to the principles set out above.
- 7 All Cabinet Members considered that governance arrangements are effective.

Overall Opinion

- 8 Based on the evidence identified in the assurance statements from Members of Cabinet, governance arrangements are considered to be effective.

Recommendation

- 9 The Committee is asked to note the assurances of members of Cabinet and the evidence on oversight and endorse the opinion that the Council's governance arrangements are effective.