

MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT- QUARTER 3

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the progress, over the last quarter, against the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan.
- 1.2 The current AGS Action Plan was presented in June 2013 and reflects issues raised in the 2012/13 financial year, which have been addressed in 2013/14. A copy is attached as Annex A for ease of reference.
- 1.3 This is the penultimate update for this year. The final quarter 4 report will be presented to the committee in June 2014. At that meeting a consolidated account of progress will be presented and any outstanding issues highlighted and carried over to the 2013/14 plan if appropriate.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the key issues for quarter 3 highlighted in section 4 in relation to the Milton Keynes Council Annual Governance Statement Action Plan.

3. Background Information

- 3.1 The Annual Governance Statement Action Plan is a statement of the actions to be taken by Milton Keynes Council in order to remedy any weaknesses or areas for improvement which it has identified in the Council's governance arrangements. Each action has a named officer and a time frame by which it should be completed.

4. Issues

- 4.1 The key issues for Quarter 3 (October to December 2103) are:
 - Action 5 – Following a Member workshop and discussion among the group leaders, a proposal to refresh the Council's Policy Framework was referred to the Constitution Commission and adopted by Council on 15 January 2014. - Completed.
 - Action 6 – completed

- Action 7 – completed
- Action 8 – ongoing
- Action 10 The Risk Management Audit has started, it will be completed by the end of April.
- Actions 11 and 12 Training offered to all members. New arrangements now embedded. - Completed.
- Action 15 – Guidance has been issued to all staff and reference is included in inductions and other training.
- Actions 16 & 17 – there have been quarterly reports, culminating in 15 January 2014 when OTP made the transition to ‘transformation as usual. The “declarations of Interests outside of work” Policy has been updated and communicated to all staff. The audit showed satisfactory compliance
- Action 19 Members IT being reviewed as part of wider review of Democratic Support processes. Pilot being reviewed. Issues of member IT not now considered to be a matter properly for the remuneration panel. Completed.
- Action 20 the appointment of the Service Director LADS will address this longer term. The council has formally appointed the Interim Head of Legal Services as the Monitoring Office. - Completed.
- Action 21 – Agreed with Group Leaders that this will be emphasised in the Member induction process after the 2014 elections. Minor amendments to be considered in due course.
- Action 23 – This is work in progress, a report was presented to CAPSC (8 October 2013) setting out the Council’s overall approach.
- Action 24 - The follow up has been undertaken and the opinion to date has improved from weak to limited. Two essential actions have not yet been fully completed. Further action plan to be reported to CLT.
- Action 26 - All schools have received good or satisfactory opinions at follow up.
- Action 27 - The number of schools without appropriate segregation of duties in place has reduced and has not been an issue in the most recent audits.

5. Background Papers

CIPFA/SOLACE – Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework