

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE**

<b>TO:</b>	<b>AUDIT &amp; GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>8 JULY 2015</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2014/2015</b>		
<b>LEAD COUNCILLOR:</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR LOVELOCK</b>	<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>AUDIT &amp; GOVERNANCE</b>
<b>SERVICE:</b>	<b>FINANCE</b>	<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>ALAN CROSS</b>	<b>TEL:</b>	<b>937 2058</b>
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**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Council is responsible for ensuring that financial management is adequate and effective and that the Council has a sound system of internal control, which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.2 Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 requires councils to review the "*effectiveness of their system of internal control*" at least once a year and to publish an annual governance statement which accompanies the authority's financial statements. It also requires the findings of the review to be considered by a committee of the Council (or the whole Council).
- 1.3 The Annual Governance Statement is a key record of the overall effectiveness of governance arrangements within the Authority. The statement reflects the latest guidance from CIPFA/SOLACE on a strategic approach to governance and demonstrates how the key governance requirements have been met.
- 1.4 The following documents are appended:
- Draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2014/2015
- Appendix A - Governance Framework
- Appendix B - AGS Implementation plan for 2015/16

**2. ACTIONS REQUIRED**

- 2.1 Audit & Governance Committee is requested to receive and approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2014/2015 for publication with the Council's accounts.

2.2 The Committee is asked to authorise the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader and Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee, to make any minor amendments that become necessary before final publication in September.

### 3. GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

#### Internal

3.1 The governance framework, Appendix A, comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which we are directed and controlled and the activities through which we account to and engage with our residents and businesses. The headings and documents, activities, processes and outcomes which underpin the framework are included in paragraphs 3.2 - 3.4.

#### 3.2 Values

##### Key documents reviewed annually

- Corporate Plan
- Financial Plan
- Annual Statement of Accounts
- Council tax leaflet
- Members Allowance Scheme
- Pay Policy
- Service Delivery Plans
- Treasury Management Strategy

#### 3.3 Purpose and Outcomes

##### Key documents reviewed as required

- Constitution
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Business Continuity Arrangements
- Complaints Procedure
- Policy Statements e.g. Health & Safety
- Decision Book
- Member Training and Development Programme

#### 3.4 Engagement

##### Supporting processes monitoring and regulation

- Council
- Committees
- Annual Governance Review
- Budget Framework
- Appraisals
- CMT/ SLG Performance Meetings
- Internal Audit

- External Audit
- Job Descriptions
- Head of Paid Service role
- Monitoring Officers role
- S151 Officer role
- Corporate Procedure Rules
- Risk Management
- Website and Intranet
- Procedure Notes

#### External factors

- 3.5 The CIPFA/SOLACE statement of recommended practice: Guidance notes for practitioners specifically makes reference to where an authority is in a group relationship and undertakes significant activities the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control should include its group activities. In material terms the only organisation that this applies to remains Reading Transport Limited (RTL). RTL has an operating financial year to September 2014 and it is this period which its AGS relates. For the purpose of the AGS review, the Chief Executive of RTL and the Board considered the work carried out by their auditors was sufficient to enable them to complete an annual governance statement.
- 3.6 The statement received from the Chief Executive of RTL confirmed that their accounts had been audited by the company's appointed auditors, in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements and appropriate accounting standards.

#### Views of External Audit (KPMG) and other inspection agencies

- 3.7 Consideration has been given by the Chief Finance Officer to the views of KPMG as indicated in their Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. In particular KPMG issued an unqualified value for money ('VFM') conclusion for 2013/14. This means they were satisfied that the Council had proper arrangements for securing financial resilience and challenging how we secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness. To arrive at their conclusion they looked at our financial governance, financial planning and financial control processes, as well as how we are prioritising resources and improving efficiency and productivity.
- 3.6 KPMG issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's financial statements. This means that they consider the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority and the Group of its expenditure and income for the year.

#### Internal Audit Assurance

- 3.7 One of the assurance statements the Council receives is the annual opinion is the Chief Auditor in respect of the financial control framework. The opinion of the Chief Auditor in respect of audit work completed in 2014/15 is that the Council's internal control systems in the areas audited were adequate with the exception of a few systems where improvements were

recommended. Those audits where improvements were highlighted, whilst non material in terms of the council's overall Risk Management, Governance and internal control framework, are set out below:

- General Ledger - Need to improve controls over journal transactions.
- Debt Management - Resources to progress recovery action should be kept under review and greater corporate overview of all outstanding debt is needed.
- Home to School Transport Service - Need for more in-depth analysis of complaints and travel arrangements
- Fuel - improve information on vehicle fuel usage and apply appropriate restrictions on quantity and frequency of fuel dispensed.
- Fleet Management - further develop systems and processes to ensure compliance with legislation and value for money is achieved.

#### **4. THE PROPOSAL**

4.1 Based on the governance framework and statement together with the Internal Audit review of the Council's control framework, 17 governance related themes were highlighted that warrant reporting in the action plan which accompanies the Council's 2014/2015 Annual Governance Statement, Appendix B.

4.2 The report covers the period up to the publication of the accounts following the Committee's late September meeting, but as the Statement is signed off by the Leader of the Council and the Managing Director, it would be sensible to authorise minor amendments that may be needed before then. Inasmuch as the accounts will be part of that agenda, the committee will have an opportunity to reconsider the statement at that time. The need for amendment is not currently anticipated. The External Auditor will review the statement for consistency with his knowledge of the Council, but does not "audit" it as such.

#### **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

5.1 Good governance enables us to pursue our vision and corporate objectives effectively as well as underpinning these with mechanisms for the control and management of risk. Governance must be owned by all stakeholders, including senior management and Members, thus forming the intrinsic core of the Council. It should remain embedded in the culture of the Council and applied within a transparent framework of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes.

#### **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

6.1 Good governance means focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area. The annual governance statement accompanies the authority's published financial statements.

#### **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
  - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 We are mindful of the Equality Act and Equality Impact Assessment which is not relevant to this report

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 requires councils to review the *“effectiveness of their system of internal control”* at least once a year and to publish an annual governance statement which accompanies the authority's financial statements. It also requires the findings of the review to be considered by a committee of the Council (or the whole Council).
- 8.2 The CIPFA/SOLACE governance framework recommends that the assurance gathering process should have a structured link between the strategic objectives and statutory requirements of the authority and how these objectives are to be delivered. It requires the identification of key controls that are deemed critical to the delivery of these objectives and expects a formal review and risk assessment for the management and delivery of these key controls.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.
- 9.2 As indicated above the statement must be published with the Council's accounts, and will be reviewed by the External Auditor (though is not subject to audit).
- 9.3 In respect of the Council's Financial Management Arrangements, the CIPFA/SOLACE Guidance makes reference to specific CIPFA guidance covering the role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government and Head of Internal Audit in Public Service Organisations. Those roles in Reading are unchanged from recent years, and therefore continue to comply with the requirements.

## **10 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 CIPFA/Solace - Delivering Good Governance in Local Government
- 10.2 Audit & Accounts Regulations 2011

# Annual Governance Statement 2014/15

## 1.0 WHY WE HAVE THIS DOCUMENT

- 1.1 The Council is required to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS), with its Statement of Accounts which must be supported by a comprehensive assurance gathering process.

## 2.0 WHAT GOVERNANCE IS LIKE IN THE COUNCIL (THE SCOPE)

- 2.1 We are responsible for ensuring that the Council's business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging this overall responsibility, we are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the Council's affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which include arrangements for the management of risk.
- 2.2 The Council has adopted a code of corporate governance which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE *Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*. This statement explains how we govern our affairs.

## 3.0 THE PURPOSE OF OUR GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which we are directed and controlled, and the activities through which we are accountable to, engage with and lead our communities. The framework is attached at appendix A which in future years should be included as part of the Council's constitution. This enables us to monitor the achievement of the Council's priorities in the Corporate Plan and other key strategies to improve service delivery and to test and consider that these continue to provide value for money.
- 3.2 Our governance framework has been in place for the year ended 31 March 2015 and up to the date of approval of the statement of accounts.

## 4.0 OUR GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

### Political Leadership

- 4.1 Councillors are elected by residents of the Borough every four years to represent them in taking decisions about council services and funding. Reading is divided into 16 wards and 46 members are elected to represent them. In the Council Chamber, the councillors make decisions that set the policy direction of the organisation.

4.2 The party that receives the most votes forms an Administration and therefore has a greater influence on key decisions within the Council. The Council appoints a Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council, lead councillors and chairs of the committees at the Annual General Meeting. There are nine lead councillors who have particular responsibilities or 'portfolio's' such as Health, Housing and Adult Social Care.

4.3 The Council and the Committees shape what services are delivered and how Reading develops and grows sustainably. The Council is responsible for approving the priorities for the Council each year via the Corporate Plan supported by the resources in the Council's Budget and Financial Plan. The Council and Committees also develops policies, makes constitutional decisions and decides on local legislation.

4.4 The Council has developed a set of guiding values to help decision making and agree priorities:

- **Fair**

- tackling inequality and promoting residents' rights
- ensuring residents are part of decision making
- ensuring our staff have enough support

- **Caring**

- putting residents at the heart of what we do
- working with residents to look after each other

- **Enterprising**

- unlocking the power of our communities
- acting now to create a better future

4.5 We have considered the issues that affect our services and in February 2015 we adopted 6 service priorities to focus our efforts to help narrow the gaps within Reading:

**1 Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable**

**2 Providing the best life through education, early help and healthy living**

**3 Providing homes for those in most need**

**4 Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active**

**5 Providing infrastructure to support the economy**

## 6 Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities

To deliver these priorities within the new Corporate Plan there is a continued focus on the Council's contribution to narrowing what the gaps are within Reading. We have ensured that the funding and other resources we have available, such as our property and our people, are aligned to these priorities for the coming year.

### Good decision-making

- 4.6 Members sit on a variety of committees - mostly open to the public - that manage the organisation's different functions. Since 2013, the Council has adopted a committee system of decision making. Four cross-party committees whose membership is proportionate to the representation of each political party on the Council are responsible for all activity. These committees are:
- Policy Committee;
  - Adults, Children's and Education Committee;
  - Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee; and
  - Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee (SEPT).
- 4.7 In the committee arrangement the four standing committees also carry out overview and scrutiny exercises.
- 4.8 There are also committees for:
- Audit & Governance
  - Licensing
  - Planning and
  - Personnel
- 4.9 All the committees set goals and guidelines for the operation of services.
- 4.10 Traffic Management Sub-Committee considers relevant issues on behalf of the SEPT committee. The regulatory committees - Licensing Applications and Planning Applications - together with the Audit and Governance, Personnel, and Standards Committees have continued as committees of full Council. In addition, a Health and Wellbeing Board has been set up as a committee of full Council.
- 4.11 Our Constitution sets out the roles of, and relationships between the Council, the committees involved in making our policies and officers. The Constitution also sets out the responsibility of each group or individual for making particular types of decisions or for director decisions relating to particular responsibilities. Under the Constitution, all decisions that we make or that are made on our behalf must be made in line with the principles and frameworks set out in the Constitution.

- 4.12 The Constitution also sets out how members of the public can get involved in the decisions we make (under the 'Access to Information Rules'). We have a legal responsibility to carry out consultations before we make certain decisions.

### Day-to-day operations

- 4.13 The day-to-day work is carried out by officers within the Council. Their direction comes from Council and the Committees. Officers are employees of the Council and are non-political and ensure that the work is carried out as decided by Council and the Committees.
- 4.14 Some officers have statutory duties that they must uphold. Our Managing Director is 'Head of paid service' and is responsible for the organisation's efficient management. The role also involves giving Members strategic advice on policy-related issues, drawing on the experience and expertise of the organisation as a whole. All officers must provide objective, comprehensive and impartial advice to councillors so that they can rely upon this to make decisions.
- 4.15 The remaining statutory roles of Monitoring Officer, Chief Financial Officer, (statutory) Director of Adult's Services & (statutory) Director of Children's Services are fulfilled by relevant members of the Corporate Management Team. The role of Director of Public Health is fulfilled by one person for all authorities in Berkshire who is employed by Bracknell Forest BC.
- 4.16 Through our recruitment and learning and development we ensure that officers have the right skills and experience to ensure that governance is strong and they understand the requirement of legislation and how this needs to be considered when making recommendation to councillors and when delivering services.

## 5.0 HAVE YOUR SAY

- 5.1 We welcome views from the public and community as part of the constitutional process. These views are considered through formal and informal consultation processes, attendance at local meetings (e.g. community meetings) or contact with a local ward councillor. Trades unions are consulted on issues that affect staff.
- 5.2 During the last year we have continued to work hard to communicate (and receive feedback on) our aims for the community. We have done this in a number of ways, including:
- Our 'Working Better With You' initiative, which aims to improve the way we engage with residents, building lasting relationships and finding ways of working better together for the benefit of Reading;

- Consulting with residents on the proposals for the Abbey Quarter and Early Help services to support children, young people and families
  - Consulting with Service Users and Residents to ensure effective implementation of the Care Act for adults in Reading from April 2015
  - Using social media as a tool for communicating with the community on important developments and developing the council's website.
- 5.3 We get regular and detailed information on what people think about the quality of each of our services and we use this feedback to improve services. Through our 'Working Better With You' initiative, we have been providing opportunities for Reading people to get involved in the decision-making process so their views play a major part in helping to set spending priorities.

## 6.0 KEY STRATEGY DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 We continue to review and update the **Constitution** as necessary and have updated the Scheme of Delegation, Financial Procedural Rules and operational and financial delegations to reflect the changes following restructuring of services within the Council. Moving forward a programme of work continues to keep operational and financial delegations and procedures which underpin the Council's constitution up to date. The driver for this review is to have shorter and clearer policies for staff as far as is practical.
- 6.2 The Council's **Corporate Plan** provides the link between our strategic priorities and the way in which the Council operates. The Corporate Plan and the Council's budget to support the delivery of the Council's service priorities for 2015-2018 were approved by full Council in February 2015. The priorities within the Corporate Plan form the basis of our spending plans over the next three years with an on-going need to reduce our budget further. Therefore, this plan and the budget will continue to be updated every year to take account of changes.
- 6.3 The overall budget and policy framework is set by the Council and all decisions are made within this framework. We decided to incorporate the medium term financial plan as part of the Corporate Plan.
- 6.4 We delivered our 2014/15 net budget and we approved a robust balanced budget for 2015/16 within the context of a rolling 3 year financial plan. We will receive 27% (£9m) less Revenue Support Grant funding from Government in 2015/16 compared to 2014/15. We have estimated that we will still need to save a further £28.8m from our budget 2016-18.
- 6.5 The Council will have to continue to change the way it operates to deal with reductions in funding as we protect as many vital services as we can with the focus on narrowing the gaps within Reading. The Corporate Plan and the Budget provides an important framework for us to do this.

Because of the amount of money we will have to save, through the course of 2015, councillors will be presented with further options and proposals to reduce spending and to focus on what services we can continue to deliver with our remaining budget.

- 6.6 As a result of the savings required we will need to be realistic about what we can and cannot do moving forward. We undertook a programme to reshape the Council over the 2013-15 period, moving to a more decentralised and flatter structure. In some cases the Council's Reshape programme has led to new ways of working and we continue to reduce management posts and costs whilst reviewing all staffing structures to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

## 7.0 MONITORING AND MANAGING SERVICES

- 7.1 We continue to monitor and manage our service delivery as part of good governance within the Council, and during 2014/15 we:

- improved and strengthened our overall approach to performance management to further promote the performance culture;
- implemented the Council Health & Safety Action Plan;
- further developed compliance with information security standards;
- ensured the Audit and Governance Committee undertook its responsibility for monitoring the effective development and operation of corporate governance in the council;
- kept safeguarding practices and performance under continuous review at all levels and that escalation processes are in place;
- continued to monitor staff capacity and develop capacity/demand modelling in children's services;
- responded to regular external audit and challenge as well as regular internal themed audits and performance is regularly reported to the Corporate Management Team;
- used Peer Reviews to reflect upon our practices;
- undertook a Capacity & Resilience review, which completed in January 2015 and resulted in the Directorate, Education Adults and Children's Services (DEACS) being split into two new Directorates of Children's, Education and Early Help Services (DCEEHS) and Directorate of Adult Care and Health Services (DACHS) to strengthen management arrangements with new Directors appointed
- agreed a digital strategy as the framework for action and incorporated the replacement and update of the Council's website
- launched a beta version of the new website on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014;
- undertook a comprehensive review of assets including a rolling programme of condition surveys has informed a prioritised programme of works;
- implemented a programme of learning and development to officers and members. Senior officers are keep abreast of developments in their profession;

- continued to develop our training needs analysis to assess any potential skills shortages, single points of reliance and also staff that could be deployed in other areas of the organisation if required. The training needs analysis will inform a new Workforce Development Plan to ensure that training and support is available to all staff but also particularly staff whose roles have changed or are going to change to minimise potential risks;
- began a piece of work on the “Reading Offer” to make sure our staff terms and conditions, development opportunities are equitable and comprehensive, and can ensure that we can recruit and retain staff in our present operating context
- monitored performance through feedback from residents and service users. A new corporate performance monitoring and reporting programme has been introduced from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.
- undertook regular satisfaction surveys of residents and service users and analyses of complaints raised under the Council’s Corporate Complaints Policy are regularly reported and considered by CMT.
- responded to system issues within Accounts Payable and the General Ledger since the implementation of the Councils Financial Management System and began work to address these issues.
- put in place, following corporate and service reviews improvement plans for Finance and Children’s Services
- refreshed and published our whistleblowing policy in July 2014
- followed up issues identified by external audit, by providing training to benefit assessors to strengthen the quality of claimant assessments and classification of overpayments.

## 8.0 REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

8.1 We are responsible for carrying out, at least once a year, a review of how effective our governance framework is, including our system of internal control. Our review of how effective our systems and procedures are is supported by the work of CMT and the Chief Auditor’s Annual Assurance Report. The review includes consideration of comments made by the External Auditor, peer reviewers, inspectors and other review agencies. The process that has been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance framework includes the following:

- The Council’s internal management processes, such as performance monitoring and reporting; the staff performance appraisal framework; internal surveys; monitoring of policies, such as the corporate complaints and health and safety policies; and the corporate budget process;
- The Council’s internal audit coverage, which is planned using a risk based approach. The outcome from the internal audit coverage helps form the Chief Auditor’s opinion on the overall adequacy of the Council’s Internal Control Framework, which is reported in his annual report; including any limited assurance audit reports and action taken

Reading Borough Council  
Annual Governance Statement 2014/15

- The Chief Auditor's annual report on anti-fraud and corruption activities;
- OFSTED annual children's services assessment;
- The Care Quality Commission's inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services;
- External Audit of the council's financial statements and VFM opinion assessing whether proper arrangements are in place for securing financial resilience and challenging how the council provides economy, efficiency and effectiveness ;
- The work of the Audit and Governance Committee, which reviews the outcomes from the Annual Audit Plan and the annual report of the Chief Auditor;
- Annual review of standards and complaints about councillors by the Monitoring Officer to the Standards Committee.

8.2 We have made progress in implementing actions contained within the 2013/2014 Annual Governance Statement. Some of the actions identified last year have been completed:

- Updated and approved a revised Scheme of Delegation and Financial Procedure Rules
- Managed the availability of school places in all statutory year groups.
- Reviewed the budget monitoring and profiling arrangements in Leisure and Cultural Services to ensure the service deals with changing income levels and patterns of activity
- Continue to implement the Information Security Action Plan and standards. Enable the Public Service programme (PSN) connectivity between the Council and NHS Health ICT systems
- Reviewed and consolidated operational and financial procedures and introduced shorter and clearer policies and procedures
- Delivered a new Website to ensure residents, businesses and visitors have access to good quality services and information

8.3 Other actions are on-going and reflected in the implementation plan attached at appendix B.

## 9.0 PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

9.1 The annual review of governance provides evidence of how effective our governance framework is. As a result, we have put in place an improvement plan as mentioned at 8.2 above. Over the next year we will be taking steps to continue to improve what we do.

9.2 We are satisfied that these steps will bring about the improvements that we identified in our review of effectiveness, and we will monitor these improvements as part of our next annual review.

Reading Borough Council  
Annual Governance Statement 2014/15

Signed:.....

Signed:.....

Ian Wardle, Managing Director

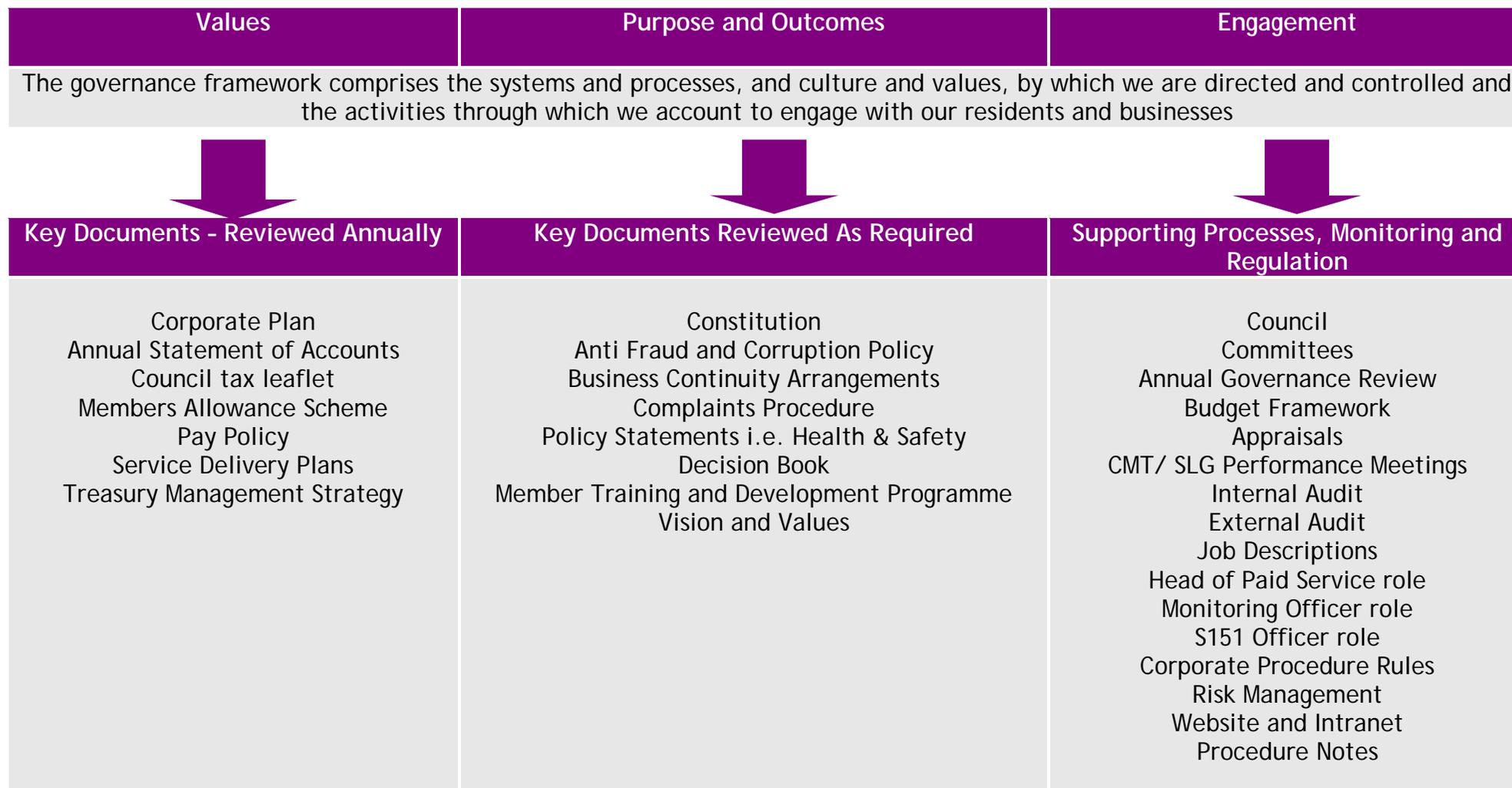
Councillor Jo Lovelock, Leader of Council

On behalf of the members and officers of Reading Borough Council

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## Appendix A

### Governance Framework



Appendix B

**2014/15 Annual Review of Corporate Governance Arrangements – DRAFT Improvement Plan for 2015/16**

Ref	Action	CMT lead
AGS 1	Develop and manage a budget and financial management strategy to operate within available resources over the period to 2017/18	Managing Director
AGS 2	Strengthen financial and budget management throughout Council services and provide effective financial management support considering reducing budgets and the changing nature of income.	Head of Finance
AGS 3	Introduce cost effective solutions to meet the demand for safe and adequate emergency accommodation and mitigate the growing pressure on the B&B budget.	Director of Environment & Neighbourhood Services
AGS 4	Continue work to accelerate progress and reduce the school attainment gap	Director of Children, Education & Early Help Services
AGS 5	Develop further the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Strategy to enable schools to meet the needs of children and young people with higher levels of need	Director of Children, Education & Early Help Services
AGS 6	Continue to refresh forecasts to maintain level of understanding and develop capacity/demand modelling and promote development in children's services	Director of Children, Education & Early Help Services
AGS 7	Develop and monitor actions to mitigate the failure of providers around adult and children safeguarding	Director of Children, Education & Early Help Services / Director of Adult Care & Health Services

Appendix B

**2014/15 Annual Review of Corporate Governance Arrangements – DRAFT Improvement Plan for 2015/16**

Ref	Action	CMT lead
AGS 8	Produce a new workforce development plan to take account of Reshaping the Council, new skills required and the changing demands on services.	Director of Adult Care & Health Services
AGS 9	The Council is continuing to refine and simplify processes and procedures and will provide guidance and training to staff to ensure that controls are embedded throughout the organisation.	Managing Director
AGS 10	Continue to monitor the impact on staff resilience (stress and motivation) of organisational change and change generally	Head of Legal & Democratic Services
AGS 11	Continue to undertake work on embedding the policy, delivery, governance and monitoring arrangements for Health & Safety.	Managing Director
AGS 12	Continue to develop our commissioning, procurement and contract management	Director of Adult Care and Health Services
AGS 13	Continue to undertake work to further improve information management and the Council's data protection policy and reduce the risk of loss of data.	Head of Legal & Democratic Services
AGS 14	Given the risks presented via the significant changes being delivered and further cost reduction activity across the Council, the Corporate Management Team will continue to closely monitor the operation of the Council's control environment through the transformation and change processes	Managing Director
AGS 15	Complete a Council wide review of the use of vehicles and fleet in general to ensure compliance with legislation and that value for money is achieved.	Director of Environment & Neighbourhood Services

Appendix B

**2014/15 Annual Review of Corporate Governance Arrangements – DRAFT Improvement Plan for 2015/16**

AGS 16	Deliver improvements and actions contained in the Finance Improvement Plan	Head of Finance
AGS 17	Deliver and monitor the requirements of the Local Government Data Transparency code 2015 which sets out the requirement for Councils to publish key information	Head of Customer Services

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