

## **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2007-2008**

Head of Finance

### **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to allow the Audit Committee to review and approve the Annual Governance Statement for Aylesbury Vale District Council which will form part of the formal accounts for the financial year 2007/2008.

### **2.0 Recommendation**

The Audit Committee is asked to:

- a.** Critically review the Annual Governance Statement and the supporting documentation;
- b.** Consider the robustness of the Council's governance arrangements;
- c.** Monitor any actions arising from the review arrangements;
- d.** Approve the Annual Governance Statement prior to its inclusion in the Statement of Accounts.

### **3.0 The Assurance Framework**

- 3.1 The requirement to publish an Annual Governance Statement was reported to this Committee in March 2008. That report set out the reasons for the preparation of the statement and the Audit Committee's role in the Annual Governance Statement process. At that meeting the Audit Committee approved the assurance gathering process and the format of the statement.
- 3.2 Once it has been approved by the Audit Committee, the statutory Annual Governance Statement will be signed by the Leader and Chief Executive.
- 3.3 As discussed at the March Committee meeting, the assurance gathering process is similar to that previously used during the preparation of the Statement of Internal Control. It is based on the management, risk management and internal control framework of the Council and in particular the independent report of the Council's Audit Manager presented to this meeting.
- 3.4 This year Risk Management arrangements at the Council have been strengthened by the appointment of a dedicated Risk Manager. She has assisted each service to maintain and keep up to date comprehensive risk registers for the management of corporate, generic and service risks.
- 3.5 The assurance framework includes individual statements from each Head of Service covering the Internal Control Framework within their service. This

takes the form of a 16 page self assessment questionnaire and assurance statement considering all aspects of service operation.

- 3.6 Where Heads of Service have raised matters of concern they have been identified in the draft Annual Governance Statement together with the details of proposed remedial action. All these items will be included in the Audit Tracker document, so that the Committee will be able to monitor progress made in resolving them.

#### **4.0 Options Considered**

None - The Annual Governance Statement is a statutory requirement.

#### **5.0 Resource Implications**

The resources to produce the report have been found from within the previously agreed budget.

#### **6.0 Response to Key Aims and Outcomes**

The Annual Governance Statement is an integral part of the Council's Annual Accounts and requires formal consideration and reporting at Committee.

#### **7.0 Reason for Recommendation**

To comply with legislation.

Contact Officer  
Background Documents

Peter H Watson  
Final Account papers  
Audit reports  
Internal Audit Manager's Annual Report