

## **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN**

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This report details the Corporate Governance Action Plan and draft Joint Statement of Governance and Internal Control to accompany the 2011 – 2012 Annual Accounts.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report;
- 2.2 Approve the Corporate Governance Action Plan 2012/13

### **3. DETAIL**

3.1 In 2007 CIPFA and SOLACE published a Framework for 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. This Framework, and subsequent guidance documents, took the core principles detailed within the 'Good Governance Standard for Public Services (2004)' and adapted these for local government. These documents outline the requirements for Councils to prepare a local code of corporate governance and undertake self assessment of their governance arrangements.

3.2 The Council's Governance Group, chaired by the Executive Director of Customer Services as Monitoring Officer, has responsibility for the preparation of the Improvement Plan.

The Governance Group includes:

- Head of Strategic Finance (s95 Officer);
- Head of Improvement & HR;
- Head of Governance and Law;
- Governance Manager;
- Internal Audit Manager.

3.3 In 2011 the Strategic Management Team, Audit Committee and Executive approved the Argyll and Bute Council Code of Corporate Governance and an Improvement Plan for 2011/12.

3.4 The progress made in completion of the actions identified in the 2011/12 improvement plan have been considered by the Governance Group and reflected in the updated code (Appendix 1). Evidence of the progress made has been provided. The completion of these actions provides clear evidence of ongoing improvement in the corporate governance arrangements of the Council.

The actions CG-7 through to CG-14 have been progressed by a review of the risk management policy and strategy and the development of the risk management action plan 12-13 and are now scheduled for completion in 2012/13.

- 3.5 The updated Code of Corporate Governance is attached (Appendix 1) along with a new Action Plan for 2012/13 (Appendix 2) and a draft statement for inclusion in the Accounts for 2011/12 has been prepared and is attached (Appendix 3).
- 3.6 The review of the effectiveness of the system of governance and internal control is informed by the:
- Work of Officers within the Council;
  - Work of External and Internal Audit;
  - Statements of Governance or Internal Control provided by external bodies;
  - External review and inspection reports; and
  - Recommendations from the Audit Committee.
- 3.7 The attached joint statement is in draft format and may be updated further when Audit Scotland, the Council's external auditors, complete their review of the Council's Annual Accounts for 2011 – 2012.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 A Code of Corporate Governance is in place setting out the requirements for good governance within the organisation. The Code is reviewed annually, with a Governance Action Plan developed to address any areas of partial or non-compliance.
- 4.2 The Code of Corporate Governance, Action Plan, and the evidence gathered during the self-assessment allowed the Governance Group to prepare a Joint Statement of Governance and Internal Control to accompany the Annual Accounts.

#### **5. IMPLICATIONS**

**POLICY** Ensures compliance with the Council Code of Corporate Governance and recommended practice

**FINANCIAL** None

**HR** None

**LEGAL** None

**EQUALITIES** None

**RISK** None

**CUSTOMER SERVICE** None

**6. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Code of Corporate Governance

Appendix 2 - Action Plan 2012/13

Appendix 3 - Draft Statement of Governance and Internal Control

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