

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Governance Arrangements for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council Programme</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Audit Committee on 4 December 2017
<b>WARD</b>	None specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director Governance

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

The transformation of the way the Council operates will be undertaken with strong governance arrangements in place to ensure we achieve the following benefits:

- Improved availability of, and access to, Council services through digital channels
- Swifter resolution of issues and queries
- Ability for residents to track the progress of their issue as it is resolved by the Council
- Greater focus on problem-solving and customer responsiveness
- A leaner, more efficient Council costing significantly less to run

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Audit Committee notes the conclusions from the internal audit of governance arrangements for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council programme.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the outcome of the internal audit of the governance arrangements for the implementation the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council programme. It should be noted that the Executive also receives quarterly update reports reporting on progress of implementation and revenue return on investment.

The key features of the governance arrangements are:-

- Officer Programme Board chaired by the interim Chief Executive
- Member/Officer Management Group with sub groups focused on IT and Finance
- Existing decision-making bodies (e.g. Executive, Personnel Board) operated as per the Council's constitution
- Risk management embedded in the programme at all levels.

The overall audit conclusion was that controls are Substantially Complete and Generally Effective (second highest out of 4 opinions).

## Background

On 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016, the Executive agreed to the implementation of the business case for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Organisational Change Programme which set out the key elements of change to the shape, structure and operating model of the Council. The proposals are leading to a radical change in how the Council operates resulting in a reduction in costs whilst improving services.

For a programme of this size, complexity and organisational significance it is essential that robust and effective governance arrangements are in place.

As part of the programme set-up work a series of governance groups has been established.

In addition, risk management arrangements have been put in place across the Programme. Given its significance, risks around the programme are included on the Corporate Risk Register (Risk No. 20).

## Analysis of Issues

An overall summary of the Governance bodies established in 2016 is provided at Appendix 1.

Details of the terms of reference for each part (as per 2016) is provided at Appendix 2.

These arrangements have been subject to an internal audit. The main conclusions were:-

Good evidence was in place to support:

- The project planning and authorisation for its implementation;
- A structured approach to implementing the Programme;
- Communication of the structure and implementation approach;
- A comprehensive governance structure in place.

Scope for improvement was identified in the following areas:

- Governance documentation;
- Roles and responsibilities (to the extent that some arrangements have been consolidated since 2016 (i.e. IT sub group merged into main Member/Officer group); and
- Risk management.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	Yes	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	Yes	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	Yes	N/A

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
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None
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<b>Cross-Council Implications</b>
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This change programme impacts on the whole Council.
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<b>List of Background Papers</b>
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<p>21<sup>st</sup> Century Council Business Case – see Executive papers 29 September 2016  Governance Arrangements reported to Audit Committee – see Audit Committee papers 5 December 2016  Update to Executive – 26 January 2017  Update to Executive – 25 May 2017  Update to Executive – 28 September 2017</p>
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