

# ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

## 2015/16



**PRESENTED TO:** **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**DATE OF MEETING:** **28 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**OFFICER PRESENTING REPORT:** **HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT;  
CONOR BYRNE**

### 1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Audit and Governance Committee to approve the 2015/16 Annual Governance Statement.
- 1.2 The final version of the Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16 is shown in the **Appendix**. It is based on the draft statement that has been published on the RBFRS website since July 2016.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 2.1 **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statement;

### 3. BACKGROUND AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Authority is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance within the law and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for.
- 3.2 It 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.
- 3.3 In discharging this overall responsibility, the Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions and managing corporate risk.
- 3.4 The Authority has a duty to produce and publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The CIPFA statement of recommended practice (SORP) requires the AGS to be scrutinised by the Audit Committee prior to presentation of the annual Statement of Accounts.
- 3.5 The CIPFA/SOLACE *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government; Framework* urges local authorities to prepare a governance statement in order to report publicly on the extent to which they comply with their code of governance on an annual basis, including how they have monitored the effectiveness of their governance arrangements in the year, and on any planned changes in the coming year.

- 3.6 Officers have prepared a draft AGS and as required, the draft has been published on the RBFRRS website since July 2016.
- 3.7 The AGS will be signed by the Chairman of the Fire Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.

#### **4. FINANCIAL, LEGAL, RISK MANAGEMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The AGS assures members that controls are in good order. The AGS must be approved by the Audit and Governance Committee and will then be used as evidence in the formulation of the Authority's 2015/16 Statement of Assurance.

#### **5. COMPLIANCE WITH STANDING ORDERS / FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

- 5.1 This report complies with the statutory timetable.

#### **6 CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**

The Annual Governance Statement provides a framework to enable the delivery of all the 6 commitments listed below:

- 6.1 Commitment 1 – We will educate people on how to prevent fires and other emergencies, and what to do when they happen.
- 6.2 Commitment 2 – We will ensure a swift and effective response when called to emergencies.
- 6.3 Commitment 3 – We will ensure appropriate fire safety standards in buildings.
- 6.4 Commitment 4 – we will seek opportunities to contribute to a broader safety, health and wellbeing agenda.
- 6.5 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provide good value for money.
- 6.6 Commitment 6 – We will work with Central Government to ensure a fair deal for Royal Berkshire.

#### **7 ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMON SENSE**

- 7.1 There are no direct impacts from this report on the partnership for common sense.

#### **8 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 No additional papers

#### **9 CONSULTATION WITH STATUTORY OFFICERS**

##### **9.1 Chief Fire Officer**

The Chief Fire Officer was consulted during the preparation of this report.

##### **9.2 Head of Finance**

Report Author

##### **9.3 Monitoring Officer**

Report sponsor.

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