



REPORT of CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**to
PERFORMANCE, GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
20 FEBRUARY 2025**

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024 / 25

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2024 / 25 for review and adoption.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That the Committee approve the Annual Governance Statement (**APPENDIX A**) and that this is appended to the Statement of Accounts;
- (ii) That the Performance, Governance and Audit Committee (PGA) monitors the progress of the action plan identified in the AGS through a quarterly report.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The AGS analyses Maldon's governance arrangements for 2024 / 25 against the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) best practice, and this is also the second version where we include analysis against CIPFA Financial Management code Standard C 'The leadership team demonstrates in its actions and behaviours responsibility for governance and internal control' – which was identified by the Local Government Association (LGA) finance peer review as a possible improvement action for the Council.
- 3.2 The statement reviews the criteria for good governance and the activity that has taken place within these criteria over the 2024 / 25 financial year, as well as including the internal audit statement / review of the year.
- 3.3 The document also highlights areas where further improvements could be made to improve governance and build best practice, and this is set out in the action plan proposed for 2025 / 26.
- 3.4 Overall, there are no significant governance concerns and there have been improvements within the year, as highlighted in the report.
- 3.5 The AGS is provided separately to the Statement of Accounts to recognise the importance of the document and information set out in supporting our governance arrangements, which underpin the way our financial reporting is produced. If the draft is approved by the Committee this will then be appended to the Statement of Accounts.

- 3.6 To meet Committee timetables, this report has been brought forward before the conclusion of the financial year. Officers do not anticipate significant governance changes between now and the end of March, but if there are any, a revised version of the document will also be brought forward accordingly.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The draft AGS is provided for Committee review and adoption, and comments on the Council's Governance arrangements for 2024 / 25, and the plans for improving these in 2025 / 26.

5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025 - 2028

5.1 Supporting our communities

- 5.1.1 The report gives viability to our residents around our governance arrangements and supports openness and transparency.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The report gives viability to our residents around our governance arrangements and supports openness and transparency.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None
- (iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – Good governance includes good risk management and fraud awareness and comment on these areas is included in the AGS.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – This document is appended to the Statement of Accounts and contributes to financial reporting.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Cheryl Hughes, Assistant Director- Programmes, Performance and Governance.