

Report of the Head of Internal Audit, Anti-Fraud and Assurance

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 15TH NOVEMBER 2023

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (FINAL) 2022/23

1. Purpose of the report

1.1 This brief covering report presents the Authority's Final Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2022/23

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) **consider the final AGS which reflects the annual review of the effectiveness of the governance arrangements in place and the actions arising; and**
- b) **receive updates on the progress of the actions identified in the AGS action plan at future meetings.**

2.2 Subject to the Committee's comments the final AGS will be presented to full Council for formal approval on 23rd November 2023.

3. Background

3.1 The production of an AGS is a statutory requirement as defined in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. These regulations do not prescribe the actual content or format of the document, although CIPFA provides guidance, but this is not mandatory.

3.2 The AGS is fundamentally a public document and should be constructed in a style that allows the reader to understand the governance arrangements of the Council and obtain assurance that there has been a robust annual review process resulting, where appropriate, in actions to address any weaknesses or improvements identified.

3.3 The final AGS 2022/23 has been prepared following an annual governance review process previously outlined to the Committee.

3.4 Since the draft AGS was considered by the Audit and Governance Committee in May 2023 there have been a number of changes made to the document. Of particular note are:

- Reference in the Executive Summary to the Council winning 2 prestigious awards.
- A new section 10 – on Council wholly owned companies.

- 3.5 It is important that the AGS is not seen as an “end of year” process, and that there is constant focus on the actions throughout the year.
- 3.6 The final AGS is appended to this report.

Contact Officer: Head of Internal Audit, Anti-Fraud and Assurance

Email: robwinter@barnsley.gov.uk

Date: 3rd November 2023