

Wickham Council Annual Governance Statement 2016

Audit Commission Annual Return - Report on the requirements of Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement

Section 1 of the Annual Audit return requires members to acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of accounting statements. The return has to be signed by the Chairman and Clerk to this effect having first agreed to nine specific statements:

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.

The accounts are prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations and scrutinised through the internal audit process

2. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.

A Risk Assessment of Financial and Non-Financial Internal Audit Controls document has been developed to review internal control systems including measures to prevent and detect fraud, an action plan to ensure improvements are carried out has been adopted as part of the Statement of Accounts. The accounts and financial systems are scrutinised through the internal audit process

3. We have taken reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice which could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.

The Council operates within a robust set of governance arrangements, section 1 Governance, of the Risk Assessment of Financial and Non-Financial Internal Audit Controls document outlines these controls and improvements required are highlighted on the action plan.

4. We have provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

The Council displays a Notice of Appointment of the date for the exercise of electors' rights which for 2016 will be made on 3rd June. This entitles any person interested to inspect and make copies of the Annual Return, books, invoices, receipts etc during stated office hours Monday – Friday between 3rd June and 14th July 2016

In addition to the statutory requirements the Statement of Accounts and accompanying documentation will be made available on the Council website.

5 We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks including the introduction of internal controls and / or external insurance cover where required.

A Risk Assessment of Financial and Non-Financial Internal Audit Controls document has been developed to monitor and manage risks and internal controls and a review of the document and an action plan is included with the Statement of Accounts.

6. We have maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council's accounting records and carried out a review of its effectiveness.

7. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.

Any issues raised will be considered by the Finance Committee.

8. We have considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the statement of accounts.

A Risk Assessment of Financial and Non-Financial Internal Audit Controls document has been developed to monitor liabilities, a review of the document and an action plan will be included with the Statement of Accounts.

9. Trust Funds - Not relevant to Wickham.