

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

07 April 2015

### Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

#### Part 1- Public

#### Matters for Information

#### **1 GRANT THORNTON PUBLICATION – LOCAL GOVERNMENT GOVERNANCE REVIEW 2015 – ALL ABOARD**

**Grant Thornton in February 2015 published the report entitled ‘Local Government Governance Review 2015 – All aboard’.**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

1.1.1 The fourth annual review into local authority governance aims to assist senior management and elected members of councils to assess the strength of their governance arrangements and to prepare for the challenges ahead.

1.1.2 Focusing on three particular aspects of engagement – within the organisation, with partners and with the public – the key messages from the report are:

- While 90% felt their organisations encouraged well-managed risk taking and innovation, 43% felt scrutiny committees were not challenging enough about the way authorities do things.
- 84% of respondents said their organisations are now using or considering alternative delivery models but only 43% feel that scrutiny of service quality is sufficiently challenging.
- 54% said the transition to police and crime commissioners has not had a positive impact on local partnership working arrangements, while 42% saw no difference in local healthcare governance as a result of councils’ new public health role.
- The annual accounts and annual governance statement continue to expand in length, making them even more challenging for the public to read and understand.
- Only 30% of cabinet positions in local authorities are held by women, while over half of respondents said members do not adequately reflect the demographic profile of the local population.

1.1.3 Local authorities are required to prepare and adopt a Code of Corporate Governance. The current Code of Corporate Governance was adopted by the Council in July 2014 and is used for the purposes of the Annual Governance Statement. The purpose of the Annual Governance Statement is to assess and demonstrate that there is a sound system of corporate governance throughout the organisation. The Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2015 and the accompanying self-assessment questionnaire and supporting evidence is to be reported to the June meeting of this Committee.

1.1.4 The report itself runs to 36 pages and can be found at the link below:

[http://www.grant-thornton.co.uk/Global/Publication\\_pdf/Local-government-governance-review-2015-All-aboard.pdf](http://www.grant-thornton.co.uk/Global/Publication_pdf/Local-government-governance-review-2015-All-aboard.pdf)

## **1.2 Legal Implications**

1.2.1 None.

## **1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.3.1 As set out in the report where appropriate.

## **1.4 Risk Assessment**

1.4.1 As set out in the report where appropriate.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Neil Lawley  
Paul Worden

Sharon Shelton  
Director of Finance and Transformation