

# Annual governance statements 2016/17

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# Changes for 2016/17

- No 'standard text'
- Accounting for actions taken on 2015/16 issues

Keeping their prominence:

- Focus on outcomes
- Focus on review of effectiveness, not description of arrangements
- Inclusion of opinion
- Action plan

# Making the best of your statement

- Use your local code
- Have a robust review of effectiveness

Then the AGS can be brief on description and focus on communicating results.

How well are your governance arrangements working?

Do they match up to the principles?

What does that mean for your planned outcomes?

How are you responding to current challenges and the risks coming up?

# What should you be looking for?

- General readability and user friendliness
- Emphasis is on review of effectiveness rather than description
- Quality of evaluation and openness about findings – against the governance principles
- Includes opinion
- Focus on outcomes and strategic objectives
- Articulation of risks, future challenges and governance weaknesses.
- Usefulness of action plan
- Prominence and accessibility

# How well do 2015/16 AGS match up?

## Evaluation of AGS from 2015/16:

- Weakest area – prominence and accessibility
- Some failed to include an opinion
- Longest was 45 pages
- Many still include a lot of description
- Action plans vague, unsuitable for monitoring
- ‘Dressing up’ poor performance

## Good points:

- Use of diagrams / graphics
- Use of web links
- Achieving a short but meaningful focus on arrangements
- Accounting for progress made on 2014/15 plans
- Openness about failings
- Highlighting partnership governance arrangements
- Focus on outcomes

# Other points to aim for

From the Guidance Notes:

- It is regarded as a valuable means of communication
- It demonstrates ownership by the authority and has a high status within senior management
- It is a genuinely shared effort with wide input from outside the finance and audit functions
- It is a 'living' document, ie it is not focused exclusively on year end

# Workshop discussion

Using the handout and the AGS from your group

- Highlight some examples of good practice
- Highlight areas that could be improved
- Feedback to the rest of the group



## Next steps

- Evaluate your own AGS
- Review examples
- Use the change in the framework as an opportunity

# Governance, further support options

## Guidance

- [Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework \(2016 Edition\)](#)
- [Guidance Notes \(England\)](#)
- [Guidance Notes \(Wales\)](#)
- [Guidance Notes \(Scotland\)](#)
- [Guidance Notes \(Police\)](#)

## Resources

- [CIPFA Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and corruption, Assessment Tool](#)

## Events

- CIPFA Internal Audit Conference, 11 May Oxford



# Final discussions and questions

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