

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

26 January 2022

Report Title Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) – Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2020/21

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Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

West MO (for West and joint papers)	Catherine Whitehead	Emailed 17 th January 2022
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List of Appendices

Appendix A – NCC AGS 2020/21

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. West Northants Council Audit and Governance Committee has inherited the responsibility to approve the relevant financial documents from the predecessor Northamptonshire Councils.

2. Executive Summary

- 1.2. The NCC AGS 2020/21 is attached at Appendix A

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the Committee approve the NCC AGS 2020/21 as attached at Appendix A

4. Reason for Recommendations (NOTE: this section is mandatory and must be completed)

4.1 The Council's Financial Accounts must include an Annual Governance Statement when published. With the closure of predecessor Councils the WNC AGC has inherited the responsibility of approving those documents.

5. Report Background

5.1 The guidance for Annual Governance Statements provides that it should focus on the financial period for the published accounts (ie 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021) and provide a summary of the controls and governance etc operating throughout that period. It should also provide some narrative for anticipated, significant issues for the period following the year end.

5.2 External Auditors also request that it include any significant post year end issue or event until formally published with the Accounts.

5.3 The AGS therefore is drafted to focus on the 2020/21 financial period but also includes some reference to more recent issues as appropriate.

6. Issues and Choices

6.1 With the closure of the predecessor Councils the WNC AGC must consider and approve various documents that would have been considered by each of the predecessor Councils. It must be recognised that the WNC AGC will not have the same level of organisational understanding as those predecessor Audit Committees.

6.2 The NCC AGS for 2020/21 was drafted on behalf of the Chief Executive and the NCC Leadership Team. The draft was approved by the NCC Leadership Team in February 2021. Subsequent attempts to refresh that prior to the closure NCC were not successful.

6.3 The AGS approved by NCC NLT has therefore been updated to reflect known key issues and is attached at Appendix A.

6.4 It is highlighted that the absence / departure of the key NCC senior officers after 1st April 2021 prevents the usual processes of evolving the AGS via the relevant Leadership Team officers.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

7.1.1 None

7.2 **Legal**

7.2.1 The approval of the AGS and its publication with the audited Accounts ensures the Council properly discharges the Accounts and Audit Regs.

7.3 **Risk**

7.3.1 None

7.4 **Consultation**

7.4.1 None required

7.5 **Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

7.5.1 None required

7.6 **Climate Impact**

7.6.1 None

7.7 **Community Impact**

7.7.1 None

8. Background Papers

8.1 None