

South Northamptonshire Council

Audit Committee

30 March 2021

Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 and Letter of Representation

Report of the Temporary Assistant Director – Finance and Procurement & Deputy Section 151 Officer

This report is public

Purpose of report

To receive a report asking Members of the Committee to consider the Statement of Accounts 2019/20 and the Letter of Representation 2019/20.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the Statement of Accounts 2019-20 and to approve the Letter of Representation 2019-20.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with all relevant statutory reporting requirements.
- 2.2 The statutory timescale requires the Statement of Accounts to be approved by the S151 Officer and received by the Council's External Auditor, Ernst & Young (EY). The council is then required to publish the accounts by 30 November 2020. Ordinarily, the accounts are published after they have been audited and an opinion issued by the external auditor. Unfortunately, the Northamptonshire County Pension audit and going concern work has resulted in a delay, but this work has been successfully completed.
- 2.3 The Annual Governance Statement sets out the assurance framework in place across the Council and an assessment of this during 2019/20.
- 2.4 The Letter of Representation sets out the representations which enable the Council's External Auditor, Ernst & Young to form an opinion as to whether the consolidated and Council financial statements give a true and fair view of the Group and Council financial position.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The Statement of Accounts sets out the financial performance of the Council during 2019/20 and provides useful information for the public and stakeholders to identify how the Council has managed public resources across the district.
- 3.2 The Annual Governance Statement is part of the CIPFA/SOLACE governance framework. It is a wide ranging document that is governance focussed and must be considered and 'owned' corporately.
- 3.3 The Annual Governance Statement describes our governance arrangements and assesses how closely we align with good practice. In overall terms this is a positive statement for the financial year 2019/20.
- 3.4 The Annual Governance Statement takes assurance from several mechanisms including the internal audit work, internal audit reports throughout the year, the work of the Audit Committee, the scrutiny process and external audit.
- 3.5 The Letter of Representation is provided in connection with the audit of the consolidated and council financial statements.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with statutory requirements. The Annual Governance Statement provides assurance on the Governance Framework in place across the Council.
- 4.2 The Letter of Representation is prepared in accordance with statutory requirements.

5.0 Consultation

None

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 None

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:
Kate Crussell, Finance Business Partner,
Tel: 01327 322188
Email: kate.crussell@southnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 Comments will be provided together with the Statement of Accounts 2019/20.

Comments checked by:

Andrew Hunkin, Executive Director – Resources (Monitoring Officer)

Tel: 0300 003 0202

Email: andrew.hunkin@southnorthants.gov.uk

Risk Management Implications

7.3 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Geoff Kent, Assistant Director – Customers and Corporate Services

Tel: 01327 322183

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8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected – All wards are affected

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework – All corporate plan themes

Lead Councillor – None

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1: Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement 2019-20
- Appendix 2: Letter of Representation

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

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