



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Audit Committee

Report Title

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

AGENDA STATUS:

Public

Cabinet Meeting Date:	28 June 2010
Directorate:	Finance and Support – Finance and Assets
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Perkins
Ward(s)	N/A

1. Purpose

1.1 To present the 2009/10 Annual Governance Statement to the Cabinet.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Audit Committee reviews the 2009/10 Annual Governance Statement and indicates whether there are any updates required.

2.2 To approve the Annual Governance Statement for its inclusion in the draft 2009/10 Statement of Accounts.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

3.1.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations (A&AR) 2003, as amended in 2006, require the Council to formally approve the Statement of Accounts by 30th June. This includes the adoption of the Annual Governance Statement.

3.1.2 The system on internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance.

3.1.3 In many organisations the system (and statement) of internal control is often seen as an audit or finance function. The responsibility lies with both officers and Members. In summary:

- The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- The Council has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to value for money.
- In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council (elected Members and officers) is responsible for ensuring there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

3.1.4 The Annual Governance Statement is attached at Appendix 1.

3.2 Issues

As noted within the document, the control weaknesses are detailed in section 5.

3.3 Choices (Options)

N/A

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

There are no direct implications in relation to the statement on internal control.

4.2 Resources and Risk

The system on internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance.

4.3 Legal

None

4.4 Equality

N/A

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

Management Board, Corporate Managers and Internal Audit.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

N/A

4.7 Other Implications

None

5. Background Papers

5.1 Office working file including evidence

**Cllr Brian Hoare, Leader
David Kennedy, Chief Executive
Isabell Procter, Director of Finance and Support
Francis Fernandes, Borough Solicitor
Gavin Chambers, Head of Finance and Assets. Ext. 7194**