Draft Annual Governance Statement 2025/2026	
Executive Summary	The Annual Governance Statement is prepared and published alongside the Draft Statement of Accounts. This report seeks consideration of the Draft Annual Governance Statement, relating to 2025/2026.
Options considered	This report is for consideration and noting – there are no options presented at this time.
Consultation(s)	Section 151 Officer Monitoring Officer Chief Executive
Recommendations	There are no recommendations attached to this item.
Reasons for recommendations	N/A
Background papers	None

Wards affected	None
Cabinet member(s)	Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services
Contact Officer	Daniel King, Assistant Director Finance & Assets

Links to key documents:	
Corporate Plan:	A strong, responsible and accountable Council
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	Linked to the MTFS through the requirement for robust financial governance and statutory financial reporting.
Council Policies & Strategies	Annual Governance Statement, Local Code of Corporate Governance

Corporate Governance:	
Is this a key decision	No
Has the public interest test been applied	N/A
Details of any previous decision(s) on this matter	N/A

1. **Purpose of the report**

   1.1. To present the draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2025/26 to the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee for consideration.

2. **Introduction & Background.**

   2.1. The Annual Governance Statement sets out the Council's assessment of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2026 and supports the approval of the Statement of Accounts. The AGS will then be updated if necessary and will be brought before the Committee for approval prior to the signing of the AGS, this happens alongside the approval and signing of the statement of accounts.

3. **Proposals and Options**

   3.1. The Committee is asked to consider and note the draft AGS. There are no options for the Committee to consider at this stage.

4. **Corporate Priorities**

   4.1. The Annual Governance Statement supports the Council's Corporate Plan priorities relating to A strong, responsible and accountable Council, and underpins effective financial management set out within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5. **Financial and Resource Implications**

   5.1. None immediately as a result of the production of the Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26. However should there be an appetite for an additional resource and capacity then this will have a financial implication, reflective of the amount of additional capacity sought.

Comments from the S151 Officer:

The Annual Governance Statement supports the Council's wider framework of financial governance and assurance. There are no direct financial implications arising from approval of the draft AGS, although any future actions identified through the governance review will need to be considered through the Council's normal financial planning and budget processes.

6. **Legal Implications**

6.1. No legal implications as a direct result of the approval of the Annual Governance Statement.

Comments from the Monitoring Officer

The Annual Governance Statement is an important part of the Council's governance procedures. There are no direct legal implications arising from the draft AGS, provided that it is considered and approved in accordance with the Council's constitutional and statutory reporting requirements.

7. Risks

7.1. None at this stage, however there is a risk that delaying the final approval of the Annual Governance Statement, which supports effective governance and transparency, would have a negative impact on NNDC. Failure to approve the AGS would delay statutory sign-off and publication of the Statement of Accounts and could undermine assurance over the Council's governance arrangements. No additional operational risks arise from approval of the AGS.

8. Net Zero Target

8.1. The approval of the Annual Governance Statement is a statutory governance and reporting matter and has no direct impact on the Council's Net Zero 2030 Strategy or Climate Action Plan.

9. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

9.1. The approval of the Annual Governance Statement is a statutory governance and reporting matter and does not give rise to any direct equality, diversity or inclusion impacts. The Council has had due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment is not required.

10. Community Safety issues

10.1. The approval of the Annual Governance Statement has no direct impact on community safety.

Conclusion and Recommendations

To consider and note the draft AGS for 2025/2026.