

Report to: Audit Committee

Date of meeting: 29 September 2014

Report of: Head of Finance Shared Services

Title: External Auditors Report To Those Charged With Governance (September 2014) and Approval Of The Statement of Accounts 2013/14

1.0 **SUMMARY**

1.1 This report allows the Committee to ask questions of the external auditor concerning his 'Report to those charged with Governance (ISA260)' and to approve the Statement of Accounts for 2013/14.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Committee notes the external auditor's 'Report to those charged with Governance.

2.2 That the Committee seeks any clarification it needs concerning the Statement of Accounts for 2013/14.

2.3 That the Committee confirms that it is satisfied that the accounting policies adopted are the most appropriate.

2.4 That the Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 be approved.

Contact Officer:

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Report approved by: Joanne Wagstaffe Director of Finance

3.0 **DETAILS**

- 3.1 The Audit Committee at its meeting on the 30 June received the draft Statement of Accounts for 2013/14. The Accounts have since been audited by Grant Thornton UK LLP.
- 3.2 The Auditor's 'Report to those charged with Governance' is attached at Appendix 1. It is issued in accordance with ISA260 and incorporates a conclusion on final accounts work and a value for money judgement. Grant Thornton will attend the meeting to present the report and answer questions.
- 3.3 Attached at Appendix 2 is a draft letter of representation which should be signed at the meeting.
- 3.4 The Council's Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 is attached at Appendix 3.
- 3.5 The accounts must be signed by the Chief Financial Officer before they are approved by the Committee and, subject to approval, the Chairman of the Committee shall sign and date them at the meeting.
- 3.6 Financial Reporting Standard 18 requires the Committee to confirm that it is satisfied that the accounting policies adopted are the most appropriate.

4.0 **KEY ISSUES AND INTERPRETATION OF THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

- 4.1 The purpose of the Statement of Accounts is to give interested parties an understanding of the Council's financial position. It also provides an opportunity to compare how the Council performed financially against its original plan published when setting the budgets in February 2012. Members are referred to the Foreword to the Statement of Accounts.
- 4.2 The Financial Statements have been prepared under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), a statutory accounting framework which has replaced the United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (UK GAAP). The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy produces a Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting which reflects the statutory requirements and has been followed in preparing the financial statements.
- 4.3 A draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) was presented to the Committee and approved on 30 June 2014. It is now included in the Statement of Accounts before the Committee, and has been signed by the Mayor and the Managing Director as required by proper practice.
- 4.4 *Summary of Financial Position*
- 4.5 The Council's medium-term financial planning has aimed to achieve a balanced budget and a prudent level of balances. With the reductions in government grant and changes to business rates, however, this means that further savings are

required. The Council is aiming to realise these through the continuation of its Roadmap efficiencies that commenced in 2013/14. Close monitoring will be required to ensure that the savings identified are achieved.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 Contained in the Statement of Accounts

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 None Specific.

5.3 **Equalities**

5.3.1 None Specific.

5.4 **Potential Risks**

There are no risks associated with the decisions members are being asked to make.

APPENDICES

1. Report to those charged with Governance (ISA260) – Grant Thornton – September 2014.
2. Draft Letter of Representation
3. Statement of Accounts 2013/14

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011