

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/21 - EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT

Audit Committee - 28 March 2023

**Report of:** Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance and Trading

**Status:** For Consideration

**Key Decision:** no

**Executive Summary:** The report set out the external audit findings on the 2020/21 financial statements.

**This report supports the Key Aim of:** effective management of the Council's resources.

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Matthew Dickins

**Contact Officer(s):** Alan Mitchell, Ext. 7483

Adrian Rowbotham, Ext. 7153

**Recommendation to Audit Committee:**

To note the external audit findings report.

### Introduction and Background

- 1 The 2020/21 Statement of Accounts was presented to the Audit Committee on 29 March 2022. The report included the Statement of Accounts, Draft Letter of Representation and minutes from the Member Working Group.
- 2 The audit of the accounts by Grant Thornton was not completed at that time therefore, the Committee resolved the following:
  - a) Following completion of the 2020/21 audit, delegated authority be given to the Deputy Chief Executive and the Chief Officer Finance and Trading and the Chairman of the Audit Committee to sign the Statement of Accounts 2020/21; and
  - b) Following completion of the 2020/21 audit, the Letter of Representation be approved.
- 3 The external auditor Lead Partner, Paul Cuttle from Grant Thornton, will attend the meeting to discuss their report on the 2020/21 audit.

## **Commentary on the Auditor's Report**

- 4 The findings have not been received at the time this report was written but will be set out in the Audit Findings Report (Appendix A) and will be issued before the meeting itself. A verbal summary will be provided at the committee.

## **Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and 2022/23**

- 5 An update on progress on the 2021/22 and 2022/23 accounts will be presented at the next meeting.

## **Key Implications**

### Financial

All financial implications are covered within this and the previous report.

### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

Under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 the section 151 officer (Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance and Trading) has statutory duties in relation to the financial administration and stewardship of the authority.

The Audit Committee should review the financial statements and approved under regulation 10 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, and again, in conjunction with the external auditor's SAS 610 (ISA 260) report to those charged with governance, following completion of the audit. The committee's review of the financial statements should focus on:

- the suitability of accounting policies and treatments
- any changes in accounting policies and treatments
- major judgemental areas
- significant adjustments and material weaknesses in internal control reported by the external auditor.

### Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## Net Zero Implications

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the council's ambition to be Net Zero by 2030. There is no perceived impact regarding either an increase or decrease in carbon emissions in the district, or supporting the resilience of the natural environment.

## **Conclusions**

Members will note the issues brought to the attention of the Committee and that the external auditor expects to issue an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and value for money conclusion.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A - Grant Thornton Audit Findings Report 2020/21 (to follow)

### **Background Papers**

Audit Committee report 29/03/22: Statement of Accounts 2020/21 - Outcome of External Audit

**Adrian Rowbotham**

**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance & Trading**