Audit Findings Report

Governance & Audit Committee 27 September 2023

Report Author Chris Blundell (Director of Corporate Services - S151)

Portfolio Holder Cllr Rob Yates, Cabinet Member Corporate Services.

Status For Information

Classification: Unrestricted

Key Decision No

Executive Summary:

The Council's external auditor Grant Thornton is required to report its audit findings from its audit of the accounts to this Committee. A representative from Grant Thornton will present their Audit Findings Report, as attached at annex 1 to this report.

The 2020/21 accounts were previously presented to this committee in July.

The Value for Money opinion will be considered at a forthcoming meeting of G&A.

Recommendation(s):

- 1. That the Audit Findings Report for 2020/21 as set out at Annex 1 is considered.
- 2. In the unlikely event that a minor change would be required, i.e. immaterial, the Section 151 be delegated the authority to sign-off the Audit Findings Report, in consultation with the committee Chair.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal

The audit of the Council's accounts is governed by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Corporate

The audit of the accounts is a statutory requirement

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and

(iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

There are no equity or equalities issues arising from this report.

Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- Growth
- Environment
- Communities

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The 2020/21 statement of accounts were presented to this committee on the 26 July for consideration, they were approved and then formally signed by the Chair and the Section 151 Officer.
- 1.2. However, as a result of additional audit work required by Grant Thornton it is necessary to formally return them to this committee for consideration.
- 1.3 The draft Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 have now been audited and the audit findings are set out in detail in Grant Thornton's report, shown in Annex 1.
- 1.4 There are no material changes to the Grant Thorton's Audit Findings report, in comparison to the report presented in July, however for completeness the Committee is again asked to consider their audit findings and to note the report.
- 1.5 In order to avoid this situation happening again, it is recommended that authority to sign-off any immaterial changes is delegated to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Chair of this committee.

2.0 Conclusion

- 2.1 Subject to outstanding items being resolved, Grant Thornton intends to issue an unmodified audit opinion.
- 2.2 Grant Thornton's Value for Money review will be considered by G&A at a later meeting.
- 2.3 As management has accepted Grant Thornton's Value for Money recommendations, they expect to be able to certify the completion of the audit when the audit opinion is given.

Contact Officer: Matthew Sanham (Head of Finance, Procurement and Risk)

Reporting to: Chris Blundell (Director of Corporate Services - S151)

Annex List

Annex 1: Audit Findings Report

Corporate Consultation

Finance: N/A

Legal: N/a