
Finance Update

Governance & Audit Committee

Decision to be taken by: N/A

Date of meeting: 18 September 2024

Lead director: Amy Oliver, Director of Finance

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Kirsty Cowell
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- Report version number: 1

1. Summary

- 1.1 To provide an update on the progress of the statement of account and present external audits findings for 2023/24.
- 2.1 To provide an update on the finalisation of 2021/22 and 2022/23 accounts

2. Recommended actions/decision

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and external audits findings.

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

N/A

4. Background and options with supporting evidence

- 4.1 The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 require that the Council presents its audited Statement of Accounts along with its Annual Governance statement for approval annually by the 31 July. This is delegated to the Governance & Audit Committee by Council. For the 2023/24 accounts, this deadline was extended to the 30 September due to issues being experienced in the local authority audit sector.
- 4.2 The draft (unaudited) 2023/24 accounts were considered by the Governance & Audit Committee on the 7 August 2024.
- 4.3 The external audit commenced at the beginning of July, and officers are working through sample requests and queries, liaising with the external auditors where appropriate, with the overall aim of bringing the final audited set of accounts for the Committee to approve at the November meeting.
- 4.4 The Committee should however note that the national deadline of 30 September 2024 for the publication of 2023/24 audited accounts will be unlikely to be met. It is important to note there will not be any financial penalties incurred by the Council for not meeting the deadline, however we are endeavouring to complete as soon as possible.

Update on the finalisation of 2021/22 and 2022/23 accounts

- 4.5 Members will be pleased to note that the external auditor has issued in July the final audit certificate for 2021/22 and this has been published on our website, and is attached in Appendix A. This could not be issued until their work on the council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness on our use of resources (VFM), and the work needed to issue their Whole of Government Accounts

(WGA) Component Assurance statement for the year had been completed. These elements of the work were impacted by the national issues relating to the technical accounting, resourcing and audit challenges across the sector. The VFM report for 2021/22 was presented to this committee on 27 September 2023.

4.6 The final certificate for 2022/23 remains outstanding and officers are working with the external auditors to enable the final certificate to be issued as soon as possible.

5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The financial implications are contained in the report.

Signed: Kirsty Cowell

Dated: 3 September 2024

5.2 Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Signed: Kevin Carter – Head of Law (Commercial, Property & Planning)

Dated: 03.09.24

5.3 Equalities implications

There are no specific equality implications arising from this report.

Signed: Kalvaran Sandhu, Equalities Manager

Dated: 2nd September 2024

5.4 Climate Emergency implications

There are no significant climate emergency implications directly associated directly with this report.

Signed: Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer

Dated: 3 September 2024

5.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

N/A

6. Background information and other papers:

- Draft Statement of Accounts & Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 presented to Governance & Audit Committee on 7 August 2024
- Statutory Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 presented to Governance & Audit on 18 April 2024
- Statutory Statement of Accounts & Annual Governance Statements 2021/22 presented to Audit & Risk Committee on 15 March 2023

7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix A – Grant Thornton – Independent auditor’s report to the members of Leicester City Council 2021/22

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?

No