

REPORT OF: FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER

TO: ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

DATES: 31st July 2017

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Statement of Accounts 2016/17

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to present for approval the Statement of Accounts for 2016/17. At the time of writing this report the audit undertaken by Grant Thornton is substantially complete. The accounts submitted with this report include any amendments arising from the work of External Audit as at the 20th July.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Committee is recommended to approve the Statement of Accounts for 2016/17.

ISSUE

Introduction

3. The draft (pre-audit) accounts were completed and published on the Council's website on the 2nd June. Grant Thornton commenced their on-site audit of the accounts in the week commencing 26th June and this work is nearing completion. The Statement of Accounts submitted with this report reflects all changes agreed with Grant Thornton as at the 20th July. Any new matters arising prior to the Committee will be reported verbally at the meeting.
4. At the time of writing this report no changes have been made to the core statements. The amendments requested thus far relate mainly to a small number of disclosures and enhancements to the Narrative Report.
5. Details of the formal audit findings are presented in a separate report from Grant Thornton which is included elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting. There has been one error identified during the course of the audit. This relates to items of Plant, Property and Equipment. 2 assets were accounted for in the year as being disposed by way of transfer to a local parish council. However, the transfers did not complete by the 31st March and hence the assets were still retained by the Council at the reporting date. As the amount involved (£349k) is not classed as material in the context of the Council's financial position and reported accounts it has been agreed with Grant Thornton not to adjust the accounts for this. This also features in the Letter of Representation presented elsewhere on this agenda.

6. The period for public inspection of the accounts commenced from the 5th June and ended on the 14th July. No questions or enquiries were received from members of the public in this period.
7. Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (regulation 9(2)), the Council must, following the conclusion of the period for the exercise of public rights, in the following order:
 - (a) *consider, either by way of a committee or by the members meeting as a whole, the statement of accounts;*
 - (b) *approve the statement of accounts by a resolution of that committee or meeting;*
 - (c) *ensure that the statement of accounts is signed and dated by the person presiding at the committee or meeting at which that approval is given.*
8. The Statement of Accounts is attached at **Appendix A** for approval. The Financial Services Manager, as the Council's responsible financial officer, has re-certified the accounts confirming that the statement of accounts presents a true and fair view of:
 - (a) *the financial position of the authority at the end of the financial year to which it relates; and*
 - (b) *the authority's income and expenditure for that financial year.*
9. Subject to the Committee's approval and receipt of the Auditor's Opinion, the accounts will be published on the Council's website shortly after this meeting. The statement of accounts also includes the Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Statement, both of which are required to be published together with the financial statements.
10. Once confirmation has been received from Grant Thornton that the audit has been completed, a 'Notice of Conclusion of Audit' will be published. This will explain that the audit of the Council's accounts has been completed and state where the accounts and auditor's report can be inspected.
11. The Committee will be aware that the accounts for 2016/17 have been prepared and audited earlier than in previous years. This is the second year when the audited accounts have been presented for approval in July rather than September as was previously the case. This earlier completion has been in response to legislative changes which, from the 2017/18 financial year, require councils to publish their draft accounts by the end of May and publish their audited accounts by the end of July each year.
12. In preparation for this we aimed to complete the 2015/16 accounts by mid-June and achieved this. Our aim was then to complete the 2016/17 accounts by the end of May 2017 and they were substantively complete by this time and authorised for issue on the 2nd June. The experience the team has gained over the past two years in closing down earlier will ensure we meet the statutory deadline from next year.
13. Such outcomes are not possible without the hard work and support of team members within Finance assisted by colleagues across the Council and I am grateful to them all for their support.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy

14. There are no policy implications arising directly from the contents of this report

Financial

15. The financial implications are as given in the report and Statement of Accounts.

Legal

16. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 currently require the Council to approve and publish its audited Statement of Accounts by the 30th September each year. Councillor's approval of the accounts at this meeting will allow us to satisfy this requirement.

Risk Management

17. There are no risk management implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

Health and Safety:

18. There are no Health and Safety implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

Climate Change:

19. There are no climate change implications arising directly from this report.

Community Safety:

20. There are no community safety issues arising directly from the contents of this report.

Equality and Diversity:

21. There are no equality and diversity issues arising from the contents of this report.

APPENDICES

[Appendix A](#) - Statement of Accounts 2016/17

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS: Final Accounts working papers for 2016/17 held by Accountancy.