

Title: Audit of 2021/22 Accounts
Lead Officer: Andrew Rollins (01926456013)
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Hales
Wards of the District directly affected: N/A

Summary

The External Auditors, Grant Thornton, have prepared their Draft Audit Plan for 2021/22 for members' consideration. This is supported by the "Informing the Risk Assessment" document

Recommendation(s)

- (1)** That Committee Agree the 2021/22 Draft Audit Plan (Appendix A) and the supporting document, Informing the Risk Assessment (Appendix B).
 - (2)** That Committee note the progress of the 2021/22 audit to date.
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1 Background/Information

- 1.1 The auditors have submitted the External Audit Plan for 2021/22 (Appendix A). This is included as Appendix A. Members are requested to agree the plan and may wish to seek assurance from officers and auditors that all is being done to ensure the statutory requirement will be met.
- 1.2 The Informing the Risk Assessment (Appendix B), has been produced by the external auditors, bringing together details of responses from officers. The document is to assist in the communication between members and the external auditors. Members should consider and agree the document and make any observations to the auditors. Officers responses to the document have been included.
- 1.3 The auditors have commenced work on the audit, starting in February with the interim audit, and are scheduled to complete the main audit over agreed dates between August and November.
- 1.4 The Audited Accounts are due to be signed off and published by 30 November 2022, with it planned for these to be reported to Audit and Standards Committee in November (date to be confirmed).
- 1.5 As in previous years, active use is being made of Inflo. This is an on-line portal to securely share documents between Warwick District Council teams and the External Auditors. Inflo has worked well to date, allowing leads on both sides to keep track on audit progress, therefore all parties are keen to continue with this for 2021/22.

2 Alternative Options available to Audit and Standards Committee

- 2.1 None

3 Consultation and Member's comments

- 3.1 Clarification was sought on the drivers of the fee increase. Officers are satisfied with the reasons given and these have been shared as part of the consultation process.

4 Implications of the proposal

4.1 Legal/Human Rights Implications

- 4.1.1 There are no direct legal/human rights implications to this report.

4.2 Financial

- 4.2.1 The agreed planned fee charged for the 2021/22 Audit of the Accounts is £41,290, as agreed by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA), who tendered for the audit work for the vast majority of local authority audits. The auditors have included in their report how they propose to charge £73,140, an additional £31,850 (77%) above the agreed scale fee, and above the actual Fee for 2020/21 of £65,540. The Auditor's rationale for the increase is set out in their Audit Plan report. The proposed fee is in excess of the Budget allocated for the audit.

4.3 Council Plan

- 4.3.1 This process has been developed to assist the Council in prioritising resources in order to achieve the objectives of the Council Plan.

4.4 Environmental/Climate Change Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no direct environmental or climate change implications arising as part of this report.

4.5 Analysis of the effects on Equality

- 4.5.1 There are no direct equality implications arising as part of this report.

4.6 Data Protection

- 4.6.1 There are no data protection implications arising as part of this report.

4.7 Health and Wellbeing

- 4.7.1 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising as part of this report.

5 Risk Assessment

- 5.1 The requirement for external auditors is part of the assurance framework under which all local authorities operate. The audit of the accounts and associated grant claims seeks to provide assurance to all stakeholders that the Council's finances, as reported in the Accounts, are being properly managed.

6 Conclusion/Reasons for the Recommendation

- 6.1 Members are requested to agree the 2021/22 Draft Audit Plan (Appendix A) and the supporting document, Informing the Risk Assessment (Appendix B). The audit will then be able to commence after the draft Statement of Accounts is published on or before 31st July.

Background papers: N/A

Supporting documents:

Appendix A – Warwick DC 2021-22 Audit Plan

Appendix B – Warwick District Council – Informing the Audit Risk Assessment 2021-22

Report Information Sheet

Please complete and submit to Democratic Services with report

Committee / Date	Audit and Standards Committee – 14/06/22	
Title of report	Audit of 2021/22 Accounts	
Officer / Councillor Approval *required	Date	Name
Ward Members(s)		
Portfolio Holder		Councillor Richard Hales
Financial Services *		Andrew Rollins and Steven Leathley
Legal Services (*SDC)		
Other Services		
Chief Executive(s)		Chris Elliot
Head of Services(s)*		Andrew Rollins
Section 151 Officer		Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer		
CMT (WDC)		Chris Elliot / Andrew Jones
Leadership Co-ordination Group (WDC)		
Other organisations		
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Ctee / Council?	Yes	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes	