

Audit & Governance Committee
22 November 2023

External Audit 2022/23 – Progress Report

Purpose of the report:

To update the Audit and Governance Committee on the progress of the external audit of the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2022/23.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee:

Note the progress update provided by Grant Thornton.

Introduction:

1. The Draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 for Surrey County Council, the Group Accounts and Surrey Pension were published on 20 June 2023.
2. The Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, started their planning and final accounts visit in July 2023 with a target date of September 2023 to complete the audit procedures and to produce an Audit Findings Report for the November 2023 meeting of this Committee.
3. Grant Thornton have stated that whilst good progress has been made and some areas are substantially complete, the audit is ongoing and therefore a progress report is being brought to this Committee (Annex A).
4. Work continues between Grant Thornton and the Finance Team to complete the audit, and the Audit Findings Report is now planned to be presented to this Committee in January 2024.
5. The report also provides a sector update containing emerging national issues and developments which may be of interest to the Committee.

Conclusions:

6. The committee is asked to note the progress update provided by Grant Thornton and the target date of January 2024 for the Final Audit Findings Report to be presented to this Committee.

Financial and value for money implications

7. All financial implications in the accounts have been made in line with the Code of Practice and any impact on the Council's 2023/24 budget was contained in the outturn report to Cabinet.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

8. There are no direct equalities implications of this report.

Risk Management Implications

9. There are no direct risk management implications of this report.

Next steps:

The Audit Findings Report and audited statement of accounts for 2022/23 will be presented to Audit and Governance Committee in January 2024.

Report contacts: Barry Stratfull – Chief Accountant (Corporate)

Contact Details: Barry.Stratfull@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom
2022/23 CIPFA

Annexes:

Annex A - Grant Thornton Audit Progress Report 2022/23