

## Audit Committee – 24 January 2025

### Conclusion of 2022/23 Audit Process and Annual Financial Report

Purpose	For Information
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	<p>This report confirms the delegations agreed at the 25 October 2024 Audit Committee regarding concluding the 2022/23 audit process, including approval of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2022/23 Annual Financial Report</li><li>• 2022/23 Letter of Representation and</li><li>• Annual Governance Statement 2022/23</li></ul> <p>These were used to conclude and publish all matters by the 13 December 2024 deadline.</p>
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	<p><b>It is recommended that Audit Committee:</b></p> <p><b>1. Note the contents of the report and that the Annual Financial Report, Letter of Representation and Annual Governance Statement relating to the 2022/23 financial year were concluded and published by the 13 December 2024 backstop deadline.</b></p>
Reasons for recommendation(s)	<p>The Council is required to prepare, and have externally audited, an Annual Financial Report for each year and to prepare an Annual Governance Statement.</p> <p>This report acknowledges the completion of the requirements by the deadline.</p>
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Jeremy Heron – Finance and Corporate
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune – Strategic Director Corporate Resources and Transformation (Section 151 Officer)

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## **Introduction and background**

1. This report provides an update to the Audit Committee on the audit of the 2022/23 Annual Financial Report and its conclusion.

## **Conclusion of the audit process 2022/23**

2. In line with the delegations provided by the Audit Committee at the 25 October 2024 meeting, the Chairman of the Audit Committee and s151 Officer approved the final Annual Financial Report 2022/23 in order to satisfy the 13 December backstop deadline.
3. The Annual Financial Report did not contain any material changes from that which was presented to the October committee.
4. Furthermore, and again in line with the delegations provided by the Audit Committee at the 25 October 2024 meeting, the Chairman of the Audit Committee and s151 Officer signed the Letter of Representation relating to the 2022/23 Annual Financial Report.
5. The Letter of Representation did not contain any material changes from that which was presented to the October committee.
6. The final approved Annual Financial Report for 2022/23 alongside the final auditor's report and completion report were submitted and published by the required 13 December 2024 deadline.
7. Finally, in line with the delegations provided by the Audit Committee at the 25 October 2024 meeting, the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council signed the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 by the required deadline.
8. Copies of the final Annual Financial Report, Letter of Representation and Annual Governance Statement are available on the council's website.

## **Corporate plan priorities**

9. The Annual Financial Report is a public facing document that sets out a number of key financial figures related to the Council's financial performance and sustainability.

10. The external auditor's report provides assurance to stakeholders as to the effectiveness of the Council's internal control environment and its efficiency in securing value for money in the use of public funds.
11. It provides assurance on the financial standing of the Council and ensures that commitments to corporate plan can be delivered with adequate and sustainable financing.
12. Ensuring the council is being financial responsible, as evidenced by independent external audits, underpins all our corporate plan themes (People, Place and Prosperity).

### **Options appraisal**

13. There are no alternative options to consider.

### **Consultation undertaken**

14. Consultation between the council and our external auditors and advisors has been continuous throughout as the situation has developed.
15. Audit committee has been appraised of the progress to date at each opportunity.

### **Financial and resource implications**

16. There are no financial and resources implications arising as a result of the recommendations in this report.

### **Legal implications**

17. There are no legal implications arising as a result of the recommendations in this report.

### **Risk assessment**

18. There are no risk assessment implications arising as a result of this report.

### **Environmental / Climate and nature implications**

19. There are no environmental or climate and nature implications as a result of this report.

### **Equalities implications**

20. There are no equality matters arising as a result of this report.

### **Crime and disorder implications**

21. There are no crime and disorder matters arising as a result of this report.

**Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications**

22. There are no data protection, information governance or ICT implications arising as a result of this report.

**Appendices:**

None

**Background Papers:**

[Annual Financial Report & Annual Governance Statement 2023/24](#)