

Report to:	Audit and Governance	29 th March 2022
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Williams, Lead Cabinet Member for Finance	
Lead Officer:	Peter Maddock, Head of Finance	

COMPLETION OF THE 2018/19 AUDIT OF THE ACCOUNTS AND 2019/20 ACCOUNTS COMPLETION

Executive Summary

1. The audit of the 2018/19 accounts has now been completed. Both the Council sign off and the issue of the auditors opinion is expected to be completed before the meeting.

Recommendations

2. That Committee note that the 2018/19 final accounts audit was completed on Friday 25th March 2022. The Council will then sign these off followed by the issue of the audit opinion by EY.
3. That Committee note the timescales for completion of the 2019/20 accounts and subsequent audit.

Details

4. The audit of the 2018/19 accounts was completed on Friday 25th March 2022. Following that, the accounts will then be signed by the Council and the audit opinion issued by the auditors with the intention that this will be completed ahead of this meeting.
5. EY will also be making their final report which is elsewhere on the agenda.
6. Both sides have worked hard to complete this milestone and it is now imperative that we move on to complete the 2019/20 audit, as part of the process of 'catch up'. The SCDC team have already made good progress on this and work has been allocated and resourced in order to move swiftly onto finalisation of 2019/20.
7. It is likely that the 2019/20 statement of accounts will be ready to issue to the auditors within 10 to 12 weeks of the completion of the 2018/19 audit process and the audit itself take between 6 to 8 weeks after that. This is an extremely tight

timeframe if we are going to be ready for the Audit Committee in late July and is dependent on starting the 2019/20 process next week.

8. During April the auditors will be carrying out their 2019/20 audit planning which will drive their approach to the audit so we cannot be completely sure of the areas they will concentrate on until that is done. They will also be carrying out their systems walk through tests which is an early activity of any audit.

Options

9. The report is a position statement for noting. Another option would be to propose a different timeline but that could not be recommended.

Implications

10. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

11. Timely and robust consideration of the Council's budgets is vital to ensure that financial statements are correctly stated, financial procedures are followed and that the financial position of the Council is effectively managed and monitored.

Legal

12. There is a requirement under the Accountancy and Audit Regulations for Council's to present their accounts for the preceding financial year for audit by 31st of May each year and for those accounts to be audited and published by 31 July each year.

Risks/Opportunities

13. There is a risk that the financial statements are incorrectly stated with consequential impacts. The purpose of the external audit is to mitigate this risk. This is still a significant risk going forward but with a dedicated experienced resource now tasked with accounts completion for both 2019/20 and 2020/21 the risk should be mitigated.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

A modern and caring Council

14. Producing an annual statement of accounts is key to supplementing the financial information already in the public domain, to ensure the full transparency of the Council's financial affairs.

Appendices

None

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