

**Statement of Accounts 2020/21**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Audit, Governance and Standards Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

**Executive Summary**

This report provides the committee with an update on progress with the audit of the 2020/21 financial statements.

**Purpose of Report**

Noting.

**This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the report be noted.

**Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Audit, Governance and Standards Committee	14 March 2022

# Statement of Accounts 2020/21

## 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will support the Council's overall achievement of its aims in demonstrating accountability and value for money.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>	There is no specific implication, however sound financial management does support the delivery of the Council's cross cutting objectives.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Risk Management</b>	This is detailed within section 5.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Financial</b>	The Statement of Accounts provides an overview of income and expenditure for the financial year to 31 March 2021, and details the council's assets, liabilities and reserves at this date. The work of the external auditor aims to provide independent assurance over this document.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Staffing</b>	No implications identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Legal</b>	Under section 151 of the Local Government Act (LGA 1972), the Section 151 Officer has statutory duties in relation to the financial administration and stewardship of the authority, including advising on the corporate financial position and providing financial information. It is a function of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee to review and approve the annual statement of accounts and to consider if appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the	Director of Finance and Business Improvement

	financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Policy and Resources Committee or Council.	
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	No implications identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Equalities</b>	No implications identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Public Health</b>	No implications identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	No implications identified.	
<b>Procurement</b>	No implications identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Biodiversity and Climate Change</b>	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and there are no direct implications on biodiversity and climate change.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations, the Council was required to have its audited Statement of Accounts for the 2020/21 financial year approved by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee by 30 September 2021. This did not happen, and although the accounts have now been approved by the Committee, auditors Grant Thornton have still not issued an opinion as at the time of writing this report. The background is set out in the following paragraphs.
- 2.2 The draft financial statements were prepared by the finance team and presented to this committee at its meeting in July 2021, with audit fieldwork commencing in late August. An updated version of the statements was then presented to the committee at its meeting on 28 September 2021. At this time, Grant Thornton advised that insufficient work had been completed to issue an audit opinion by the statutory deadline of 30 September, but they anticipated that outstanding work would be completed during October 2021.

- 2.3 The updated Statement of Accounts and Grant Thornton's Audit Findings Report were presented to the committee at its meeting on 15 November 2021. The Audit Findings Report stated that the audit was substantially complete and Grant Thornton anticipated issuing an unmodified audit report. Some further adjustments relating to the capital accounting entries were anticipated, and the committee approved the accounts subject to the satisfactory resolution of these issues by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.
- 2.4 An update from Grant Thornton was provided at the committee's meeting on 17 January 2022. This stated that 'subject to the completion of outstanding work we anticipate giving our audit opinion on the 2020/21 financial statements by 31 January 2022'.
- 2.5 The Director of Finance and Business Improvement and the team have provided answers to all the auditors' queries promptly throughout this process. We are not aware of any contentious issues that might cause a delay in issuing an audit opinion. However, as of the time of writing, an opinion has not been issued.
- 2.6 Mr Paul Dossett of Grant Thornton has been invited to this meeting so that members may raise any questions if an audit opinion is still not forthcoming as of the date of the meeting.
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### **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 Committee members are asked to note this report.
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### **4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 The report is for noting only.
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### **5. RISK**

- 5.1 Risks have been considered with reference to the Council's risk management framework, and are considered to be within acceptable levels.
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### **6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 6.1 Members of the public have legal rights to inspect, ask questions about and challenge items in the Council's accounts. Details of this were published on the Council's website and the statutory period ended on 10 September 2021. One enquiry was received regarding Covid Grants and rent deferrals, and this has been dealt with.
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**7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

7.1 To be discussed at the meeting.

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**8. REPORT APPENDICES**

None

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**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None