

External Auditor's Audit Plan 2021/22

Final Decision-Maker	Audit, Governance & Standards Committee
Lead Head of Service	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Paul Holland, Senior Finance Manager (Client)
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report from the Council's External Auditor, Grant Thornton, sets out the planned approach to delivering the audit of the 2021/22 financial statements and value for money conclusion.

Representatives from Grant Thornton will be in attendance at the meeting to present their report and respond to questions.

Purpose of Report

Noting

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the external auditor's audit plan, attached at Appendix 1, be noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Audit, Governance & Standards Committee	27 September 2022

External Auditor's Audit Plan 2021/22

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will support the Council's ability to discharge its responsibilities in relation to the 2021/22 financial statements audit and value for money conclusion.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Cross Cutting Objectives	The recommendations set out above will not have any material impact on the cross-cutting objectives.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Risk Management	This report is presented for information only and has no decisions which give rise to risk management implications.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Financial	The scale fee published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd is £41,666. However, the final audit fee for 2021/22 from Grant Thornton is £64,666 including additional fees for extra work they are required to do, including the Value for Money work.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Staffing	No implications identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Legal	The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 sets out the framework for audit of local authorities.	Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment.	Equalities & Communities Officer

Public Health	No implications identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Crime and Disorder	No implications identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Procurement	No implications identified.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Biodiversity and Climate Change	There are no implications on biodiversity and climate change.	Biodiversity and Climate Change Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 The external auditor produces an annual audit plan for the financial statements audit opinion and value for money conclusion. As in previous years this work will be undertaken by Grant Thornton, the appointed auditors. A copy of the plan, which includes the outcomes of work undertaken to date, is attached at Appendix 1.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 As the committee charged with responsibility for overseeing the financial reporting process, the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee is asked to consider and note this report. The committee could choose not to consider this report; however, this option is not recommended since the report is intended to assist the committee in discharging its responsibilities in relation to external audit and governance.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The committee is asked to note this report. The report details the external auditor's plan for ensuring the delivery of the audit opinion and value for money conclusion by the end of December 2022 and notes the significant risks identified, the results of the work undertaken to date and the anticipated audit fee. It is considered appropriate for the committee to receive this information at this time.

4.2 The scale audit fee set by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) for 2021/22 is £41,666 for Maidstone Borough Council. However, the total fee

is £64,666, including a further £14,000 for impact of revised accounting standards and requirements, and £9,000 for the Value for Money work. The amounts above and beyond the scale fee are subject to agreement by PSAA, who will give the Council the opportunity to make representations about the additional charges.

5. RISK

- 5.1 This report is presented for information only and has no decisions which give rise to risk management implications.
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6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 No consultation has been taken in relation to this report.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Next steps are outlined within Appendix 1.
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Maidstone Borough Council Audit Plan
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None