

Audit and Standards Committee – 18th December 2023

Report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services

External Audit Findings Report 2022/23

Purpose of report

1. To consider the external auditor's Audit Findings Report and formal Management Representation Letter to the Auditor.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that:-
 - the committee considers the Audit Findings Report 2022/23 (Appendix 1)
 - the Committee considers the Letter of Representation (Appendix 2)
 - the Committee authorises the Chair to sign and date the final version of the Letter of Representation.

Background

3. The Council has delegated the responsibility for the approval of the Statement of Accounts and all audit matters, to the Audit and Standards Committee.
4. The Audit Findings report presents the observations arising from the audit of the 2022/23 accounts which the auditor deems significant to those charged with the governance to oversee the financial reporting process.
5. Towards the end of each audit of the annual accounts, the Director of Finance and Legal Services provides a management representation letter (sometimes known as a letter of comfort), confirming the completeness and reliability of the information and records supplied to the auditors. The external auditors request that this letter should also be signed by the Chair

of Audit and Standards Committee, to evidence Member's acknowledgement of responsibility for financial management. A draft of this letter is attached as Appendix 2.

Finance

6. This report is financial in nature but does not give rise to any direct costs.

Law

7. Legislation appertaining to Local Authority Audit and Accounts is contained in the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Risk Management

8. The proposals contained within this report do not raise any 'material' risks.

Equality Impact

9. The proposals take into account the Council's Policy on Equality and Diversity.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

10. There are no Human Resources or Organisational Development implications resulting from the items in this report.

Commercial/Procurement

11. There are no implications associated with this report.

Environment/Climate Change

12. There are no direct environmental implications impacting on the Council's work to address Climate Change and achieve our Net Zero target by 2030.

Council Priorities and Projects

13. The work undertaken by Audit and Standards Committee helps to ensure Council priorities are achieved by ensuring the Council has an effective framework of governance, risk management and internal control.



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List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Audit Findings for Dudley MBC
Appendix 2 – Draft Letter or Representation