

AUDIT, GOVERNANCE & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

19 March 2018

External Audit Progress Report March 2018

Final Decision-Maker	Audit, Governance and Standards Committee
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Ellie Dunnet, Head of Finance
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	None

Executive Summary

Committee members are invited to consider the report of the external auditor which provides an update on progress with the 2017/18 audit and offers a summary of emerging national issues and developments of relevance to the local government sector.

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

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the External Audit Progress Report, attached at **Appendix A** be noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Audit, Governance & Standards Committee	19 March 2018

External Audit Progress Report March 2018

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 External audit services are provided by Grant Thornton who successfully tendered for the five year contract from 2012-13 following the abolition of the Audit Commission's audit practice.
 - 1.2 The report attached at **Appendix A** provides an update on progress with the 2017/18 audit and informs committee members of a number of relevant emerging issues and developments.
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2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the committee 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.
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3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the committee notes the report. Given the respective responsibilities of both the external auditor and this committee, a progress report of this nature is judged to be appropriate for consideration by committee members.
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4. RISK

- 4.1 This report supports the committee in the delivery of its governance responsibilities. It also helps to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with the statutory timetable for the production and audit of the annual accounts through timely communication of any potential issues.
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5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 No consultation has been undertaken in relation to this matter.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Next steps are outlined within **Appendix A**.
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7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The report is focused on ensuring that the auditor's opinion on the 2017/18 financial statements and value for money conclusion are issued by the statutory deadline of 31 July 2018.	Head of Finance
Risk Management	Risks arising are set out above in section 4 of the report.	Head of Finance
Financial	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report, although the opinion on the financial statements and value for money conclusion are one mechanism through which the council demonstrates financial accountability.	Head of Finance
Staffing	None identified.	
Legal	None identified.	
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified.	
Equalities	None identified.	
Crime and Disorder	None identified.	
Procurement	None identified.	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- **Appendix A:** External Audit Progress Report 2017/18