

**FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE
20 SEPTEMBER 2012**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

9

TITLE OF REPORT: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2011/12

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, POLICY & GOVERNANCE

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR T.W.HONE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Finance, Audit and Risk Committee to approve the audited Statement of Accounts for 2011/2012. The Annual Statement of Accounts for 2011/2012 is complete and enclosed with the report as Appendix A.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This Report does contain a recommendation on a key decision and was first included in the Forward Plan on 1 September 2012.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is legally required to produce a statement of accounts detailing the financial activities for the financial year and overall financial position as at 31 March. The audited statement of accounts for the year 2011/2012 are set out in appendix A and consist of a number of statements. Much of the information in the document is of a technical nature which has been completed to be compliant with the 2011 Local Authority Accounting Code of Practice (the Code).
- 3.2 There is a statutory requirement that the Annual Statement of Accounts is prepared and certified by the 30 June and then published after an audit examination by the 30 September. The accounts were signed by the Strategic Director of Finance, Policy and Governance before the deadline of the 30 June 2012. Regulation 10 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, states the accounts should be signed and dated by the Member presiding at the meeting which formally approves the accounts. The Finance, Audit & Risk Committee is delegated to sign off the statutory annual Statement of Accounts.
- 3.3 The Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, arrived on the 2 July to start the accounts audit and their report (ISA 260) on the Accounts will be presented to Members at this meeting tonight.

4. ISSUES

- 4.1 The Strategic Director of Finance, Policy and Governance will have signed the Statement of Responsibilities (page 1 of Appendix A), prior to the meeting, to certify that the statement of accounts give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2012 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

- 4.2 The Foreword, which starts on page 5 of the statement of accounts, provides an overview of how the accounts are presented and highlights the most significant matters. In addition all Members have been invited to attend an informal open session at 6.00pm on the 19 September 2012 in Committee Rooms 1 and 2 to ask any questions about the Statement of Accounts ahead of this Committee meeting.
- 4.3 As a result of discussion with Grant Thornton, during the audit of the accounts, a number of adjustments / amendments have been made to the un-audited version of the accounts, published on the 30 June, to ensure they provide a true and fair view of the financial position. The key matters arising from the audit of the accounts and the resulting key changes are described in the ISA 260 report.
- 4.4 The Council has a statutory responsibility to make copies of the accounts available for public inspection before the auditor gives their opinion. The Statement of Accounts were published on the Council's website and hard copies were made available in the Customer Services Centre. Officers did not receive any enquiries from the public during this time and we are not aware that any members of the public visited the Customer Services Centre to view the hard copies available.
- 4.5 Officers are not aware of any events that have occurred since the year end that provide additional evidence of conditions that existed at the 31 March 2012 or materially affect the amounts included in the Statement of Accounts.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 require that the Annual Statement of Accounts be approved and published by the deadline date of 30 September 2012. Members are reminded of the duty to set a balanced budget and to maintain a prudent balance.

6. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- 6.2 There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That the 2011/12 Annual Statement of Accounts, as set out in appendix A to the report, be approved and signed by the Chairman.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To ensure that any queries raised are addressed before the approval of the statement of accounts for 2011/12.

9. APPENDICES

- 9.1 Appendix A - Audited Statement of Accounts 2011/12

10. CONTACT OFFICERS

FAR COMMITTEE (20.09.12)

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11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Revenue Estimates 2011/2012
Financial Ledger (March 2012)
Un-audited Statement of Accounts 2011/12 (available on the website – link below):

http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/index/council_and_democracy/budgets_and_spending/statement_of_accounts.htm