

**FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

**13 NOVEMBER 2024**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/23 AND 2023/24 (ADDENDUM)**  
**This report supplements the report already published as part of the agenda pack.**

REPORT OF: *SERVICE DIRECTOR: RESOURCES*

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: *NON-EXECUTIVE*

COUNCIL PRIORITY: SUSTAINABILITY

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

For the 2022/23 Accounts, Ernst and Young (EY) have now issued their completion report. This details the work that they have carried out on the 2022/23 Accounts. As detailed in the substantive report this is mainly focused on their Value for Money conclusion, as they will issue a disclaimed opinion against the main Statement of Accounts. The completion report has been provided as a late addendum, as this allows the Audit Partner (EY) and the Service Director: Resources to provide an overview of what it contains at the meeting. It also provides an opportunity to respond to any questions that the Committee may have.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Additional recommendation to the substantive report:**

- 2.6. That the Committee note the process that will be followed for the approval of the 2022/23 Accounts as detailed in paragraph 8.13.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 As per the substantive report.

**4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1. As per the substantive report.

**5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

- 5.1. As per the substantive report.

## **6. FORWARD PLAN**

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

## **7. BACKGROUND**

- 7.1. As per the substantive report.

## **8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

Paragraphs 8.1 to 8.10: As per the substantive report.

- 8.11 EY have now issued their completion report, an almost final version of this is attached at Appendix C. The completion report details the work that they have carried out on the 2022/23 Accounts. As detailed in the substantive report this is mainly focused on their Value for Money conclusion, as they will issue a disclaimed opinion against the main Statement of Accounts. The Audit Partner (EY) and the Service Director: Resources will provide a verbal update on the key contents within the completion report.
- 8.12 The Committee can decide that they are satisfied with the audit completion report (based on the explanation that they have received at this meeting) and they could add a recommendation that they will note the completion report. That would slightly change the process that is detailed in the following paragraph.
- 8.13 Following this meeting (and subject to approving the delegation to the Chair of the Committee in the substantive report) the following would happen:
- Members of the Committee confirm by e-mail that they have noted the Audit Completion report and have raised any matters (if applicable) with the Chair of the Committee.
  - Authorisation from the Chair of the Committee (as per the delegation) for approval of the Statement of Accounts.
  - Approval by the Service Director: Resources (as the Council's Chief Finance Officer) of the Statement of Accounts.
  - Signing of the Statement of Accounts by the Chair of the Committee and the Chief Finance Officer.
  - A signed (by the Chair of the Committee and Chief Finance Officer) letter of representation confirming the Council has carried out its obligations in relation to the Statement of Accounts.
  - Confirmation by the Chief Finance Officer that there have been no events since the Balance Sheet date that would require a change to the Statement of Accounts.
- 8.14 The actual signing of the Statement of Accounts can not take place until two external events have taken place. Parliament needs to approve the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice, and the NAO need to confirm that their Whole of Government Accounts processes are complete. These are both expected to complete by 21 November 2024. We are therefore planning to complete the above processes early in week commencing 25 November 2024.

**9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 As per the substantive report.

**10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 As per the substantive report.

**11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 As per the substantive report.

**12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

12.1. As per the substantive report.

**13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1. As per the substantive report.

**14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

14.1. As per the substantive report.

**15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 As per the substantive report.

**16. APPENDICES**

Appendices A and B are as per the substantive report.

16.1 *Appendix C: Completion Report for Those Charged with Governance, Ernst and Young*

**17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

17.1 *Ian Couper, Service Director: Resources, [ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk), ext: 4243*

**18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

18.1 *As per the substantive report.*