

Report of the Chief Finance Officer

Report to Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

Date: 22nd March 2019

Subject: Grant Thornton Audit Progress Report

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Grant Thornton have provided the attached report, which outlines the progress they have made to date in delivering their 2018/19 audit.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee are asked to receive and note the audit progress report presented by Grant Thornton.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To inform members of Grant Thornton's progress in delivering the audit of the Council's accounts and value for money arrangements. The attached report from Grant Thornton highlights the progress made so far in their 2018/19 audit.

2 Background information

- 2.2 Grant Thornton's statutory responsibilities and powers are set out in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the National Audit Office's Code of Audit Practice. As the Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton are required to satisfy themselves that the Council's accounts comply with statutory requirements and that they have been compiled according to proper practices. In addition they are also required to conclude as to whether the Council has arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Grant Thornton's audit has two key objectives, to give an opinion on the council's financial statements (including confirming whether the annual governance statement is consistent with their understanding), and to review and report on the council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Their audit plan which was presented to the January meeting of the Committee set out their approach to this work and the planned timing of their reporting to the council during the year.
- 3.2 Grant Thornton have carried out interim audit work during February, and are due to undertake further work in late March. The attached report presents an update on the work which they have carried out so far, outlining the areas covered and the conclusions reached.
- 3.3 The report also identifies some current issues in the field of local authority audit and governance which may be of interest to the committee.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The audit progress report does not raise any issues requiring consultation or engagement with the public, ward members or Councillors.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 This report does not raise any issues regarding equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 Under the Committee's terms of reference members are required to receive reports from the Council's external auditors.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The audit progress report outlines the areas which Grant Thornton have considered to date in assessing whether the Council has proper arrangements for securing value for money.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 As this is a factual report provided by the external auditors none of the information enclosed is deemed to be sensitive or requesting decisions going forward and therefore raises no issues for access to information or call in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The report identifies any findings so far in relation to the key risks which Grant Thornton have identified in their audit plan.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Grant Thornton have provided the Council with an update report outlining the progress made so far in their 2018/19 audit.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Members of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee are asked to receive and note the audit progress report presented by Grant Thornton.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.