

Report to: **Audit Committee**
Date: **19 September 2017**
Title: **Annual Statement of Accounts 2016/2017**
Portfolio Area: **Support Services**
Wards Affected: **All**
Relevant Scrutiny Committee: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

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Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members approve:

- 1. The wording of the Letter of Representation (Appendix A)**
- 2. The audited Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2017 (Appendix B).**
- 3. The Annual Governance Statement post audit (Appendix C)**

1. Executive summary

- 1) This report presents a summary of net revenue and capital expenditure for Members consideration and seeks approval of the audited Statement of Accounts for 2016/17. **Following approval of the accounts, the Chairman of the Audit Committee is required to sign and date the accounts.** Members are also required to consider the content of the Letter of Representation. **Following approval of its wording, the Chairman of the Audit Committee and the Section 151 Officer (Strategic Finance Lead) are required to sign the Letter of Representation.**

2. Background

- 1) The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 set out the requirements for the production and publication of the local authority's annual Statement of Accounts (SOA). These regulations introduced revised procedures for the approval and publication of accounting statements. In line with common practice in the commercial sector, local authorities are now required to approve the accounts following the completion of the audit.
- 2) The SOA is an essential feature of public accountability, since it provides the stewardship report on the use of funds raised from the public. The closing of accounts is also important to the budgetary process, since it confirms the availability of reserves and balances for future use.
- 3) The attached booklet (Appendix B) contains the Council's final accounts in full, including details of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet and Collection Fund together with statements setting out movements in reserves and cash flow.

Following the 'telling the story' review by CIPFA, the 2016/17 Code changed the segmental reporting arrangements for the CIES. From 2016/17 local authorities are required to report their Cost of Services based on the way in which they operate and manage services.

There is no longer a requirement for the service expenditure analysis to be based on the Service Reporting Code of Practice for Local Authorities. The 2016/17 CIPFA Code also introduced a new financial statement, the Expenditure and Funding Analysis. This brings together local authority performance reported on the basis of expenditure measured under proper accounting practices with statutorily defined charges to the General Fund. In addition, the narrative statement to the booklet summarises the major variations in income and expenditure from the original budget.

- 4) The accounts have been prepared in accordance with all relevant and appropriate accounting standards including, International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19 which deals with pension costs. This standard ensures that the full cost of employing people is recognised systematically in the accounts and that creditors reflect the council's liability to pay money into the pension fund. A full explanation of the pension's liability is included in the Council's SOA. Members are advised that the accounting arrangements for IAS 19 are for reporting purposes only. Indeed the required entries are reversed out of the accounts and consequently, IAS 19 has no impact on the Council's surplus for the year.
- 5) The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2016/17 shown in Appendix C reflects the new reporting requirements introduced by

CIPFA/SOLACE's 2016 Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework. The new requirements include:

- An acknowledgement of responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of governance.
- A reference to and assessment of the effectiveness of key elements of the governance framework and the role of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment.
- An opinion on the level of assurance that the governance arrangements can provide.
- An agreed action plan.
- A conclusion.

The only change to the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) from the version the Audit Committee considered at its July 2017 meeting, is that the Annual Governance Statement has been page numbered following the audit of the AGS.

3. Outcomes/outputs

1) Revenue Expenditure

Revenue expenditure represents the ongoing costs of carrying out day-to-day operations, and is financed from council tax, business rates, fees and charges, government grants and interest earned on investment activity. The under spend on the General Fund in 2016/2017 of £70,000 is essentially a break-even position. ***The 2016/17 budget was £7.25 million and therefore the saving of £70,000 means that the actual spend was 1% less than the budget.*** This saving will go into the Council's Unearmarked Reserves which now stand at £1.125 million. The main variations from budget are shown on Pages 9 of the Narrative Statement in the Statement of Accounts.

2) Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure represents monies spent on the purchase, construction or major refurbishment of assets. The Council's capital expenditure amounted to £547,146 in 2016/17. The main areas of expenditure were as follows:

- Residential renovation grants including disabled facility grants (£0.289m)
- Affordable housing contributions (£0.111m)
- Community projects, namely village hall and parish project grants
- Leisure Centres (£0.099m)

3) Audit of Accounts

The draft SOA was considered by the Audit Committee on 18 July 2017. These accounts are required to be audited by the Council's external auditors, who give their opinion on the draft accounts. The annual audit was undertaken during July by KPMG LLP. Post audit changes have been incorporated within the SOA in line with the recommendations contained within their 'Audit Findings Report'.

4. Proposed Way Forward

- 1) The Council Constitution delegates approval of the Accounts to the Audit Committee. The Council is also required to sign a Letter of Representation every year, which gives representations to the Council's external auditors. The Chairman of the Audit Committee and the Section 151 Officer (Strategic Finance Lead) are required to sign the Letter of Representation. The letter is attached at Appendix A. It is recommended that Members approve the wording of the Letter of Representation.

5. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	<p>The Statutory Powers that apply to this report are Section 151 Local Government Act 1972 Section 21 (12), Local Government Act 2003 and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015.</p> <p>The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 requires all relevant bodies to prepare an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).</p>
Financial	Y	The financial implications to this report are that an under spend of £70,000 was generated in 2016/2017.
Risk	Y	<p>1) Public Accountability – the accounts have been drawn up in strict accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17 which is recognised by statute as representing proper accounting practice.</p> <p>2) Resource Planning – the Council takes into</p>

		account any significant issues when developing the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		None directly arising from this report.
Safeguarding		None directly arising from this report.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		None directly arising from this report.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		None directly arising from this report.
Other implications		None directly arising from this report.

Supporting Information

Appendix A – Letter of Representation

Appendix B – Statement of Accounts 2016/17

Appendix C – Annual Governance Statement 2016/17

Background Papers:

Finance Community of Practice final accounts working papers.

Audit Committee 18 July 2017 – Draft Statement of Accounts 2016/17.