

Audit and Standards Committee

30 November 2023

Warwickshire County Council External Auditor's Audit Findings Report and Letter of Representation 2022/23

Recommendation

That the Committee:

- 1) note the Audit Findings Report of the External Auditors for Warwickshire County Council, attached at Appendix A, and consider whether there are any matters it wishes to bring to the attention of Council; and
- 2) approve, subject to any changes which may be necessary to the final draft, the wording of the Letter of Representation, attached at Appendix B.

1. Key Issues

- 1.1. Our external auditors, Grant Thornton, are required to report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the County Council's financial statements before issuing their final opinion. This report is in addition to the Annual Audit Report which is also on today's agenda. A separate Audit Findings Report is required for the Warwickshire Pension Fund; this can also be found elsewhere on today's agenda.
- 1.2. The 2022/23 Audit Findings Report which will form **Appendix A** to this report will be circulated as a late item as it was unable to be completed in time for publication as a result of unexpected illness within the audit team. The Engagement Partner for Grant Thornton and the Audit Manager will attend the meeting to present their report.
- 1.3. As part of the audit process the External Auditors require written confirmation about the fairness of various elements of the financial statements. This is known as the Letter of Representation. In the letter the Executive Director for Resources and those charged with governance on audit matters declare that the financial statements and other presentations to the auditor are sufficient and appropriate and without omission of material facts to the financial statements, to the best of their knowledge.

- 1.4. The Audit and Standards Committee are asked to approve, subject to any changes which may be necessary to the final draft, the wording of the Letter of Representation for the County Council (**Appendix B**). The final version of the letters will be signed, by the Chair of the Council and the Executive Director for Resources, when the accounts are approved by Council on 19 December 2023.
- 1.5. As is our usual approach, once the accounts are signed and approved, we will be undertaking a review of the process, in conjunction with the External Auditors, to ensure that any lessons learned are built into the closedown/audit process for the 2023/24 accounts.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1. None.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1. None.

4. Background Papers

- 4.1. None.

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

None