

Report of the Treasurer

5. Annual Audit Letter 2014/15

Purpose of report

1. To present the Annual Audit Letter 2014/15 from the External Auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP.

Recommendation

The Treasurer recommends that the Committee notes the Annual Audit Letter 2014/15 from the External Auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP.

Introduction and Background

2. Under the Audit Commission Act the Auditors must be satisfied that the Authority has adequate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources focusing on the arrangements for:
 - securing financial resilience; and
 - prioritising resources within tighter budgets.
3. The Auditors undertake a risk assessment to identify any significant risks which need to be addressed before the value for money conclusion is reached. The Auditors assess the Authority's financial resilience as part of their work on the value for money conclusion.
4. The Annual Audit Letter summarises the findings from the 2014/15 audit.
5. The Audit comprised of two elements:
 - a. the audit of the Authority's financial statements; and
 - b. an assessment of the Authority's arrangements to achieve value for money in its use of resources.

Overview

6. The key messages in the Audit 2014/15 are as follows:
 - (i) testing was conducted as planned the audit of the accounts went well.
 - (ii) Officers prepared the accounts in accordance with the agreed timetable, and audit;
 - (iii) working papers were good quality and officers were responsive to questions

- (iv) the Authority has a realistic Medium Term Financial Plan which underpins the annual budget
- (v) the Authority has put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources

Conclusion/Summary

Audit Opinion and Financial Statements

7. An unqualified opinion on the Authority's 2014/15 financial statements was issued on 29 September 2015 and were considered to give a true and fair view of the Authority's financial position.

Value for Money

8. The Engagement Lead issued an unqualified Value for Money Conclusion on 29 September 2015 as work did not identify any matters which indicated that the Authority did not have proper arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
9. The Engagement Lead was satisfied on the basis of his work that in all significant respects Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority has put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2015.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Annual Audit Letter 2014/15 from the External Auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP

Contact Officer

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