

## Report of the Treasurer

### External Audit Plan (2020/21 Accounts)

#### Purpose of Report

1. To consider the Audit Plan from the Authority's External Auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP, which sets out the work to be undertaken in 2022/23 in respect of the 2021/22 Audit.
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#### Recommendation

***The Treasurer recommends that the External Audit Plan 2022/23 (2021/22 Accounts (including proposed Audit Fee) be noted.***

#### Introduction & Background

2. The External Auditor is required to inform the Authority of the work that will be undertaken during an annual audit and that this is submitted in the form of an Audit Plan.
3. The Audit Plan is based on the Grant Thornton's risk-based approach to audit planning.
4. Grant Thornton comply with the statutory requirements that govern their work in particular:
  - The National Audit Office Code of Audit Practice
  - International Standards on Auditing (ISA) (UK)
  - Financial Reporting Council (FRC)

#### Key Milestones and Deadlines

5. The Authority is required to prepare the accounting statements for 2021/22 by 31 July 2022, and is required to publish the accounts along with the Auditor's Opinion, by 30 September 2022.
6. The proposed timetable and planned outputs (including the approach to Value for Money (VFM)) are contained within the report which will be presented by Grant Thornton.

#### Audit Fee

7. Members will be aware that the Audit fee rose from £35,000 for the audit of the 2019/20 Accounts to £44,000 for the 2020/21 Accounts. This included the

planned changes (increase) to work required as indicated in last year's plan, and the additional work required around Fixed Asset valuations.

8. Late in 2021/22 government provided a £13,000 grant towards this additional audit burdens, so the net cost to the Authority actually went down to £31,000.
9. The proposed fee for the 2021/22 Accounts is marginally lower than last year at £43,000, and there is a possibility that government may provide further grant.
10. The Treasurer considers the fee to be reasonable, and it is certainly not as excessive as other Fire Authorities are receiving from other Auditors.

## Conclusion

11. The Audit Plan sets out the work that will be undertaken during the audit of the 2021/22 Accounts. The Plan is based on Grant Thornton's risk based approach to audit planning. However, the audit does not relieve the management or the Audit and Standards Committee, as those charged with governance of their responsibilities.

## 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 – External Audit Plan