

Cheltenham Borough Council
Audit Committee - 23 September 2015
Statement of Accounts 2014/15
Report of the Section 151 Officer

Accountable member	Cabinet Member Finance, John Rawson
Accountable officer	Section 151 Officer, Paul Jones
Accountable scrutiny committee	Audit Committee
Ward(s) affected	All
Significant Decision	Yes
Executive summary	The purpose of this report is to present the audited Statement of Accounts 2014/15 for formal approval. Members of the Committee will recall that Council previously agreed that the consideration and sign off of the statement of accounts is delegated to the audit committee and that no report is made back to council unless there are issues arising from the audit.
Recommendations	That the audited Statement of Accounts for 2014/15 be approved for signature by the Chairman of this Committee.

Financial implications	None Contact officer: Sarah Didcote E-mail: mark.sheldon@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel no: 01242 264123
Legal implications	This report adopts relevant guidance issued in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 and 2011. Contact officer: Peter Lewis E-mail: Peter.Lewis@tewkesbury.gov.uk Tel no: 01684 272012
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	None Contact officer: Julie McCarthy, E-mail julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk, Tel no: 01242 264355

Key risks	There are no risks arising from this report which need to be brought to the attention of members.
Corporate and community plan Implications	None identified.
Environmental and climate change implications	None identified.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 require the council to prepare an annual statement of accounts by 30th June of each year. The Section 151 Officer must sign and date the draft statement of accounts, and certify that they present a true and fair view of the financial position of the council. There should then be a period of public inspection of the accounts of 20 working days, for which public notice of at least 14 days must be given.
- 1.2** The Regulations then require that the draft accounts be audited and for the audited statement of accounts to be considered and approved by way of a council committee by 30 September, following the year end. The Section 151 Officer must re-certify the audited statement of accounts prior to this meeting. Following approval by the committee, the statement of accounts is to be signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting.
- 1.3** At its meeting on 28th June 2010 Council delegated authority to the Audit Committee to review and approve the audited statement of accounts.
- 1.4** The Audit Committee review specifically considers whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed, the conclusion of the audit of the statements, and whether there are any issues that need to be brought to the attention of the Council. The Committee also considers whether the Annual Governance Statement fairly reflects the arrangements within the council and whether the suggested action plan will address any significant governance issues.

2. Background

- 2.1** The draft Statement of Accounts was signed by the Section 151 Officer on 30th June 2015. The public inspection period operated from 6th July to 31st July 2015 and a public notice to that effect was placed in the Gloucestershire Echo on 22nd July 2015.
- 2.2** The accounts were audited during July and August 2015 and have been signed by the Section 151 Officer.
- 2.3** From 2010/11 the Statement of Accounts has had to comply with a new code of accounting practice – the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local authority Accounting (the 'Code'), which fully incorporates International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

3. Auditor's Report

- 3.1** The council's external auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP, conducted a full audit of the financial statements and have issued a 'Report to those charged with governance (ISA 260) for 2014/15, giving the Statement of Accounts an unqualified audit opinion.
- 3.2** The auditor must appoint a date on which local government electors for the area to which the accounts relate may exercise their rights under regulation 15 and 16 of the Audit commission Act 1998 to question the auditor about or make objections to the accounts. The date appointed by the auditor was 3rd August 2015.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1** The Council is required to formally approve its audited Statement of Accounts by 30th September. The Chairman of the Audit Committee is asked to approve the Statement on behalf of the Council.
- 4.2** A copy of the audited Statement of Accounts 2014/15 is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. Once approved, the audited statements will be published on the Council's website and notice advertised of the completion of the audit.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1** None.

6. Consultation and feedback

- 6.1** As detailed throughout the report.

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Appendices	1. Statement of Accounts 2014/15 (to follow) 2. Letter of representation
Background information	External Audit Working paper files 2014/15 Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2014/15 Accounts Service Reporting Code of Practice 2014/15 Report to those charged with governance (ISA 260) for 2014/15 Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011