

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE 15th SEPTEMBER 2020

GRANT THORNTON – Sector report and 2019/20 audit progress update

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor David Thain
Portfolio Holder Consulted	-
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering – Exec Director Finance and Resources
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	No

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To present a sector update report from Grant Thornton relating to emerging public sector national issues and 2019/20 audit progress to date.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to note updates as included in Appendix 1.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

Legal Implications

3.2 The Council has a statutory responsibility to comply with financial regulations.

Service / Operational Implications

3.3 The report attached at Appendix 1 updates Members on the progress on the 2019/20 accounts work undertaken by Grant Thornton since the last Committee meeting. The draft (pre-audit) 2019/20 Statement of Accounts was due to be published by 31st August 2020. This deadline was met and the accounts were published on line and sent to the Auditors. As in previous years this draft document will be sent to the Members of this Committee and a briefing session will be held to ensure Members have a greater understanding of the Accounts prior to publishing with the Audit opinion in November.

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- 3.4 It is important to inform the Committee that whilst officers and Grant Thornton are committed to ensure the accounts are audited by the end of November in line with guidance (not statutory legislation), there is a risk that this date will not be achieved. This is not solely due to the slight delay in the audit of the accounts but also due to the fact that undertaking an audit within a virtual environment has been seen to take longer than if the team were on site and able to discuss issues with the finance team. Officers will keep Members up to date on the progress of the Audit.
- 3.5 In addition the appendix includes updates and links to Grant Thornton Publications in relation to issues that are relevant to Local Government at the current time. These mainly relate to the impact of Covid and how Councils can address the associated risks of financial implications and service delivery.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.6 There are no implications arising out of this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 As part of all audit work the auditors undertake a risk assessment to ensure that adequate controls are in place within the Council so reliance can be placed on internal systems.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Grant Thornton Report

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. KEY

N/A

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