

Report of:	Head of Finance
Contact Officer:	Emma Fullagar
Telephone No:	01543 464720
Key Decision:	No
Report Track:	Audit & Gov Cttee: 19/09/17

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
19 SEPTEMBER 2017
EXTERNAL AUDIT OF THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2016/17

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report the process for the approval of the audited statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2017.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members note the contents of the report with reference to the separate reports elsewhere on the agenda covering:
- a) The Audit Findings for Cannock Chase District Council;
 - b) Statement of Accounts 2016/17;
- 2.2 Members approve the Management Representation letter (to be signed by the Chair on behalf of the Committee).

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Council is required to publish its accounts, including the auditor's report by 30 September each year.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The annual Statement of Accounts is an important part of the Council's corporate governance arrangements which cut across all of the Council's priorities.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The approval process for the Statement of Accounts requires the accounts to be certified by the Section 151 Officer (Head of Finance) by the 30 June as providing a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at the 31 March 2017. The accounts are then audited and considered by Audit and Governance Committee alongside the 'Audit Findings' report by 30 September.
- 5.2 External Auditors are required to report the matters arising from their audit of the financial statements via the 'Audit Findings' report to Audit and Governance Committee before they are able to provide an opinion which will enable the accounts to be published.
- 5.4 The Council's external auditors have a duty to report to those charged with governance those issues arising from the audit of the financial statements of Cannock Chase District Council.
- 5.5 The auditors who must provide a representation in terms of their integrity, objectivity and independence will review and report on the following issues:
- Qualitative aspects of financial reporting
 - Misstatements within the accounts
 - Material weaknesses in internal control
- 5.6 The contents of the report and in particular any misstatements and recommendations for future improvements are discussed with officers following the audit and the accounts amended accordingly.
- 5.7 The 'Audit Findings' report forms a separate item on the agenda and details the changes made and recommendations for performance improvement.
- 5.8 Members should note that the report also provides an assessment of the arrangements put in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (the Value for Money conclusion).
- 5.9 As part of the formal audit conclusion process, the Responsible Financial Officer is required to submit the attached Management Representation Letter (Appendix 1) to the Appointed Auditor having obtained acknowledgement by the Audit and Governance Committee.

6 Implications**6.1 Financial**

None

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

None

6.5 Human Rights Act

None

6.6 Data Protection

None

6.7 Risk Management

None

6.8 Equality & Diversity

None

6.9 Best Value

None

7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1 – Management Representation Letter.

Previous Consideration

None.

Background Papers –

File available in Financial Services

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**19 SEPTEMBER 2017****Management Representation Letter**

Richard Percival
Grant Thornton UK LLP
The Colmore Building
20 Colmore Circus
Birmingham
B4 6AT

CONTACT	Bob Kean
DIRECT DIAL	01543 464334
FAX	
EMAIL	bobkean@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
OUR REF	
YOUR REF	
DATE	19 September 2017

Dear Richard,

Cannock Chase District Council - Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2017

This representation letter is provided in connection with the audit of the financial statements of Cannock Chase District Council for the year ended 31 March 2017 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17 and applicable law.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

Financial Statements

- i We have fulfilled our responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17 ("the Code"); which give a true and fair view in accordance therewith.
- ii We have complied with the requirements of all statutory directions affecting the Council and these matters have been appropriately reflected and disclosed in the financial statements.
- iii The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance. There has been no non-compliance with requirements of regulatory authorities that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance.
- iv We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud.
- v Significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
- vi We are satisfied that the material judgements used in the preparation of the financial statements are soundly based, in accordance with the Code and adequately disclosed in the financial statements. There are no other material judgements that need to be disclosed.
- vii Except as disclosed in the financial statements:

- a there are no unrecorded liabilities, actual or contingent
 - b none of the assets of the Council has been assigned, pledged or mortgaged
 - c there are no material prior year charges or credits, nor exceptional or non-recurring items requiring separate disclosure.
- viii We confirm that we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme assets and liabilities for IAS19 Employee Benefits disclosures are consistent with our knowledge. We confirm that all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for. We also confirm that all significant post-employment benefits have been identified and properly accounted for.
- ix Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Code.
- x All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the Code requires adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.
- xi Actual or possible litigation and claims have been accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Code.
- xii We have considered the unadjusted misstatements schedule included in your Audit Findings Report and attached. We have not adjusted the financial statements for the misstatements brought to our attention as it is considered immaterial to the results of the Council and its financial position at year-end. In addition for items 2 and 3 these cannot be adjusted as they are estimates and not actual valuations. The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.
- xiii We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.
- xiv We believe that the Council's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the Council's needs. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

Information Provided

- xv We have provided you with:
- a access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
 - b additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of your audit; and
 - c unrestricted access to persons within the Council from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
- xvi We have communicated to you all deficiencies in internal control of which management is aware
- xvii All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
- xviii We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.

- xix We have disclosed to you all our knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the Council involving:
 - a management;
 - b employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
 - c others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

- xx We have disclosed to you all our knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Council's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, regulators or others.

- xxi We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements.

- xxii We have disclosed to you the identity of all the Council's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.

- xxiii We have disclosed to you all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

Annual Governance Statement

xxiv We are satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and we confirm that we are not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

Narrative Statement

xxv The disclosures within the Narrative Statement fairly reflect our understanding of the Council's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the financial statements.

Approval

The approval of this letter of representation was minuted by the Council's Audit and Governance Committee at its meeting on 19 September 2017.

Yours faithfully

Name.....

Position.....

Date.....

Name.....

Position.....

Date.....

Signed on behalf of the Council

Audit findings

Unadjusted misstatements

The table below provides details of adjustments identified during the audit which have not been made within the final set of financial statements. It should be noted that adjustment 2 is only a potential adjustment based on estimates and as such no actual figure currently exists. The Audit and Governance Committee is required to approve management's proposed treatment of all items recorded within the table below:

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £'000	Balance Sheet £'000	Reason for not adjusting
1 Overstatement of Property, Plant and Equipment – Other Land and Buildings due to incorrect casting of external valuer information.	508	(508)	Due to a robust review undertaken of the local authorities revaluation process (in its entirety) with regards to material uncertainty the Council have decided not to adjust and will incorporate this asset (which is individually significant) in to its revaluation process in 2017/18.
2 Understatement of Property, Plant and Equipment – Other Land and Buildings due to impact of change in values on assets not revalued	(1,513)	1,513	Due to a robust review undertaken of the local authorities revaluation process (in its entirety) with regards to material uncertainty the Council have decided not to adjust.
Overall impact	£1,005	(£1,005)	

We have also identified an extrapolated error of £204k in relation to the overpayment of housing benefits expenditure. This estimate is based on a small sample of the population tested and is indicative only. The overpayments identified by our testing are not recoverable from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).