



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Standards and Governance Committee

Purpose: Approval

Date : **28 November 2022**

Title: **External Audit Results 2021/22**

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SUMMARY

1. Attached to this report, in Appendix 1, is the External Auditor's Audit Results report for the year ended 31 March 2022. It summarises the findings from the audit of the Authority's financial statements, and the work undertaken to assess arrangements in place to secure value for money in our use of resources.
2. The audit work in respect of the Authority's audit opinion is substantially complete, with details of outstanding items included within EY's report (Appendix C). Given the audit process is ongoing, EY's report notes that they will continue to challenge the remaining evidence provided and the final disclosures in the Narrative Report and Accounts which could influence their final audit opinion, however the draft opinion included in the report is for an unqualified opinion. In addition, the report has concluded that we have proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of our resources.

BACKGROUND

3. The Authority is required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act (2014) and the Accounts and Audit Regulations (2015) to produce an annual statement of accounts and to have these accounts externally audited. The Department for

Levelling Up, Housing and Communities published details of measures to support the improved timeliness of local audit in December 2021. One of the outcomes was to temporarily extend the deadline for the sign-off of audited accounts for 2021/22 to the end of November 2022.

4. The audit work is now substantially complete and the results are set out and reported on in the draft Audit Results Report, which is attached as Appendix 1.

SUPPORTING OUR SERVICE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

5. Good financial management is essential to enable the Service to achieve its plans and priorities and the audit results report provides external confirmation around the quality and content of the final accounts and the overall financial resilience of the Authority

CONSULTATION

6. No consultation is required for this report as it is based on historic information and is a purely factual document.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no direct resource implications contained within this report, but appropriate financial resources have been made available to fund the estimated cost of the 2021/22 audit fee. Proposed changes to this fee would need to be agreed by the Authority or referred to the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) for consideration.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

8. This is a factual report presenting the external audit results for 2021/22 so no impact assessments are required.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9. This external audit results are part of the final accounts process. There is a legal requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations that the Statement of Accounts be approved and published by 30 November 2022.

RISK ANALYSIS

10. Areas of risk are identified by the auditor as part of the planning process and examination of these areas form part of the formal audit and the results are reported in the attached Appendix.

CONCLUSION

11. The presentation of the annual external audit results is an important part of the overall governance framework for the Authority and the Committee is therefore requested to consider and approve the external audit results alongside the accounts.

RECOMMENDATION

12. That the Committee receives and notes the External Auditor's Audit Results Report for the year ended 31 March 2022.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

13. Appendix 1 – External Audit Results (draft) 2021/22

BACKGROUND PAPERS

14. Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972