

# **Somerset West and Taunton Council**

## **Audit, Governance and Standards Committee – 12 April 2021**

### **Somerset West and Taunton District Council Annual Audit Letter 2019/20**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Henley, Corporate Resources**

**Report Author: Martin Henwood, Corporate Finance Advisor**

#### **1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This brief cover report introduces the Annual Audit Letter from Grant Thornton, which summarises the key findings arising from their work carried out at Somerset West and Taunton Council for the year ended 31 March 2020.

#### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee considers and notes the contents of the Annual Audit Letter.

#### **3 Background and Full details of the Report**

- 3.1 Somerset West and Taunton Council's external audit function is undertaken by Grant Thornton. The external auditor, as part of their work, provide an Annual Audit Letter which summarises their findings and updates regarding the actual audit fees.
- 3.2 The Annual Audit Letter provides a commentary on the results of the auditor's work to the Council and external stakeholders, and highlights issues that they wish to draw to the attention of the public and those charged with governance (this Committee).
- 3.3 Further to the Audit Findings Report, presented to this Committee on 1 February 2021, the Annual Audit Letter confirms that Grant Thornton have issued an unqualified opinion in respect of Somerset West and Taunton Council's accounts for 2019/20 and in respect of the Council's arrangements for ensuring value for money.

#### **4 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

- 4.1 This report links to the Council's aim of achieving financial stability.

#### **5 Finance / Resource Implications**

- 5.1 The main audit fees proposed to be charged for 2019/20 total £82,075. This is £21,750 higher than initially set, and some £29,000 higher than the scale fee for the year which included a one-off £6,000 as it is the first year of accounts for the new Council. Grant Thornton propose to include additional fees due to changes in scope of work, which includes the impact of additional response to regulation, COVID and the extended audit period. This is summarised on page 15 and in detail on pages 17 and 18 of their Letter, and is subject to agreement by Public

Sector Auditor Appointments (PSAA) – the body that procured the audit services for the Council.

## **6 Legal Implications**

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty to produce financial statements.

Appendix:

Grant Thornton: Annual Audit Letter for Somerset West and Taunton Council

Democratic Path:

- Audit Governance and Standards Committee – 12 April 2021

Reporting Frequency: Annually

### **Contact Officers**

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