

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

29 July 2019

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected – All wards

Statement of Accounts 2018/19

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to consider and approve the 2018/19 Statement of Accounts, following the completion of the external audit.

Background

Local authorities are required to complete and submit a set of accounts to audit by the 15th June, with a requirement to gain Audit Committee approval, following the conclusion of the audit process, by the 15th September at the latest.

This Council's Finance team recognises that the deadline dates will move to the end of July, so has worked to close early in advance of the legislative changes. Our external auditor, Wales Audit Office, supports this approach and includes this Council in the early closure scheme for local government accounts.

The Accounts and Audit (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 update the timescales for the Section 151 officer/Director of Finance and Corporate Services to sign and date the accounts, to certify that they present a true and fair view. The revised requirements are:

Year	Draft Statement of Accounts	Final audited Statement of Accounts
2018/19	15 th June 2019	15 th September 2019
2019/20	15 th June 2020	15 th September 2020
2020/21	31 st May 2021	31 st July 2021

Closure of Accounts 2018/19

Neath Port Talbot's Statement of Accounts was submitted to the external auditor on the 22nd May 2019 and they have now substantially completed their audit.

The final Statement of Accounts is updated from the draft considered in June to reflect the anticipated impact of a Supreme Court judgement made on the 27th June 2019. This ruled that the transitional arrangement put in place when public sector pension schemes were reformed has discriminated against younger employees. The Pension Fund Actuary provided an updated schedule to reflect the financial impact of this change, together with the anticipated costs arising from the Guaranteed Minimum Pension solution.

Following the receipt of the certified Letter of Representation, after approval at this meeting, Wales Audit Office intend issuing an unqualified audit report.

Conclusions

Neath Port Talbot Council has closed its accounts and produced its Statement of Accounts in an improved timeline.

Audit Committee should note that the external auditor is once again able to issue an unqualified audit opinion.

Financial Impact

All financial impacts are contained within the body of the report.

Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement for an integrated impact assessment in respect of this item.

Valleys Communities Impacts

There are no impacts in respect of this item.

Workforce impacts

There are no workforce impacts in respect of this item.

Legal Impacts

There are no legal impacts in respect of this item.

Risk Management

There are no risk management issues in respect of this item.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members approve the Letter of Representation, included as Addendum 1;
- Members approve the final 2018/19 Statement of Accounts, as included in Addendum 2;
- The Chair of the Audit Committee be authorised to sign the Letter of Representation and the Statement of Accounts.

Reason for proposed decisions

To ensure that the Council's Statement of Accounts is approved.

Implementation of Decision

The decision is proposed for implementation immediately.

Appendix

Addendum 1 – Letter of Representation 2018/19

Addendum 2 – Statement of Accounts 2018/19

Background Papers

Closing working papers 2018/19

Officer Contact

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