

MEETING:	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING DATE:	23 JUNE 2014
TITLE OF REPORT:	2014/15 ANNUAL AUDIT FEE
REPORT BY:	CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Classification

Open

Key Decision

This is not an executive decision

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To seek the Committee's agreement to the annual audit fee.

Recommendations

THAT: the Audit Fee letter 2014/15 be agreed.

Alternative Options

- 1 There are no alternative options.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 Grant Thornton is the council's external auditor, appointed by the Audit Commission. The annual fee letter, attached as Appendix A, is an opportunity for the Audit and Governance Committee to be informed of the planned outputs and proposed fee.

Key Considerations

- 3 The annual audit fee letter details the amount to be paid to Grant Thornton (£164,803) for 2014/15, which remains at the same level as the previous year. The council's indicative fee for grant certification in 2014/15 is £6,420; this was £8,420 in 2013/14.
- 4 The audit fee covers work on the audit of financial statements, value for money conclusion and work on the whole of government accounts return. The scale fee excludes any additional work requested by the council.

- 5 The letter lists the planned outputs and their indicative dates.

Community Impact

- 6 The report has no community impact.

Equality and Human Rights

- 7 The recommendations do not have any equality implications

Financial Implications

- 8 The council's annual audit will cost £164,803 and grant certification is £6,420. The overall total of £171,223 is included in the 2014/15 budget. The Audit Commission has independently set the scale fee for all bodies.

Legal Implications

- 9 The recommendations do not have any legal implications

Risk Management

- 10 The requirement to supply accounts for audit that have appropriate working papers requires the council's staff and its contractor (Hoople Ltd) to meet all deadlines outlined in the accounts timetable closure process.
- 11 The external auditor will require council management and accounting staff to be available to help locate information and provide explanations so that the accounts are audited to the required standard. This also applies to Hoople Ltd.

Consultees

- 12 None

Appendices

Appendix A – Audit fee letter

Background Papers

None identified.