

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

21 MARCH 2022

1. **AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21**

Report of the Treasurer.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Audit and Risk Committee notes the Auditor's Annual Report (AAR) 2020/21 on the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority attached as an Appendix to this report.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1 This report is submitted to inform the Audit and Risk Committee of the findings of the external audit work undertaken for the audit year 2020/21 which is summarised in the AAR.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The AAR summarises the key findings from external audit work undertaken for the 2020/21 audit year. The audit comprised two elements:
- To audit and give an opinion on the Authority's financial statements.
 - An assessment of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (the value for money conclusion).
- 3.2 The Audit Findings Reports (AFR) presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 27 September 2021 outlined the findings of the audit work undertaken.

- 3.3 The auditor issued an unqualified opinion on the Authority's 2020/21 financial statements included in the Authority's Statement of Accounts on 19 October 2021.
- 3.4 As part of the external audit work programme, the auditor was also required to provide a value for money conclusion. In carrying out this work the auditor is required to follow the National Audit Office (NAO)'s Code of Audit Practice (the Code) and Auditor Guidance Note (AGN) 03. The NAO Code specifies the following criterion for auditors to evaluate:
- Financial Sustainability
 - Governance
 - Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- 3.5 As a consequence of this work, the auditor concluded that for 2020/21 the Authority had proper arrangements in all significant respects to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness and to ensure it delivered value for money in its use of resources.
- 3.6 The Treasurer has been consulted and has agreed the content of the AAR.
- 3.7 Representatives from Grant Thornton will present and explain the findings detailed in the AAR to the Audit and Risk Committee.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out. The matters contained in this report will not lead to and/or do not relate to a policy change.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There is a legal requirement for the Authority to consider the AAR Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 234 – The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The agreed scale fee for the provision of external audit services for the audit year 2020/21 was set at £45,500.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Audit Findings Report 2020/21 – Agenda item 8 – Audit & Risk Committee 27 September 2021.

The contact officer for this report is Wayne Brown, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, telephone number 0121 380 6907.

MIKE GRIFFITHS
TREASURER