

Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee
1 February 2016

Report by the Executive Director
Service Support/S.151 Officer

2015/16 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS CLOSEDOWN TIMETABLE

REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fire Authority is required by statute to produce accounts on an annual basis; this report includes the timetable to ensure the Fire Authority produces accounts for 2015/16 on an efficient and timely basis. The Fire Authority must make available for audit its draft (signed by the S.151 Officer) Annual Accounts by 30 June 2016 and this year the aim is to produce the Final (Audited) Annual Accounts that have been approved by the Fire Authority by 31 July 2016 (This becomes mandatory from 2017/18).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members take assurance that the Fire Authority has robust plans in place to produce the Annual Accounts by the required deadlines.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2015/16

2. The attached timetable sets out the key tasks that will be undertaken on the 2015/16 Annual Accounts between December 2015 and June 2016.
3. Regular meetings will also be held with the Authority's external auditor, KPMG. These meetings will be held from late in 2015 through to the completion of the audit in summer 2016.
4. The Authority will be required to produce its 2017/18 audited Annual Accounts by 31 July 2018, in preparation for this, work is planned to complete the 2015/16 audited Annual Accounts by 31 July 2016. Any lessons learned can then be used to inform the planning process for 2016/17 and 2017/18 Accounts.
5. The Authority has liaised closely with the external auditors and together planned a shorter period for the production and audit of the Authority's Annual Accounts.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

6. No direct issues arising.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

7. The Annual Accounts are a key document that ensures the Fire Authority is recording and reporting the transactions it enters into in an appropriate manner and reporting in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Local Authority Accounts.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8. The Authority is required by statute to provide Annual Accounts in a timely manner.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

9. No direct issues arising from this report.

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

10. No direct issues arising but timely and accurate Annual Accounts are a cornerstone of good governance.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11. No direct issues arising.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

12. No direct issues arising.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

13. No direct issues arising.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

14. None.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

15. That Members take assurance that the Fire Authority has robust plans in place to produce the Annual Accounts by the required deadlines.

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KW/MR/SJ
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