

EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Head of Finance

1 Purpose

To receive a report from the External Auditors on the progress of their work.

2 Recommendations/for decision

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of the External Auditors' report.

3 Supporting information

3.1 The External Audit progress report is attached at Appendix A.

4 Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 This report is part of the independent external audit process. It is part of the Audit committee's role to receive regular reports from the External Auditors on their current work at AVDC.

5 Resource Implications

5.1 None

6 Response to Key Aims and Outcomes

6.1 The external audit review process underpins the Council's own performance management framework which is designed to ensure optimum delivery of the key aims and outcomes.

Contact Officer
Background Documents

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Audit Summary Report

Date

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Progress report to Audit Committee

Aylesbury Vale District Council

Audit 2007/08

The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively, to achieve high-quality local and national services for the public. Our remit covers more than 15,000 bodies which between them spend nearly £125 billion of public money every year. Our work covers local government, housing, health, criminal justice and fire and rescue services.

As an independent watchdog, we provide important information on the quality of public services. As a driving force for improvement in those services, we provide practical recommendations and spread best practice. As an independent auditor, we monitor spending to ensure public services are good value for money.

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Status of our reports to the Trust/Council

Our reports are prepared in the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission. Reports are prepared by appointed auditors and addressed to non-executive directors/members or officers. They are prepared for the sole use of the audited body, and no responsibility is taken by auditors to any director/member or officer in their individual capacity, or to any third party.

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Introduction

- 1 Our principal objective as the Council's appointed auditor is to carry out an audit which meets the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice. This report sets out the progress made in delivering the work set out in our 2007/08 audit plan.

Our responsibilities

- 2 In carrying out audit work, we comply with the statutory requirements governing it, in particular:
 - the Audit Commission Act 1998
 - the Code of Audit Practice (the Code).
- 3 Our audit is also planned to be consistent with the Commission's Strategic Plan. The Code sets out two key objectives for our audit:
 - accounts
 - use of resources.

Progress

- 4 Progress to date on our main blocks of work is set out in the attached appendix and indicates when our work completed. We will provide reports, or other output as agreed, to the Audit Committee for each of the audits identified in the plan. Our key milestones are set out in the planned outputs section of this plan. This will be updated regularly as work programmes are agreed and completed.

2006/07 audit

- 5 Work on the 2006/07 audit is now complete. The summary of our work is contained within the 2006/07 annual audit and inspection letter which is attached as a separate agenda item for this Committee meeting.

2007/08 audit

- 6 Progress on the planned outputs of our work programme for the 2007/08 audit is listed in Appendix 1.

2008/09 audit

- 7 The plan for our 2008/09 audit is attached as a separate agenda item for this Committee meeting.

Key contacts

- 8 If you have any concerns on any aspect of the audit then please contact one of our key contacts.

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Appendix 1 – Planned outputs for 2007/08 audit

Project	Start date	Draft due date	Finalised	Comment
Audit Plan	March 2007	April 2007	April 2007	
Interim audit memo	March 2008	April 2008		Work is due to start on our review of the material financial systems at the end of March.
Final accounts memo	July 2008	October 2008		This is due to be reported to 5 November 2008 Audit Committee.
Report to those charged with governance (ISA 260)	September 2008	September 2008		This is due to be reported to 5 November 2008 Audit Committee.
Whole of Government Accounts	September 2008	September 2008		This is due to be reported to 5 November 2008 Audit Committee.
Audit Opinion	June 2008	September 2008		This is due to be reported to 5 November 2008 Audit Committee.
Direction of Travel	January 2009	February 2009		This will be included in our Annual Audit and Inspection Letter in March 2009.
Data Quality (Performance Indicators)	May 2008	November 2008		This is due to be reported to 8 December 2008 Audit Committee.

Project	Start date	Draft due date	Finalised	Comment
Grant claims (various)	September 2008	November 2008		We are awaiting clarification on the timing of the requirements for auditing the 2007/08 Housing Benefit claim - the largest claim produced by the Council - as this may be brought forward to coincide with the deadlines for the 2007/08 opinion audit.
Use of resources:				Overall score 2 in 2007. (3 in 2006)
Financial reporting	September 2008	October 2008		This work will be carried out in conjunction with our opinion audit. Score 1 in 2007 (2 in 2006)
Financial management	April 2008	October 2008	November 2007	Initial work will be carried out in April and then updated in conjunction with our opinion audit. Score 3 in 2007 (3 in 2006)
Financial standing	September 2007	October 2008	November 2007	This work will be carried out in conjunction with our opinion audit. Score 3 in 2007 (3 in 2006)
Internal control	April 2008	October 2008	November 2007	Initial work will be carried out in April and then updated in conjunction with our opinion audit. Score 3 in 2007 (3 in 2006)
Value for money	April 2008	October 2008	November 2007	Score 2 in 2007 (2 in 2006)
Annual Audit and Inspection Letter	January 2009	February 2009		We would expect to bring the 2007/08 annual audit and inspection letter to the 16 March 2009 Audit Committee.