

Value for Money: Tracker and Social Care Experts Review 2018/19

Lead Officer: Sheila Collins, Interim Director of Finance
Author: Sheila Collins, Interim Director of Finance
Contact Details: SDCollins@somerset.gov.uk 01823 359028
Cabinet Member: Cllr Mandy Chilcott, Cabinet Member for Resources
Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

- 1.1. The Audit Committee considered the Councils external auditors (Grant Thornton) value for money conclusion for 2018/19 at its meeting on 19 September 2019. In reaching the improved value for money conclusion for 2018/19, the external auditor had sought additional assurance from social care experts from Grant Thornton, over the embeddedness of the arrangements in respect of sustainable resource deployment for adult and children's social care services.
- 1.2. The experts report was used by the auditor to inform their overall value for money conclusion and managements actions have been incorporated into the new VFM tracker presented to the Audit Committee on 19 September 2019.
- 1.3. The experts report from Grant Thornton and the VFM tracker develop by the Council in response to the overall VFM conclusion are attached in **Appendix A and B** for consideration by the Committee.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to consider the Grant Thornton experts report (**Appendix A**) alongside the VFM tracker (**Appendix B**) and determine how they might review progress during the year for the actions that are relevant to this Committee.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Audit Committee considered the Councils external auditors (Grant Thornton) value for money conclusion for 2018/19 at its meeting on 19 September 2019. In reaching the improved value for money conclusion for 2018/19, the external auditor had sought additional assurance from social care experts from Grant Thornton, over the embeddedness of the arrangements in respect of sustainable resource deployment for adult and children's social care

services.

- 3.2.** The experts report was produced in collaboration with relevant senior leaders from the Council and is being used to inform the Medium Term Financial Planning 2020-23 as well as by the auditor to inform their overall value for money conclusion.
- 3.3.** The experts report attached in Appendix A has a section on Adults Services and some useful benchmarking comparisons. The overall vfm experts opinion for Adults Services concludes that there is a very low risk to the delivery of the MTFP for Adults services.
- 3.4.** The review identified a few areas for further action in strengthening the council's financial resilience for adults and children's social care and management actions have been incorporated into the VFM tracker that was presented to the Audit Committee on 19 September 2019. Progress will now be reported to each Audit Committee during 2019/20. A copy of the tracker is attached for consideration. There are two VFM actions being VFMY20011 and VFMY20012 that have specific actions relating to Adults Services which the Committee is asked to consider how they can best review progress against them during the year.

4. Consultations undertaken

- 4.1.** See Audit Committee papers from 19 September 2019.

5. Implications

- 5.1.** See Audit Committee papers from 19 September 2019.

6. Background papers

- 6.1.** External Audit up-date report to Audit Committee 19 September 2019
VFM Tracker report to Audit Committee 19 September 2019.
[Link to Audit Committee Papers - 19-09-19](#)

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author