Annual Audit Letter

Portfolio Holder	Councillor Ric Pallister, Leader of the Council	
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Purpose of the report

This report introduces the annual audit letter for the 2013/14 financial year.

Recommendations

The Audit Committee is asked to:

(1) Note the contents of the Annual Audit Letter as set out in the report.

Introduction

The review of the Annual Audit Letter is included within the remit of the Audit Committee under its terms of reference as follows:

"To consider the reports of external audit including the Annual Audit Letter and seek assurance from management that action has been taken."

"To review and approve the annual Statement of Accounts, external auditor's opinion and reports to members and monitor management action in response to issues raised."

Each year the Audit Commission is required to make arrangements for the production of an audit letter for each local authority.

Statement of Accounts

An unqualified opinion was given on the Statement of Accounts.

Grant Thornton had received an objection to the accounts for 2013/14 regarding:

• the legal costs of a planning application and

• the renegotiation of planning obligations.

They were satisfied that both issues did not have a material impact on the financial statements for 2013/14.

Grant Thornton has yet to determine the substance of the objection and this will be concluded after the issuing of the opinion. Consequently, the certificate closing the audit will be delayed. They have since received a further objection regarding the renegotiation of planning obligations.

The Value for Money Conclusion

An unqualified conclusion was given on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications in accepting this report and the associated recommendations.

There could be a further charge to SSDC from Grant Thornton regarding their investigations into the objections made.

Background Papers

Annual Governance Report