

Certification of Claims Report

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Purpose of the report

This report introduces the updated annual report from our external auditors Grant Thornton on their findings from the signing off of the Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim for 2013/14.

Recommendations

The Audit Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the contents of the Certification of Claim Report for 2013/14.
- (2) Note the positive outcome from the appeal to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Introduction

The Certification of Claims Report is included within the remit of the Audit Committee under its terms of reference as follows:

“To consider the effectiveness of SSDC’s risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and corruption arrangements and seek assurance from management that action has been taken”

“To consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies and seek assurance from management that action has been taken”

Grant Claim

The report to Members in January outlined that £231,021 was required as an amendment to the claim because of the extrapolation over high value cells within the Housing Benefit claim. At the time of the original audit the Council was not able to produce a report to sub-total earned/self-employed income cases.

Since then we have been able to provide analysis so that a fairer method of calculation could be provided to the DWP through the appeal process. This has significantly changed the outcome to the extent that rather than SSDC paying the DWP £231,021 the DWP now owe SSDC £23,477.

This outcome has now been certified by Grant Thornton and also accepted as a final decision through the grant process by the DWP.

Financial Implications

The repayment will be made into the Housing Benefit Reserve.

Background Papers

Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim.