

**REPORT TO: AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 25 JUNE 2019**

**REPORT TITLE: EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT**

**DIRECTOR: MALCOLM COE, DIRECTOR OF INVESTMENT &  
CORPORATE SERVICES (s73 OFFICER)**

**AUTHOR: MALCOLM COE**

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 Grant Thornton is the appointed external auditor for the West of England Combined Authority. Their audit plans, progress on delivery, key findings and recommendations and scale of fees are reported periodically to the audit committee.

#### **Recommendation**

- To note the updates provided from the external auditor.

#### **Background / Issues for Consideration**

- 2 The External Auditor has provided the following items appended to this report to update the Committee on:
  - i. Appendix 1 – progress report and sector update
  - ii. Appendix 2 – fees letter 2019/20
  - iii. Appendix 3 – IAS 240 letter and Audit Chair response

- 2.1 The External Auditor will provide a full briefing on these items at the meeting

#### **Consultation**

- 3 The External Audit plan for 2018/19 and 2019/20 was produced in consultation with the WECA s73 Officer and the appointed internal audit provider (Audit West).

## **Risk Management/Assessment**

- 4 An effective external, and internal, audit function is crucial in securing strong corporate governance arrangements and managing organisational risk.

## **Public Sector Equality Duties**

- 5 The public sector equality duty created under the Equality Act 2010 means that public authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 5.1 The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

- 5.2 The general equality duty therefore requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services, including policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.

- 5.3 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

## **Finance Implications, including economic impact assessment where appropriate:**

- 6 The External Audit work supports the statutory audit requirements for the Annual Accounts and the fee for this work is agreed by Public Sector Auditor Appointments Ltd. The specific fee proposals for 2019/20 external audit work is included in the update provided.

Advice given by: Malcolm Coe

## **Legal Implications:**

- 7 The report is in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

Advice given by: Shahzia Daya, Director of Legal Services

## **Human Resources Implications:**

- 8 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Advice given by: Head of Human Resources

**Appendices:**

*List any appendices to the report:*

Appendix 1 – Progress report and sector update

Appendix 2 – Fees letter 2019/20

Appendix 3 - IAS 240 letter and Audit Chair response

**Background papers:**

None

**West of England Combined Authority Contact:**

Any person seeking background information relating to this item should seek the assistance of the contact officer for the meeting who is Ian Hird / Tim Milgate on 0117 456 6982; or by writing to West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Way, Bristol BS1 6ER; email: [democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)