



Audit Committee

9 March 2015

Report title	2014/15 Statement of Accounts Progress Update	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Andrew Johnson Resources	
Accountable director	Mark Taylor, Finance	
Originating service	Finance	
Accountable employee(s)	Claire Nye Tel Email	Chief Accountant 01902 550478 Claire.nye@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by		

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Note the progress on planning and delivering the Statement of Accounts for 2014/2015.
- (b) Note that the Director of Finance continues to be of the opinion that the Council has provided sufficient resources to allow the statutory responsibilities in relation to the statement of accounts to be fulfilled.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. To inform the Audit Committee of progress on planning and delivering the Statement of Accounts for 2014/2015.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Council is required by law to produce an annual statement of accounts, with a draft being available for audit by 30 June immediately following the financial year, and audited accounts published by 30 September. The Council's accounts are prepared by the Strategic Finance department under the instruction of the Director of Finance, who has a legal responsibility to certify that the statements present a 'true and fair' view of the Council's financial position at the end of the year, and the income and expenditure during the year.
- 2.2 The content of the statement of accounts is largely specified by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, which is updated annually. There have been no major changes to the Code of Practice for 2014/2015, and accordingly the statement of accounts are expected to be very similar to the 2014/2015 statements.
- 2.3 The statement of accounts process for 2013/2014 was a successful one, and the approach for 2014/2015 is to build upon this. This report provides an update on progress to date and key risks relating to the preparation of accounts process.

3.0 Progress to Date

- 3.1. The following progress has been made so far on the 2014/2015 statement of accounts:
 - Work is currently underway to ensure that all opening balances, including the upload of fixed assets and reserves, have been correctly input into Agresso.
 - Ongoing projects and tasks are underway to ensure that all required year-end reports and data from the Agresso system are appropriate and effective including testing where necessary. These projects are on track to be completed in time for the detailed year-end procedures for preparation of the accounts.
 - Meetings have been held with members of the strategic finance team and members of the operational finance team to determine and agree year-end timetables and processes.
 - A detailed timetable has been prepared detailing the various tasks and deadlines and circulated to members of the Strategic Finance team.
 - A memo has been circulated to all budget holders detailing the processes relating to year-end closedown with key dates with particular emphasis on payments and banking, accruals and invoicing.

- The first set of pro formas have been sent out to the Strategic Finance teams requesting initial information on various matters relating to the accounts including leases, group accounting, related parties and impairment review.
- A planning meeting has been held with the Council's auditors, PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and dates for the interim and final audits have been agreed.
- Estates and Valuation are currently undertaking a revaluation of some of the Council's properties in accordance with the five-year rolling schedule. The revaluation process is substantially complete.
- The accounting policies applying to the 2014/2015 statements have been prepared and are subject to approval by the Director of Finance.

4.0 Timetable

4.1 The summarised closedown timetable, detailing the key dates can be found at Appendix A of this report. This also includes a summarised timetable for the West Midlands Pension Fund Accounts.

4.1. The timetable is a dynamic document which will be closely monitored and reviewed on a weekly basis and updated, when appropriate, as the closedown process progresses.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 The Council is required under law and its own Constitution to "provide the...Section 151 Officer with such employees' accommodation and other resources as are in their opinion sufficient to allow their duties to be performed" (Constitution part 2/22). The Director of Finance continues to be of the opinion that the Council has provided sufficient resources to allow the statutory responsibilities in relation to the statement of accounts to be fulfilled, however, the position will continue to be monitored very closely and should things change this will be brought to Councillors' attention at the earliest opportunity.
[CN/23022015/G]

6.0 Legal implications

6.1 Legal implications and relevant legislation are contained in the body of the report.
[TS/23022015/D]

7.0 Equalities implications

7.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

8.0 Environmental implications

8.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

9.0 Human resources implications

9.1 There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

10.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

11.1 A summarised timetable is attached as Appendix A.