

Pensions Committee

27 September 2023

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| Report title | Annual Report and Accounts 2022-23 | |
| Originating service | Pension Services | |
| Accountable employee | Christopher Manning Email | Head of Finance christopher.manning@wolverhampton.gov.uk |
| Report to be/has been considered by | Rachel Brothwood Email | Executive Director of Pensions rachel.brothwood@wolverhampton.gov.uk |

Recommendations for action:

The Pensions Committee is asked to note:

1. Delegation of the authority to the Chair to approve; the final Statement of Accounts, once the audit is completed, and the final publication of the Fund's 2022-23 Annual Report, agreed by the Committee in June 2023.
2. The External Audit plan issued by Grant Thornton and previously circulated to the Committee.
3. An update on the Fund's External Audit from Grant Thornton.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the external audit and finalisation of the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 and the Annual Report for the 2022/23 year.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds are required by law to produce an Annual Statement of Accounts. These form part of the wider Administering Local Authority's accounts and are subject to Local Government Accounts and Audit regulations and publication deadlines. They are also included within the Fund's own Annual Report and Accounts for audit and publication by 1 December each year.
- 2.2 In preparing their accounts, Funds must have regard to proper practice and to any guidance which has the effective standing of 'statutory guidance'. These are, for the Statement of Accounts, "The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23" as published by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy) ('the Code').
- 2.3 In line with the above, as well as being published in the Fund's own Annual Report, the accounts for WMPF are included in the Statement of Accounts of City of Wolverhampton Council. In line with the LGPS (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2009, the transactions and balances of the Fund are separate and managed separately to those of the Administering Authority. Monies held by the Fund are for the purposes of the pension fund only.

3.0 Audit Findings

- 3.1 At the time of writing and subject to the final review finalisation of audit processes, it is anticipated that Grant Thornton, the Fund's External Auditor (appointed by the Administering Authority), will issue an unqualified audit opinion for the Fund with the Statement of Accounts having been finalised before the 30 September 2023 statutory deadline.
- 3.2 Representatives of Grant Thornton will be in attendance at the meeting to provide members with an update on the progress of the audit work.
- 3.3 Final sign-off of the accounts and issue of the final audit opinion is dependent on the completion of the Administering Authority's audit and the Fund will continue to work with the Authority to ensure the completion of these processes.
- 3.4 In accordance with International Auditing Standards, the Fund is required to confirm to the external auditor that it has complied with all relevant requirements and provided all relevant information to the auditor. This takes the form of a Management Representation letter, signed by the Chair and the Executive Director of Pensions on behalf of the Fund.

4.0 Publication

- 4.1 The Fund's draft Annual Report and Accounts will be finalised in consultation with the Chair and circulated to members of the Committee for comment prior to approval. The approved Annual Report will be placed on the Fund's website at the following link:
<https://www.wmpfonline.com/about-us/corporate-information>
- 4.2 The consolidated Scheme Annual Report for the LGPS in England & Wales will be published by the Scheme Advisory Board in due course, expected late Spring 2024.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The financial implications are discussed in the body of the report.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 This report contains no direct legal implications.

7.0 Equalities Implications

- 7.1 This report has no equalities implications.

8.0 Other Implications

- 8.1 This report contains no other implications.

9.0 Schedule of Background Papers

- 9.1 Statement of Accounts 2022/23, Report to Pensions Committee, 21 June 2023
[Statement of Accounts 2022-23.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

10.0 Schedule of Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix A – Grant Thornton External Audit Plan 2022/23
- 10.2 Appendix B – Grant Thornton DRAFT Audit Findings Report 2022/23