

Report To: Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 28 September 2015

Lead Officer: Richard Weigh, Chief Finance Officer

Report Author: Steve Gadd, Chief Accountant

Title: Approval of the Statement of Accounts 2014/15

1. What is the report about?

The council has a statutory duty to produce a statement of accounts that complies with approved accounting standards. The audited accounts have to be formally approved by elected members on behalf of the council.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The financial statements for 2014/15 were approved, subject to audit, by the Chief Finance Officer on 25 June 2015. The draft accounts were circulated to Corporate Governance Committee Members on 23 July 2015 as agreed at the Committee meeting in May.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations require that the Council formally approves the audited accounts, containing the external auditor's opinion, by the end of September. The approval of the audited accounts has been delegated to the Corporate Governance Committee.

The Statement of Accounts is produced in compliance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) produces the IFRS based Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and the council has produced the 2014/15 accounts in compliance with the Code.

The accounts include an unqualified audit opinion and audit certificate.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That elected members approve the Statement of Accounts 2014/15 which is **Appendix 1** to this report.

At the meeting, the Chair and Chief Finance Officer will be required to sign the Accounts and the Letter of Representation.

4. Report details

The accounts presented have been produced in compliance with the required accounting standards.

International Financial Reporting Standards are a suite of accounting standards used across the world. IFRS has been developed for the private sector but in theory the vast majority of transactions are the same in

accounting terms regardless of the sector. As there are some areas where public sector accounting treatment diverges from IFRS (because for example of legislative requirements), an additional set of standards has been introduced to deal with these provisions called the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

The accounts were made available for audit as required and have been open to public inspection. The accounts have been audited by the Wales Audit Office who will present an overview of their findings and assessment of the process in a report to the committee. The Audit of Financial Statements Report forms **Appendix 2** to this report.

The audit process resulted in some technical adjustments and other corrections and amendments. More details of these will be presented in the auditor's report.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The publication of the Statement of Accounts underpins the financial stewardship and governance of the council and therefore supports all council services and priorities.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

There are no additional cost implications as a result of this report.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

Not applicable.

8. What consultations have been carried out?

The Wales Audit Office has worked closely with the Finance team to ensure the timely and successful finalisation of the audit.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The Statement of Accounts has again received an unqualified audit opinion. This is a significant achievement given the scale and complexity of the accounts. Internal procedures will continue to be reviewed annually to ensure that the council continues to deliver high quality financial statements. This will take into account the issues arising from the audit that have been raised in the audit report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The council would be in breach of its statutory duty if it could not approve the accounts by 30 September.

11. Power to make the Decision

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that the council has proper financial management arrangements in place. The Accounts & Audit Regulations require that the audited accounts are approved by 30 September.