

**Report To: Corporate Governance Committee**

**Date of Meeting: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

**Lead Member / Officer: Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh,  
Chief Finance Officer**

**Report Author: Steve Gadd, Chief Accountant**

**Title: Certification of Grants and Returns 2014-15 Denbighshire County  
Council**

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**1. What is the report about?**

A report entitled 'Certification of Grants and Returns 2014-15 – Denbighshire County Council' has been prepared by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) and is attached. The report sets out a summary of the key outcomes from WAO's certification work on the Council's 2014/15 grants and returns.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

WAO have requested that this internal report is brought on an annual basis to this committee. The report is provided for information.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

It is recommended that the Committee consider the content of the WAO report. WAO representatives will attend the meeting to answer questions in relation to the report.

**4. Report details**

The WAO report sets out a summary of the key outcomes from WAO's certification work on the Council's 2014/15 grants and returns and is for the internal use of Denbighshire County Council. The report summarises the key findings and recommendations coming out of this work.

The report finds that the Council has adequate arrangements in place for the production and submission of the 2014/15 grant claims.

The main adjustment identified relates to the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy. The amendment of £78,791 was identified by Welsh Government after the claim was initially signed off by WAO. As indicated in the report this figure related to the 2013/14 claim and therefore was a timing issue between financial years and did not result in a loss of subsidy to the Council.

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

Grant Funding is vital in funding expenditure in areas such as education and schools, highways and the environment and regeneration. The WAO report helps give assurance that there are adequate arrangements in place within the Council to administer the grant process.

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

The fees for work undertaken by the WAO in respect of the certification of grants and returns for 2014-15 are included in the report.

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?**

Not applicable to the recommendations of this report.

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

The broad content of the report has been discussed with the Chief Finance Officer and senior members of the Finance Department.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

The WAO report on the Council's grants and returns is for internal use by the Council in order to help focus on any areas of risk or weakness. It is pleasing to note that the report concludes that the Council has adequate arrangements in place. Recommendations and comments in the report have been reviewed and acted upon where possible. The fees are an existing budget commitment for the authority.

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

The audit process should highlight any significant risks and the management response to addressing or minimising the risk or impact.

**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. Under Paragraph 20 of Schedule 8 to the Government of Wales Act 2006 the Auditor General shall, if required by a local government or other grant-receiving body, make arrangements for certifying claims and returns.