

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

Audit & Regulatory Committee

7 February 2024

TITLE:	Statement of Accounts 22/23
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Alan Barrow - Executive Councillor for Corporate Services and Finance
CONTACT OFFICER:	Keith Pointon – Head of Finance Sharon Hall – Principal Finance Officer
WARDS INVOLVED:	Non Specific

Appendix A : High Peak Statement of Accounts

Appendix B: Chief Finance Officer Review of Accounts

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 To allow for the scrutiny of the Statement of Accounts 2022/23, in compliance with the legislative provisions relating to financial reporting and the Council's commitment to transparency and accountability in the stewardship of public funds.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Members approve the Statement of Accounts 2022/23.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The Executive Director & Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Council's financial statements. These, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom ('the Code of Practice') and based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), are required to present 'a true and fair view' of the financial position of the Council at the accounting date (period ended 31st March 2023).
- 3.2 Part 2, Section 8(2) of The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 state that the Chief Finance Officer signs the Statement of Accounts by 31st May each year certifying that the accounts represent a 'true and fair view' of the Authority's financial position. Due to ongoing national issues with pension fund valuations, the 2021/22 Accounts were delayed in their production and Audit. These accounts were signed off on 2nd October 2023. This had a knock

on effect on the production of the 2022/23 statements due to the uncertainty of the opening position. Consequently, the Authority did not meet the deadline.

- 3.3 Members are asked to approve the audited Statement of Accounts 2022/23 (see Appendix A for draft accounts) subject to completion of the audit. In doing so, the Chair of the Audit & Regulatory Committee will sign the accounts at this meeting (or arrange for signature shortly thereafter, if there are a number of outstanding, albeit minor, areas for the auditors to still finalise). Any changes will be brought back to the chair.
- 3.4 By formally approving the Statement of Accounts, the Audit & Regulatory Committee will be demonstrating their confidence in the responsible financial officer (Executive Director & Chief Finance Officer) and in the process by which the Statement of Accounts has been prepared. The accounts have been externally audited by Grant Thornton and they will set out their opinion and findings within the Audit Findings Report presented as part of this meeting.
- 3.5 To further aid Members, Appendix B provides the Chief Finance Officer review, which challenges some of the more material financial movements compared to the previous year and requests further clarification on certain areas. It follows on from the suggested areas for scrutiny outlined in the training session.

4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The preparation of the Statement of Accounts is dictated by legislation. As such it is not directly linked to a corporate priority, although the Council is committed to the guiding principle of transparency and accountability in the stewardship of public funds.

5. Options and Analysis

- 5.1 The Statement of Accounts is primarily a record of fact. Areas of discretion are treated in accordance with guidance and professional judgement. Consequently there are no other options to consider.
- 5.2 The Statement of Accounts have been subject to external audit by Grant Thornton.

6. Implications

- 6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)
None
- 6.2 Workforce
None
- 6.3 Equality and Diversity/ Equality Impact Assessment

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Council's Equality and Diversity policies.

6.4 Financial Considerations

There are a substantial number of financial considerations throughout the Statement of Accounts.

6.5 Legal

There are a number of legal requirements in respect of financial reporting that the Council is required to comply with, which are detailed in the appropriate sections within the Statement of Accounts.

6.6 Climate Change

None

6.7 Internal and External Consultation

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 require the Statement of Accounts and supporting documents to be made available for public inspection prior to the 'appointed date for exercise of public rights'.

6.8 Risk Assessment

There are a number of areas of risk embedded throughout the Statement of Accounts. These have been individually addressed and treated in accordance with guidance and professional judgement.

Martin Owen
Executive Director (Finance & Customer Services) – S.151 Officer

Background Papers

2022/23 Closure of Accounts files
(various)

Location

Joint Finance Team,
Moorlands House, Leek

Contacts

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