

SUBJECT:	AUDITED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24 - MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
MEETING:	Governance & Audit Committee
DATE:	28th November 2024
DIVISIONS/WARD AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Governance & Audit Committee with the audited 2023/24 Statement of Accounts for Monmouthshire County Council for scrutiny and approval.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1. That the committee note that the accounts have been amended since the draft version was published to reflect the outcomes of the external audit process, as detailed within the Audit Wales ISA 260 Audit of Accounts Report.
- 2.2. That the Governance and Audit committee approve the final audited Monmouthshire County Council Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 as shown at **Appendix 1**.

3. KEY ISSUES

The Accounts closure process

- 3.1. Legislation requires that the draft Statement of Accounts are produced each year by 31st May following the financial year they relate to, with audited accounts to be published by 31st July.
- 3.2. Welsh Government, in recognising the continued demands and pressures on public sector resources and capacity, continue to allow Councils the flexibility to publish the Statement of Accounts after the statutory deadline. This is subject to providing a statutory notice as per paragraph 10(4) of the regulations detailing the reasons for not meeting the deadline. This notice was made by the Council on the 31st May 2024.
- 3.3. The draft Statement of Accounts was subsequently signed by the Responsible Finance Officer on the 1st July 2024. The accounts were published on the Council's website and were considered by this committee on the 31st July 2024.
- 3.4. The production of the draft accounts for 2023/24 was completed 19 days earlier than in 2022/23 and 40 days earlier than the accounts for 2021/22. Completion was in line with the timetable communicated to Audit Wales at the start of the closure process.
- 3.5. A public inspection period commenced from 31st July 2024 to 29th August 2024. No requests for further information or questions were received.

- 3.6. The external audit process has been ongoing since July 2024 will conclude on 29th November 2024, in line with the agreed timetable. This represents a significant improvement compared to the 2022/23 Audited Accounts, which were given final sign off in February 2024.

Audit conclusion

- 3.7. It is pleasing to note that the auditors intend to once again provide an ***unqualified audit opinion***. The Council wish to acknowledge the continuing strength of relationship between the Council and Audit Wales and the professional and constructive approach in which audit colleagues continue to conduct their activities.
- 3.8. There were no recommendations raised in this years ISA 260 Audit Report which is encouraging to note. This reflects positively on the internal financial governance controls in place in the Council and on the dedication of the finance and wider service teams in maintaining high standards of financial records and supporting documentation.
- 3.9. Audit Wales have included commentary on two significant issues regarding the inclusion of up to date figures for the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) and the ongoing uncertainty regarding the legal process relating to the Renting Homes Wales (Act) 2016. These are regional/national issues that are not solely in the Council's control and have developed since the draft accounts were published. Whilst both are considered to have a immaterial impact to the Council, they are matters to be monitored.
- 3.10. Appendix 3 of the ISA 260 Audit Report contains a list of corrected misstatements. The majority of the these do not affect the primary financial statements, rather the notes to the accounts. Those affecting the primary statements relate to the duplication of a capital addition, and an error in the uplift in the carrying value of assets.
- 3.11. All misstatements have been corrected in full within the audited Statement of Accounts found in ***Appendix 1***.

4. REASONS

- 4.1. To approve the Council's final audited Statement of Accounts which incorporate all adjustments for "corrected misstatements" which have been identified by Audit Wales and as noted within their ISA 260 Audit of Accounts report.

5. CONSULTEES

Acting Chief Executive
Cabinet Member for Resources
Audit Wales

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1: Audited Statement of Accounts 2023/24

7. AUTHORS:

Ruth Donovan
Assistant Head of Finance
Email: ruthdonovan@monmouthshire.gov.uk
Phone: (01633) 644592