

Audit and Standards Committee – 19th September 2013

Report of the Treasurer

Statement of Accounts 2012/13

Purpose of Report

1. To present the Statement of Accounts to the Audit and Standards Committee for consideration and approval and to inform the Audit and Standards Committee of the outcome of the audit of the accounts. The Statement of Accounts, and the audit of them, are the main formal and public report on the financial standing of the authority.

Background

2. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 give the requirements for approving and publishing the Council's annual accounts as follows:
 - Unaudited accounts are to be certified by the Treasurer as the Responsible Financial Officer no later than 30 June; and
 - Audited accounts are to be re-certified by the Responsible Financial Officer and formally approved by Members, then published no later than 30 September.
3. The audited Statement of Accounts is circulated with the papers. There have been a number of changes from the unaudited accounts arising from the audit. These mainly comprise expansions of the disclosure notes, and one change to the main statements. These changes are referred to in the auditor's Annual Audit Report. None of these changes affect the general fund balance.
4. These accounts are prepared under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adopted for local authorities by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

General Fund outturn

5. I reported the General Fund outturn to Cabinet on 20th June 2013 as £231.068m. The Statement of Accounts presented to this Committee is consistent with this outturn position. A reconciliation of the outturn to the Statement of Accounts is included in the explanatory foreword to the Statement of Accounts.

Statement of Accounts

6. The layout of the Statement of Accounts is as last year, with the Movement in Reserves (MiRS), which sets out a summary of the changes to General Fund Balance, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) balance and other reserves over the year, presented as the first key statement.
7. The 2012/13 Code has not introduced significant changes to the accounts. Changes to the housing finance regime include the ending of housing subsidy, which was negative for Dudley. Also charges to the HRA relating to non-dwelling assets are now a charge against the HRA balance.
8. A summary of the key financial statements is detailed below:

Movement in Reserves Statement (MiRS)

9. This statement shows the movements on the Authority's reserves, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and 'unusable' reserves.
10. The Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services shows the true economic cost of providing the authority's services, more details of which are shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES). Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure shows unrealised valuation gains and losses on property, and on pension assets and liabilities which only affect the unusable reserves.
11. The accounting charges in the Surplus or Deficit above are different from the statutory amounts required to be charged to the General Fund Balance and the Housing Revenue Account for Council Tax setting and rent setting purposes. Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations reverse out the accounting charges (such as actuarial pensions costs) and insert the statutory ones, such as actual payments for pension provision. From these accounts onwards, depreciation is to be a real charge to the Housing Revenue Account. It is no longer reversed out.
12. After transfers to and from earmarked reserves, the year end balance on the General Fund has increased by £7.196m from £12.204m to £19.400m. This is consistent with the outturn reported to Cabinet.

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)

13. This statement agrees to the change in value of the Balance Sheet. In order to be comparable across different authorities, it is based on the CIPFA Service Reporting Code of Practice (SeRCOP), rather than the Council's directorate structure.
14. The net effect of income and expenditure items results in a deficit on the provision of services of £62.857m. This is a technical deficit intended to represent the Council's revenue position as it would be if calculated according to IFRS. As such it differs from the movement on the General Fund shown in the MiRS and in the outturn report. This is adjusted by Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure items (balance sheet adjustments) to arrive at a total

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure figure of £159.245m. This matches the fall in balance sheet net assets value from £285.068m to £125.823m.

Balance Sheet

15. The Balance Sheet shows that the value of total net assets has reduced by £159.245m between 31st March 2012 and 31st March 2013, largely as a result of a fall in the value of the housing stock, and an increase in the intermediate valuation of pension liabilities due to changing economic conditions.
16. The lower half of the Balance Sheet summarises the usable and unusable reserves held by the Authority. The General Fund balance has increased by £7.196m as discussed above. HRA, Schools and general fund earmarked reserves have all increased. The changes in unusable reserves mirror the main changes described above.

Audit of the Accounts

17. The audit of the accounts for 2012/13 is substantially complete and the audited accounts are expected to be published by 30th September in accordance with regulations.
18. The Code of Audit Practice requires the auditors to report the results of their audit work to the approving body before signing their audit opinion. This report will be presented at this meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee.

Finance

19. This report is entirely financial in content, but does not give rise to any direct costs.

Law

20. Legislation appertaining to Local Authority Audit and Accounts is contained in the Local Government Act 1972, part 2 of the Audit Commission Act, 1998, and regulations made thereunder.

Equality Impact

21. The proposals take into account the Council's Policy on Equality and Diversity.

Recommendation

22. It is recommended that:-

- The Committee consider the Statement of Accounts.
- The Committee approve the Statement of Accounts.
- The Chair of the Committee signs and dates the Statement of Accounts to give evidence of the approval above.



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Iain Newman
Treasurer

List of Background Papers

Working and supporting papers for the accounts.

Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2012/13

Service Reporting Code of Practice.

Contact Officer: Amarjit Uppal
Telephone: 01384 812425 Email: amarjit.uppal@dudley.gov.uk