

WIRRAL COUNCIL

PENSIONS COMMITTEE

22 JUNE 2021

REPORT TITLE:	STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/21 – MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF PENSIONS

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to request members review and endorse the management responses to questions posed by the Fund's external auditors, Grant Thornton.

Grant Thornton, as part of their audit of the Fund's Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 have asked management to respond to a series of questions.

Fund officers have completed the questionnaire prepared by Grant Thornton and present it to Members, to support Members responsibilities in relation to the financial reporting process. This will inform the auditors risk assessment, where the auditor is required to make inquiries of Pensions Committee under auditing standards.

The questionnaire provides members with an understanding of management processes and the Fund's oversight of the following areas:

- General Enquiries of Management
- Fraud
- Laws and Regulations
- Related Parties
- Accounting Estimates

The completed questionnaire can be found as an appendix to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Pensions Committee be recommended to review and endorse the management responses to questions posed by the Fund's external auditors, Grant Thornton.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

1.1 The review and endorsement of the management responses to questions posed by the Fund's external auditors supports Pensions Committee in fulfilling its responsibilities in relation to the financial reporting process and forms part of the governance arrangements.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 Not relevant for this report.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The Fund is statutory required to prepare and publish financial statements; they are published within the Council's financial statements as an appendix and within the Fund's annual report.

3.2 The Fund has many management processes and oversight to ensure its financial statements are compliant with relevant requirements and to reduce the risk of error or misstatement.

3.3 The external audit approach in previous years was to request management to complete a questionnaire as well as the Chair of Audit & Risk Management Committee. For 2020/21, the approach is for management to respond to the questions and for the questions and responses to be reviewed by Pensions Committee and for Committee to consider whether these responses are consistent with its understanding and whether there are any other comments Committee wishes to make.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to produce annual accounts. This report provides Members with an understanding of management processes and the Fund's oversight in particular areas that could have a significant impact upon the financial statements.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING; ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 This report provides Members with assurances that management processes and the Fund's oversight in particular areas are adequate to reduce the risk of error in the accounts, by ensuring a clear framework for financial reporting, consistent with guidance.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Not relevant for this report.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no carbon usage implications, nor any other relevant environmental issues arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

Grant Thornton Questionnaire with management responses.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CIPFA - Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom
2020/21

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
None	