

Report to the Audit and Governance Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report Reference: AGC-026-2009/10.

Date of meeting: 29 March 2010.

Portfolio: Finance and Economic Development.

**Subject: Reports from the External Auditor – Grant Claims Certification & Fee
Outturn Summary.**

Responsible Officer: Bob Palmer (01992 564279).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

To consider and note the following reports from the External Auditor:

- (a) Grant Claims Certification for the year ending 31 March 2009; and**
- (b) Fee Outturn Summary 2008/09.**

Executive Summary:

This Committee has within its Terms of Reference the considering of reports made by the external auditor.

The first report is the Grant Claims Certification for the year ended 31 March 2009, which summarises the key issues that have arisen from the work on grant claims during the year.

The second report is the Fee Outturn Summary 2008/09, which compares the estimated and actual fees for the 2008/09 audit.

Reasons for Proposed Decisions:

To comply with the Committee's Terms of Reference and ensure the proper consideration of these reports.

Other Options for Action:

There are no other options for action.

Report:

1. The Grant Claims Certification and the Fee Outturn Summary 2008/09 are attached and will be presented to the Committee by Mr Richard Bint, Partner, and Ms Lisa Clampin, Director of Assurance & Advisory.
2. The Grant Claims Certification report was circulated to Members of the Committee by email on 25 February to satisfy the Audit Commission requirement for publication before the end of February. This report shows that on expenditure of £76,398,978 (07/08 £73,445,461) amendments of £106,986 (07/08 £479,647) were necessary. The amendments represent a fraction of 1% of the expenditure, but to seek further improvement a number of actions have been agreed with the external auditor.

3. The Fee Outturn Summary 2008/09 shows the estimate of £133,000 was exceeded by £14,000 to produce an outturn of £147,000. The additional costs largely arose from the unplanned audit work that was necessary to validate the figures used for the Council's housing stock. This issue has been reported previously to this committee on 24 September within the Annual Governance Report and on 8 February within the Annual Audit Letter. An adjustment of £1m was made in relation to the impairment and valuation of housing stock with a closing net book value of £500m.

Resource Implications:

In anticipation of the additional audit fee, provision was made in the revised estimates for 2009/10 so there are no additional resource requirements at this time.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no legal implications or Human Rights Act issues arising from the recommendations in this report.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations in this report for the Council's commitment to the Nottingham Declaration for climate change, the corporate Safer, Cleaner and Greener initiative or any Crime and Disorder issues within the district.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

An action plan has been agreed with the external auditors to address areas of risk in grant claim preparation.

Equality and Diversity:

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? N/A

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A