

# External Audit Update

Report of the Head of Finance and Revenues

## Recommendation:

**That the draft report of KPMG, regarding the Housing Benefit Subsidy Assurance process, be noted.**

### SUMMARY:

Following the completion of the 2022/23 Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim audit, KPMG have issued their draft audit report, which is presented for the Audit Committee's consideration.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is required to administer Housing Benefit (HB) claims for eligible residents.
- 1.2 Central government subsidise the HB expenditure, based on the circumstances of each claim. A subsidy claim form is submitted to the Department of Work & Pensions in respect of each financial year and this is subject to external audit for verification purposes.
- 1.3 The Council's auditor for the verification of the HB subsidy claim is KPMG. They have recently completed the audit of the 2022/23 HB subsidy claim. Their draft report is attached for the committee to note.

## 2 KPMG's Report

- 2.1 The report, attached as the Annex, sets out the various responsibilities of both parties; the nature of the testing that was carried out; and the findings of KPMG's testing.
- 2.2 The conclusions of KPMG's report are excellent, highlighting a very small number of errors, both in terms of percentage of the caseload and individual values.
- 2.3 To provide some context, the subsidy claim form was amended following the completion of the audit by £2. This compares to a total claim value in excess of £18.5M.

## 3 Risk Management

- 3.1 This report is for information and therefore the Council's risk management process does not need to be applied.

#### 4 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

- 4.1 The audit of the 2022/23 housing benefit subsidy claim has been concluded since the last meeting of the Audit Committee.
- 4.2 The auditor's report is attached for the committee to consider.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
None			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	1	File Ref:	N/A
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Report to:	Audit Committee	Date:	12 December 2023