

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUDIT COMMITTEE		
DATE:	24 MAY 2023	REPORT NO:	CFO/022/023
PRESENTING OFFICER	GRANT THORNTON		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	GEORGIA JONES (GRANT THORNTON)	REPORT AUTHOR:	GEORGIA JONES (GRANT THORNTON)
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	N/A		
TITLE OF REPORT:	GRANT THORNTON (MFRA EXTERNAL AUDITOR) AUDIT PLAN FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A: MFRA AUDIT PLAN
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Purpose of Report

1. To present to Members Grant Thornton's Audit Plan that outlines the Auditor's approach to auditing the Authority's 2022/2023 financial statements by the statutory deadline of 30th September 2023.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note Grant Thornton's 2022/2023 Audit Plan report.

Introduction and Background

3. The Authority is required to prepare annually a set of financial statements as required by the relevant codes and regulations. The deadline for the production of the **unaudited** financial statements is by the end of May in the following year. Whilst this will be challenging, finance officers are confident that the deadline can be met, however this will be on the basis that outside organisations provide the relevant supporting information before the end of May.
4. The financial statements must then be audited by an independent auditor, who will then issue an opinion on the statements. The Authority's current Auditor is Grant Thornton.
5. The Accounts and Audit (amendment) Regulations 2022 came into force on 22nd July 22 and extended the deadline for the publication of final 2022/2023 **audited** financial statements from 31st July 2023 to 30th September (and for the following 5 years). Grant Thornton's proposed Audit Plan, Appendix A, outlines their approach to bring their 2022/2023 Audit Findings report and Audit Opinion to the September 2023 Audit Committee.

6. Members are asked to note Grant Thornton's Audit Plan as attached to this report as Appendix A.

Equality and Diversity Implications

7. Not applicable.

Staff Implications

8. Not applicable.

Legal Implications

9. The current regulations require the unaudited financial statements to be prepared by 31st May in the year following the end of the financial year, and the statements to be audited by 30th September.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

10. The 2022/2023 external audit fee, £44,692, has been included within the 2022/2023 approved budget.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

11. Failure to prepare the financial statements or have them audited within the statutory deadlines may have an adverse impact on the Authority's financial management reputation.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

12. The achievement of sound financial administration and VFM arrangements is essential if the Service is to achieve the Authority's vision.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority is the physical and legal entity.