

1 August 2023

Report of	The Section 151 Officer	Author	Chris Hartgrove (chris.hartgrove@colchester.gov.uk)
Title	BDO Audit Status Report		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 As with the majority of councils nationally, primarily due to a sector-wide shortage of professional audit resources, there have been extensive delays to the completion of the external audit of Colchester City Council's annual Statement of Accounts, with the 2020/21 audit in particular, yet to conclude.
- 1.2 The Council's appointed auditors, BDO LLP, have prepared an update to the Committee, attached at **Appendix A**, which includes:
 - Information on the status of the audit for the period ended 31st March 2021, including outstanding work, issues to resolve and a timetable for completion; and
 - An indicative timetable for the external audit of the remaining two years under the current audit contract; 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- 1.3 The timelines have been shared with management for their initial consideration and will be kept under review at liaison meetings between the Audit and Finance teams. Should any notable changes be required, for any reason, these will be reported to the Governance and Audit Committee, along with the reasons for the proposed changes.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To consider and comment upon the BDO Audit Status Report, including the proposals contained therein, presented in **Appendix A**.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 A robust local audit system and transparent local authority financial reporting are key to delivering value for money for taxpayers, and for sustaining public confidence in local democracy.
- 3.2 Statutory accounts are the only information provided by local authorities that are independently verified through external audit. The current local audit framework was established by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

6.1 None.

7. Standard References

7.1 There are no particular references to the Strategic Plan; consultation or publicity considerations or financial; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

8. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

8.1 None.

9. Appendices

9.1 BDO Audit Status Report – ***Appendix A***