

STATUTORY NOTICE

Notice of delay to the publication of the unaudited statement of accounts for 2023/24.

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 Regulations 14 – 15

The Authority, despite its best endeavors, is not in a position to be able to publish its Statement of Accounts (subject to audit) for the year ended 31 March 2024 by the statutory deadline of 31st May 2024.

The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations require the council to publish the unaudited Statement of Accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2024 and make these available for public inspection on or before 1 June. The publication of the unaudited Statement of Accounts 2023/24 is delayed. The publication of the audited accounts, which takes place after the exercise of public rights and the external audit of the accounts, due by 30th September, will also be delayed.

The delay has arisen due to a combination of factors including the previous year's Accounts for 2022/23, which has not yet been signed off by the external auditor because of a delay in resolving issues in respect of technical accounting disclosure notes within the 2022/23 statement of accounts.

Implications:

The delay in publishing the unaudited accounts for 2023/24 will mean that:

- 1. the Public Rights to inspect the accounts and accounting records for 2023/24 will be delayed** as these will not be available from the first working day in June 2024 as required by Sections 25 and 26 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ('the Act') that provide local government electors with the right to inspect and make copies of the statement of accounts, accounting records and all documents relating to those records, for the financial year ended 31st March 2024.
- 2. the Public Rights to question the auditor and to make objections at audit in respect of the Authority's unaudited accounts for 2023/24 will also be delayed** as a result of the late publication of the accounts, as under section 26 of the Act, a local government elector may question the auditor about the accounting records for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 and, under section 27 of the Act, a local government elector may make an objection to the auditor which:
 - concerns a matter in respect of which the auditor could make a public interest report under section 24 of the Act; or
 - concerns an item of account in respect of which the auditor could apply for a declaration that the item is unlawful under section 28 of the Act.

These rights as explained are delayed and will be made available once the Authority publishes its unaudited accounts for 2023/24.

The Authority therefore plans to release a further separate Notice when this is possible, but it is expected to be before 30th June 2024.

The Authority is continuing to work hard on the accounts to ensure the required work and the publication of the draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24 (subject to audit) is completed as soon as possible. Once the unaudited accounts are published, revised dates will be provided to the public when they can inspect the accounts and question and raise objections to the external auditor in accordance with the provisions of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

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