

Our ref: ms/Sandwell/22
Your ref:

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1 August 2024

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Dear Alex

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council: Auditor's report and closure of the audit for 2021/22.

We are pleased to be able to advise you that we have completed our audit of the Council's financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2022 and our work on your arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in your use of resources, together with all other work we are required to complete under the Code of Audit Practice.

We have issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and have reported significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources as required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the National Audit Office's Code of Audit Practice and supporting guidance.

We have issued written recommendations under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in relation to the Governance arrangements in place during the financial year.

A copy of our auditor's report is attached, which includes our certificate of completion of the audit for the year ended 31 March 2022. Please include this auditor's report in your statement of accounts before publishing it on your website. Please ensure that you do not reproduce the signature of the auditor in any electronic format for any other purpose.

Please note that Regulation 16(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires the Council to publish (which must include publication on its website) a statement:

- that the audit has been concluded
- that the statement of accounts has been published
- of the rights of inspection conferred in local government electors by section 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the address at which, and the hours during which, those rights may be exercised.

This statement should be published as soon as reasonably practicable.

Please accept our thanks to everybody at the Council for your help and support during this year's audit. We have set out below further details regarding the finalisation and publication of the Council's statement of accounts, which includes the audited financial statements.

Auditor's reports on the financial statements

We have noted your wish to publish and distribute the statement of accounts, which includes the financial statements, in electronic format. Please note that:

- the examination of the controls over the electronic publication of audited financial statements is beyond the scope of the audit of the financial statements and the auditor cannot be held responsible for changes made to audited information after the initial publication of the financial statements and auditor's report;
- where you wish to publish or distribute the financial statements electronically (separately or within the statement of accounts), you are responsible for ensuring that the publication accurately presents the financial statements and auditor's report on those financial statements. This responsibility also applies to the presentation of any financial information published in respect of prior periods; and
- the auditor's report on the financial statements should not be reproduced or referred to electronically without our written consent.

Please ensure that:

- you publish the financial statements and the auditor's report on those statements together in the statement of accounts;
- you only publish the financial statements accompanied by the "other information" provided to us before we issued our audit report and specifically referred to in our audit report; and
- you do not publish the financial statements accompanied by any other information not provided to us prior to issuing our auditor's report.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like clarification on any point.

Yours sincerely

M C Stocks

Mark C Stocks
Key Audit Partner
For Grant Thornton UK LLP