

From: Katy Reynolds, Governance Advisor

To: Governance and Audit Committee, 12 November 2024

Subject: External Audit Progress Report and Sector Update for Kent County Council and Kent Pension Fund

Status: Unrestricted

---

Summary: The External Audit Progress Report and Sector Update presents the Governance and Audit Committee with a report on Grant Thornton's progress in delivering their responsibilities as Kent County Council's External Auditors and as the Kent Pension Fund's External Auditors. The paper also includes a series of sector updates in respect of emerging issues relevant to the sector which the Committee may wish to consider.

---

## 1) Introduction

- a) External Audit is a key assurance mechanism. A local authority's audited accounts allow the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), in its role as the steward of the local government accountability framework, to be assured that the authority has been acting with regularity, propriety and value for money in the use of its resources.

## 2) Governance and Audit Committee's Responsibility

- a) In accordance with CIPFA's Position Statement 2022, the Committee is responsible for considering the opinion and recommendations of External Audit and their implications for governance, risk management or control, and for monitoring management action in response to the issues raised by external audit.
- b) Members are reminded that the purpose of this Committee, in accordance with its [Terms of Reference](#), is to provide independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk, finance, and control arrangements.
- c) Towards this purpose, its role is to:
  - i. ensure there is sufficient assurance over governance risk and control and provide reports to full Council on the effectiveness and adequacy of these arrangements;
  - ii. have oversight of both internal and external audit together with the financial and governance reports, helping to ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability, and
  - iii. through i and ii above, give greater confidence to all those charged with governance for Kent County Council that its arrangements are effective and reporting to full Council or other Committees as necessary where the Committee has concerns that these arrangements are not effective.

### **3) Recommendation**

The Governance and Audit Committee is asked to consider and comment on the External Audit Progress Report and Sector Update for assurance.

### **4) Appendices**

Appendix: Grant Thornton's Audit Progress Report and Sector Update

### **5) Background Documents**

None.

### **6) Contact Details**

Katy Reynolds  
Governance Advisor  
[katy.reynolds@kent.gov.uk](mailto:katy.reynolds@kent.gov.uk)  
03000 422252