

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 29 August 2023

**BY:** Executive Director for Council Resources

**SUBJECT:** Draft Annual Accounts 2022-23

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the draft unaudited accounts for the Council and Group entities for the year ending 31 March 2023. In accordance with regulations, the unaudited accounts must be formally scrutinised by Members by 31 August 2023.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are recommended to:
- Note that the draft annual accounts for the Council and its wider group, and the Dr Bruce Trust, have been submitted to External Audit prior to the statutory deadline of 30 June 2023.
  - Note that the accounts remain in draft pending the finalisation of the statutory audit which is expected to complete by the 19 December 2023 at the latest.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 A report on the 2022-23 financial year end position, and draft accounts was considered by Council at its meeting on [27 June 2023](#) (Item 3). The report highlighted that the draft accounts would be submitted for audit in line with the statutory deadline of 30 June 2023, with formal Council consideration of the unaudited accounts to be undertaken after this.
- 3.2 In accordance with the requirements of the 2014 regulations, the unaudited accounts must be formally scrutinised by Members by 31 August 2023. To support this, a number of key elements have been undertaken:

- An Elected Member's Briefing took place on 16 August 2023 to support and assist Members in this statutory duty by highlighting key information relating to the 2022-23 unaudited accounts and explaining relevant aspects of the Local Government financial framework.
- All Elected Members have access to the draft accounts which have been published in the Members' Library Service ([June 2023 Bulletin, reference: 66/23](#)) and the opportunity to raise any significant questions or lines of enquiry to provide further clarity and understanding.
- In accordance with statutory requirements, the draft accounts were made available for public inspection for a 3-week period concluding 21 July 2023. No objections were received during this period.

3.3 An indicative timeline for finalising the audit is set out below:

- The audit will be undertaken between September and December 2023;
- The outcomes of the auditor's work on Best Value will be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee in September 2023
- The audited accounts will be formally considered by Audit & Governance Committee in December 2023 at the latest.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no direct policy implications associated with this report.

## **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 The subject of this report has been considered and given there is no change in policy direction, there is no requirement to undertake any further impact assessment.

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Financial –No direct financial implications arise from the submission for audit of the accounts. Audit fees are paid for the audit process.

6.2 Personnel - No direct personnel financial implications arise from the submission for audit of the accounts. The audit and public inspection process involve East Lothian Council staff support.

6.3 Other – None.

## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Members' Library Service – June 2023 – 66/23 East Lothian Council Draft Unaudited) Annual Accounts 2022/23

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7.2 Council – 27 June 2023 - Item 3 – Finance Review 2022/23

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