

REPORT TITLE: CERTIFICATION OF CLAIMS & RETURNS ANNUAL REPORT
2024/25

29 JANUARY 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Cutler – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member
For Finance and Transformation

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report is to summarise the results of KPMG LLP's assurance work on the council's Housing Benefits (HB) subsidy claim for the year ended 31 March 2025. The final report is provided by KPMG and is attached at Appendix 1 for consideration.

As there were no prior year errors the report confirms that KPMG were not required to apply the larger sample size for testing, under the current banding scheme.

The report details no exceptions or errors at Appendix A, one observation at Appendix B, one amendment at Appendix C and no other matters to note at Appendix D. Please note that these appendices refer to those in the KPMG report.

The amendment at Appendix C refers to a compounded issue which produced a minimum non-dependant deduction leading to an overpayment of Housing Benefit of £121. The amendment did not affect the overall amount of subsidy claimed. As it was identified as an isolated case no further testing was required.

Given the thousands of transactions which the Benefits team undertake on an annual basis this is a very positive outcome from this audit.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Audit and Governance Committee consider the attached Annual Report (Appendix 1).

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Housing Benefit (Subsidy) Assurance Process Accountants Report 2024/25.