

REPORT TITLE: 24/25 AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

29 JANUARY 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Neil Cutler, Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Auditor's Annual Report is to communicate the key issues arising from the external auditor's work to all councillors and external stakeholders, including members of the public.

The council's external auditor EY has now presented their draft Auditor's Annual Report for 2024/25, which is appended to this report. The report confirms that the auditor will not have sufficient appropriate evidence by the imposed backstop date and are likely to issue a disclaimed audit opinion on the financial statements.

The report includes commentary on the council's Value for Money (VFM) arrangements, setting out the risks of significant weaknesses they have identified, and analysis of the further reviews commissioned by the council to address the underlying governance and internal control weaknesses within the Council's Housing Service and Property Service Department.

The receipt of the Auditor's Annual Report marks the conclusion of the external audit work in relation to the 2024/25 financial year.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the committee:
 - a. takes the opportunity to discuss the contents of the Annual Audit Report 2024/25 and raises any issues with the External Auditors; and
 - b. confirms its acceptance of the Annual Audit Report 2024/25.

