

REPORT TITLE: EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT 2023/24

17 JULY 2025

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

Contact Officer: Liz Keys Tel No: 01962 848226 Email: LKeys@winchester.gov.uk

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 Auditor's Annual Report for 2023/24, which is appended to this report. The report confirms that the auditor did not have sufficient appropriate evidence by the imposed backstop date and issued a disclaimed audit opinion on the financial statements. The report includes commentary on the council's Value for Money (VFM) arrangements and has identified one significant weakness. It also details the proposed fees for the audit.

The receipt of the Auditor's Annual Report marks the conclusion of the external audit work in relation to the 2023/24 financial year. The letter has been discussed with officers and is published on the council's website.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the committee:
 - a. takes the opportunity to discuss the contents of the Annual Audit Report 2023/24 and raises any issues with the External Auditors; and
 - b. confirms its acceptance of the Annual Audit Report 2023/24.