

Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Ernst and Young – Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2014/2015	
Report No:	PAS/SE/15/011	
Report to and dates:	Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee	25 May 2016
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Lead officer:	Rachael Mann Head of Resources and Performance Tel: 01638 719245 Email: rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	To update members on the outcome of the annual audit of grant claims by Ernst and Young (our external auditors) as detailed in their Certification of claims and returns annual report 2014/2015, attached at Appendix A.	
Recommendation:	Members are asked to: Note the Certification of claims and returns annual report 2014/2015.	
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This report has been prepared in consultation with ARP, Resources and Performance, Leadership Team and the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources. 		
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 		
Implications:			
Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report includes the final fee for certification of the 2014/2015 grant claims (£30,110). 	
Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> External audit is a statutory function. 	
Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
	Low/Medium/ High*		Low/Medium/ High*
Errors identified as a result of 2014/2015 testing may have been replicated in 2015/2016	Medium	Perform early extended testing in those areas where errors were identified	Low
Wards affected:		N/A	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		None	
Documents attached:		Appendix A – Ernst and Young Certification of claims and returns annual report 2014/2015	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation

- 1.1 Ernst and Young (EY) has issued at **Appendix A**, an annual Report on the Certification of Claims and Returns for 2014/2015. This report summarises the results of the certification work that has been undertaken by EY staff as part of the annual audit of grant claims to government departments.
- 1.2 The report at Appendix A includes key messages arising from the assessment of the arrangements for preparing claims and returns and information on claims that were qualified.
- 1.3 External audit is required by section 28 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 to certify some claims and returns for grants or subsidies paid by government departments and public bodies paid to St Edmundsbury Borough Council.
- 1.4 Funding from government grant-paying departments is an important income stream for the Council which has to put in place procedures to ensure that it has met the conditions attached to these grants. The summary of work on the 2014/2015 grant claims is outlined in Section 1 of Appendix A.
- 1.5 For the financial year 2014/2015, EY certified one claim with a total value of £30 million. This was the Housing Benefits Subsidy Claim.
- 1.6 The certification work found errors on the claim amounting to £3,965 and these errors have been corrected by officers. A qualification letter setting out further errors and uncertainties was also reported to the DWP.
- 1.7 The relevant officers of the Council and Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) have agreed the qualifications in respect of the 2014/2015 certification work, as detailed in Appendix A. ARP has taken action to address the issues for 2015/2016.
- 1.8 EY have made no recommendations to Members as a result of the audit.