

**Committee: FINANCE & RESOURCES**  
**Date: 28 September 2021**

**Report: STATEMENT OF FINAL ACCOUNTS 2020/21**

**Purpose of the report**

1. To submit for Members' approval the Statement of Final Accounts (SoFA) for 2020/21.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. That members:
  - a. approve the SoFA for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2021, and the associated Annual Governance Statement (AGS);
  - b. note that the approved SoFA and associated AGS will be signed by the Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee and the Chief Executive, once the external audit of the SoFA has been completed, provided that the overall opinion in the audit report is unqualified.

**Strategic Planning Framework**

3. The information and recommendations contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and in particular its objective to 'Operate governance arrangements that are fit for purpose, as reported through the Annual Governance Statement and the Annual Governance Report' and action 37.2, 'Produce the Statutory Accounts for 2020/21, and achieve an unqualified external audit opinion'.

**Background**

4. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the Treasurer to sign and date the pre-audit SoFA, certifying that it presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority, thereafter making it available for public inspection. That aspect of the process has been completed.
5. The audit and approval timetable for 2021 remains modified in line with rules introduced last year to help deal with time delays caused by, amongst other things, the Covid-19

Pandemic [Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 No. 404]. These rules require the publication of our final, audited accounts by 30 November 2021.

6. The 2020/21 SoFA is **appended** to this report, labelled 'draft' simply because this is the unaudited version. The external audit work on these accounts commenced in September, but the audit report won't be available for some time yet. If that report is qualified, we will bring a further report to the next meeting of this committee, in December.

### **Statement of Final Accounts**

7. The format and content of the SoFA (see **Appendix**) must comply with the CIFPA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom: A Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) and is therefore largely outside the control of this Authority. The SORP sets out the proper accounting practice required for the SoFA within the statutory framework of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

8. The AGS is included with the SoFA but, whilst it is not covered by the eventual 'true and fair' certification by the Treasurer and the External Auditor, it does require the approval of the Authority and the signatures of the Chair and Chief Executive.

### **Conclusion**

9. Members are asked to agree the recommendations as described at paragraph 2.

Michelle Clyde  
Head of Finance

10 September 2021