

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MEDWAY COUNCIL**

### **Opinion on the Council's financial statements**

We have audited the financial statements of Medway Council for the year ended 31 March 2016 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The financial statements comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Collection Fund Statement, the Housing Revenue Account Income and Expenditure Statement and the Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Statement and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16.

This report is made solely to the members of Medway Council in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and for no other purpose, as set out in the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies within Chapter 2 of the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office in April 2015. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's statement and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Council and the Council's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

### **Respective responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer and auditor**

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Chief Finance Officer's Responsibilities, the Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which comprises the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, and for being satisfied that the financial statements give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

### **Scope of the audit of the financial statements**

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Council's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Chief Finance Officer; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read the financial and non-financial information in the Narrative Report and Annual Governance Statement to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

### **Opinion on financial statements**

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of Medway Council as at 31 March 2016 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and

- have been prepared properly in accordance with applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16.

### **Opinion on other matters**

In our opinion, the information given in the Narrative Report and Annual Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

### **Matters on which we report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following other matters which the Code of Audit Practice (April 2015) requires us to report to you if:

- the Annual Governance Statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information that is forthcoming from the audit;
- we issue a report in the public interest;
- we designate under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 any recommendation as one that requires the Council to consider it at a public meeting and to decide what action to take in response;
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

## **Conclusion on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources**

### **Respective responsibilities of the Council and auditor**

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

We are required under Section 20 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office requires us to report to you our conclusion relating to proper arrangements, having regard to relevant criteria specified by the National Audit Office.

We report if significant matters have come to our attention which prevent us from concluding that the Council has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

### **Scope of the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources**

We have undertaken our audit in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance on the specified criteria, published by the National Audit Office in November 2015, as to whether in all significant respects, the Council had proper

arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

The National Audit Office has determined this criterion as that necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether the Council put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2016.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to form a view on whether, in all significant respects, the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

### **Conclusion**

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion published by the National Audit Office in November 2015, we are satisfied that, in all significant respects, Medway Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2016.

### **Delay in certification of completion of the audit**

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have completed the work necessary to:

- issue our assurance statement in respect of the Council's Whole of Government Accounts consolidation pack;
- conclude on an objection to the accounts received from a local government elector relating to the lawfulness of Lender Option, Borrower Option (LOBO) loans. This issue is referred to in note 34 to the financial statements.

We are satisfied that these matters do not have a material effect on the financial statements or on our value for money conclusion.

David Eagles  
For and on behalf of BDO LLP, Appointed Auditor

Ipswich, UK

30 September 2016

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