Agenda Item: 5

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Assistant Director Finance (A) and Section 151 Officer – Ursula Bird
Claire Mellons, Partner, Ernst & Young LLP

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Assistant Director Finance (A) and Section 151 Officer – Ursula Bird
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DATE: 13 February 2025

FIRE AUTHORITY EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT AND FINAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Fire Authority with the Provisional Audit Results Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 and the final audited Statement of Accounts for 2023/24.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Authority is asked to;

2.1.1 review and comment on the external audit report at Appendix 1,
2.1.2 approve the final Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 at Appendix 2.

3. Risk Assessment

3.1 **Economic** – the major risk is the uncertainty of the pension liabilities and property valuations. The Service uses specialist third-party consultants, Hymens Robertson and Wilks Head & Eve LLP, to provide us with these valuations to minimise the risk.

4. Background

4.1 The budget for 2023/24 was approved at the Fire Authority meeting held in February 2023. The total budget was set at £34.672m with a total precept of £24.137m.

4.2 The final revenue and capital budget position 2023/24 were presented to the Fire Authority on 20 June 2024 (Minute 121 refers) and the draft financial statements were made available on our website.

5. Update

5.1 The report at Appendix 1 summarises the status of the external audit and is designed to express an opinion on the Authority's 2023/24 financial statements (and related areas of audit emphasis) whilst also addressing current statutory and regulatory requirements.

5.2 The current audit opinion will not change (as the previous year's financial audit did not verify the brought forward balances from 2022/23) however, we are still awaiting guidance on the audit opinion wording to be used within the Statement of Accounts (Page 72) from central government.

5.3 With the exception of some minor changes to some of the notes within the Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 there have been no changes to the final revenue outturn position or to the net liabilities and reserves since the draft accounts were published. They remain, to the best of our knowledge, free from errors, omissions and misstatements, compliant with the CIPFA Code of Practice and have been subjected to an audit process.

5.4 We are required by law, to conclude the 2023/24 audit, sign off and publish these accounts by 28 February 2025.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Financial Statements 2023/24 Fire Authority and Committee Meeting Reports and Minutes – various	Hinchingbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Ursula Bird Assistant Director Finance (A) and Section 151 Officer 07900 267912 ursula.bird@cambsfire.gov.uk