

## **BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Governance Committee**

### **Decision Report**

**Thursday 25 April 2024**

#### **1. Review of Out-turn Against Probable 2023/24**

##### **Recommendation**

**The Governance Committee resolve to confirm the financial situation following the completion of the accounts for 2023/24.**

##### **Ward**

Not ward specific.

##### **Risk Management**

To provide the required updates to reflect the financial standing of the Council.

##### **Objective**

To ensure compliance with the Governance arrangements in place as outlined within the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

##### **Report**

#### **Review of Out-turn Against Probable 2023/24**

During the process of preparing the final accounts for 2023/24, a comparison was carried out between the Probable, as prepared at the time the budget was being considered, and the Out-turn. Although the Out-turn reflects a lower level of net expenditure of some £59k, this is within 4.2% of the Probable Budget.

The reduced out-turn is mainly brought about by a decrease in expenditure for the:

Governance Committee (-£52k) which is mainly Staff costs £27k, Office/Members/Civic costs, as well as additional Investment income of £13k,

Environment Committee (-£81k) which is mainly the agreed delay on the Skate Park of £103k, reduced Allotment expenditure of £12k, and offset by additional expenditure on the Partnership and Future development projects of £20k and the

Community Development Committee (£5k) which is mainly due to reduced expenditure on grants.

The Council have balances of £880k as at 31 March 2023, albeit the Governance Committee have approved that £103k is to be earmarked towards the installation of the Skate Park in 2023/24, due to this work not being able to be carried out in 2022/23. This then means that there are operational balances of £777k for 2023/24.

Shown on:

Appendix A is a summary by Committee and

Appendix B is the situation regarding the Council's Reserves

## **2. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24**

### **Recommendation**

**The Committee resolve to approve the documents listed in connection with the Annual Governance and Accountability return 2023/24 prior to approval by the Council before submission to the External Auditor:**

### **Ward**

Not ward specific.

### **Risk Management**

To provide the required documents to reflect the financial standing of the Council in order for the External Auditor to give their independent opinion.

### **Objective**

To ensure compliance with the Governance arrangements in place as outlined within the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

### **Report**

The key sections within the Annual Return for 2023/24 have been prepared and are attached. These documents have been prepared on the guidance given by the external auditor for the accounts.

The Council's Internal Auditor has also submitted his annual summary report which is attached.

#### Appendices

1. Council's Internal Auditor's Report
2. Annual Internal Audit Report for 2023/24
3. Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24
4. Accounting Statements for 2023/24

### **3. Appointment of Internal Auditor 2024/25**

#### **Recommendation**

**The Governance Committee resolve to confirm the appointment of Mike Slaughter as Internal Auditor for the financial year 2024/25.**

#### **Ward**

Not ward specific.

#### **Risk Management**

To have in place effective internal audit coverage for the Council.

#### **Objective**

To ensure compliance with the Governance arrangements in place as outlined within the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

#### **Report**

The Council is required to have in place an effective internal audit resource, to evaluate the impact of its risk management, control, and governance processes, in consideration with the guidance for such Councils as ours.

The Internal Audit Review for 2022/23 was again carried out by Mike Slaughter, who has extensive experience within Local Government. This was Mike's first year in carrying out the audit and he has been of benefit to the Council in his approach etc.

If the Council are agreeable Mike would be willing to do the 2024/25 audit.

## Appendix A

Committee	Probable 2023/24 £	Out-Turn 2023/24 £
Governance	354,426	346,485
Environment	494,625	499,807
Community Development	377,220	321,359
Overall Net Expenditure	1,226,271	1,167,651

	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
	<b>Probable</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Net service Expend	1,411,539	1,273,474
Precept Income	1,331,803	1,331,803
Use of Reserves	79,736	(58,329)
Total Resources	1,411,539	1,273,474

### Position of Reserves

	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
	<b>Probable</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>Revised Budget</b>
1 April B/F	821,540	821,540	741,804	879,869*
From/(To) Reserves	79,736	(58,329)	7,796	7,796
31 March C/F	741,804	879,869	734,008	872,073*

\*Of which £103k has been earmarked for the Skate Park installation 2023/24.

The additional balances of £35k going into 2023/24 do not materially affect the Council's 7-year plan, and this will be subject to a further report at the next Governance Committee.

**Malcolm Wilkinson**  
**Deputy Town Clerk**

**17 April 2023**