
Audit and Governance Committee

13 February 2012

Report of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Certification of Claims and Returns 2010/11 – Audit Commission**Summary**

1. The purpose of this report is to allow consideration of the Certificate of Claims and Returns Report 2010/11 produced by the Audit Commission (Annex A). The report reviews the Council's arrangements for the preparation and administration of grant claims within the Council, which has improved over the last few years.

Background

2. The report identifies that the Audit Commission was responsible for certifying 9 claims and returns to the value of £197.1m in 2010/11 (compared to 11 claims and £142.1m in 2009/10). This certification work is charged on an hourly basis to the Council; this totalled £46,785 in 2010/11 (£49,462 in 2009/10 and £54,806 in 2008/09).
3. The reduction in the audit commission's fee has occurred due to fewer claims to audit but also improved working papers from Council employees, a reduction in the number of amendments on individual claims and timely submission allowing the Audit Commission to plan and certify claims by the required deadlines.
4. The results of the Audit Commission's certification work showed that four out of the nine claims audited required amendment. However these amendments were minor resulting in only 1 qualification letter. The qualification letter identified some calculation errors of benefit, where the value of amendments was in respect of 'roundings' and not significant.
5. The overall conclusion from the Audit Commission's findings was that the Council has progressed and implemented previous recommendations on its grant claim arrangements:

- a) The control environment for grant claims and returns has improved resulting in lower audit testing of the sure start claim resulting in a lower fee; and
 - b) Issues identified in the qualification letters in 2009/10 in respect of Council's non-domestic rates was noted by the Council resulting in no qualification in 2010/11
7. As a result of the discussions with the audit commission from this review the Council continues to maintain high level of working papers and focuses on producing audit certification of claims or returns with no requirements for amendment or qualifications in future.

Consultation

8. Officers have contributed to this report where appropriate.

Options

9. Not relevant for the purpose of the report.

Analysis

10. Not relevant for the purpose of the report.

Council Plan

11. This report contributes to the overall aims and priorities by helping to ensure probity, integrity and honesty in everything it does. It specifically contributes to the Council's core capabilities.

Implications

12. There are no financial implications other than those outlined in the report. There are no HR, equalities, legal, crime and disorder, IT or property implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

13. Failure to provide adequate arrangements for the administration and preparation of grant claims result in both financial and reputation risks to the Council.

Recommendations

14. Members are asked to:

- (a) consider the content of the Certification of Claims and Returns Annual report 2010/11;

Reason

To enable members to consider the effectiveness of the council's grant administration activity.

- (b) note the Audit Commissions Certification of Claims and Returns report at Annex A.

Reason

To enable Members to comment on the current arrangements.

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**



Date 15/02/2011

Specialist Implications Officers

Not applicable

Wards Affected:

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For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Audit and Governance Committee 14 February 2011: Grant Claim
Certification Report 2019/10 – Audit Commission

Annex

*Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2010/11 – Audit
Commission*