

## Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

**ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT (CORONAVIRUS) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2020**1 Purpose of Report

To outline amendments to the Accounts and Audit Regulations (2015) introduced following the coronavirus outbreak and set out how the Council intends to comply with these when producing the Statement of Accounts 2019/20.

2 Background

The Accounts and Audit Regulations (2015) set out the timescales for the production of the Council's accounts, including the dates of the public inspection period. Following the coronavirus outbreak and in response to the pressures this has placed upon finance teams and external auditors in the production of the 2019/20 accounts, the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations were approved on 7 April 2020 and came into effect on 30 April 2020. The most significant changes are as follows:

- The draft 2019/20 accounts must be approved and presented to the external auditors for review by 31 August 2020 at the latest (instead of 31 May 2020) though they may be approved earlier if possible.
- The requirement for the public inspection period to include the first 10 working days of June has been removed. Instead, the public inspection period must commence on or before the first working day of September 2020.
- The publication date for the final, audited, 2019/20 accounts will move from 31 July 2020 to 30 November 2020.

The Council's Accounts Closedown Timetable 2019/20 has been reviewed in response to the demands placed upon Finance Services and other Council staff involved in the final accounts production process at the present time and it is anticipated that the draft 2019/20 accounts will be approved and presented to the external auditors (Mazars) by 30 June 2020.

Dependent upon the availability of Mazars' staff and the successful resolution of any issues identified by the external auditors, it is envisaged that the final, audited 2019/20 accounts will be presented for approval to the Governance, Audit and Standards Committee on 21 September 2020.

Details of the changes to the public inspection period have been placed on the Council's website and will be amended to provide the exact dates once these have been confirmed.

**Recommendation**

**The Committee is asked to NOTE the report.**

Background papers

Nil