

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting Scrutiny and Audit Panel

Date 19 January 2023

Title of Report Auditor's Annual Report 2021/22

By Assistant Director Resources / Treasurer

Lead Officer Duncan Savage, AD Resources / Treasurer

Background Papers Scrutiny & Audit Panel 10 November 2022 – 2021/22
External Auditor's Results Report and Statement of Accounts

Appendices 1. Auditor's Annual Report 2021/22

Implications (please tick ✓ and attach to report)

Any implications affecting this report should be noted within the final paragraphs of the report

CORPORATE RISK		LEGAL	✓
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
FINANCIAL	✓	POLITICAL	
HEALTH & SAFETY		OTHER (please specify)	
HUMAN RESOURCES		CORE BRIEF	
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT			

PURPOSE OF REPORT To consider and approve, on behalf of the Fire Authority, the Auditor's Annual Report 2021/22.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY The Authority's external auditor, Ernst & Young (EY), has submitted its Annual Report 2021/22 relating to East Sussex Fire Authority, which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report, for approval.

The Report summarises the external auditor's work relating to 2021/22 part of which has already been reported to this Panel in the Audit Results Report for 2021/22. The report includes the new value for money commentary. The key issues raised in the report are as follows:

- EY has issued an unqualified opinion on the Authority's financial statements for 2021/22

- EY concluded that the Authority's assessment of its going concern status was appropriate
- The annual governance statement was consistent with EY's understanding of the Authority
- EY had no reason to issue a public interest report or use its other auditor powers
- EY did not identify any risks of significant weaknesses in the Authority's value for money (VFM) arrangements for 2021/22
- The Authority has had the arrangements EY would expect to see to enable it to:
 - plan and manage its resources to ensure that it can continue to deliver its services
 - make informed decisions and properly manage its risks
 - use information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers services

The Report will be published on the Authority's website.

EY confirms in the Report that it expects to issue a scale fee variation in relation to the 2021/22 audit of £44,363 which would take the total audit fee to £68,073. This is broadly similar to the scale fee variation submitted for 2020/21, which Public Service Audit Appointments (PSAA) reduced to £18,548. Officer's view is that the Authority should, in line with last year, contest the scale fee rebasing element of the variation (£34,417) but accept that the remaining elements are within the indicative ranges set out by PSAA. Ultimately the scale fee variation will be determined by PSAA.

RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to:

- a) consider and approve, on behalf of the Fire Authority, the Auditor's Annual Report 2021/22
 - b) consider whether there are any matters raised in the Auditor's Annual Report which should be reported to the Fire Authority
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