

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Finance and Policy Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	14th March 2024 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Serena Van Schepdael: R.F.O		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	Item 22 Appointment of Accountant and Internal Auditor		
Background	<p>The Town Council is required by Regulation 5(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to “undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes”. The Council complied with the requirements in terms of independence from the Council decision-making process by appointing Auditing Solutions Ltd to provide this function to the Council.</p> <p>As the Council’s Internal Auditor, the Internal Auditor has a duty to complete the internal audit report in the Council’s Annual Return, which covers the basic financial systems, activities, operating procedures and requires assurances in separate areas as shown below. After each audit a report of findings is generated, the interim audit reports are presented to Finance and Policy Committee and the Final Report is presented to Finance and Policy Committee and Council.</p> <p>In addition to the requirements above, The Council also publishes the unaudited Financial Statements which are produced by the external in the FRSE format (Financial Reporting Standards for Smaller Enterprises) to show the Town Council’s accounts in a similar format to a small business.</p>		
Update	<p>Accountants</p> <p>Our current Accountants are DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd, they have been in place for over 10 years. DCK Accounting Solutions advises the National Association of Local Councils – NALC. They are well established and remaining with Accounting Solutions would provide continued continuity with the accounting and year-end procedures, and in-year support.</p> <p>Internal Auditor</p> <p>The current internal audit is provided by Auditing Solutions Ltd. They are a well-established company with extensive experience with Town</p>		

	<p>and Parish Councils. They audit the Council's financial and other internal control systems and financial records up to four times per year and have provided good advice. Historically our external audit has been consistently good which demonstrates that the guidance and support being provided by the Internal auditor is sound. Remaining with Accounting Solutions would provide continued continuity with the audit procedure to Congleton Town Council.</p> <p>Officer recommends that the Committee approve retaining both companies for the financial year 2024-2025.</p>
Financial	<p>The approved budget for Accounting and Payroll Services is £5,300 of which the Accounting costs are included.</p> <p>The approved Budget for Internal Audit is £1,900.</p>
Environmental	<p>No implications for this decision.</p>
Equality and Diversity	<p>No implications for this decision.</p>
Decision Request	<p>To approve the services of both DCK Accounting Solutions and Auditing Solutions Ltd for the financial year 2024-2025.</p>