

13 March 2017

Audit and Scrutiny Committee

Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2015/16

Report of: *Ernst & Young*

Wards Affected: *None*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 To present the External Auditor's annual report in respect of the Certification of Claims and Returns; specifically the Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim for the financial year 2015/16.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That Members note the contents of the Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2015/16 at Appendix A.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Local Authorities claim large sums of public money in grants and subsidies from Central Government and other grant-paying bodies and are required to complete returns providing financial information to government departments. The Council's External Auditors, Ernst & Young are required to undertake certification work to provide assurances to grant-paying bodies that claims for grants and subsidies are made properly or that information in financial returns is reliable.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 Attached as Appendix A is the Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2015/16.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 For Members to review the findings of the external audit's certification work.

6. References to Corporate Plan

- 6.1 The vision for improvements to services includes an action to strengthen the Council's governance arrangements, leading to faster, more effective decision-making. An effective scrutiny function is an essential element of that priority.

7. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: John Chance, Finance Director

Tel & Email: 01277 312542 / john.chance@brentwood.gov.uk

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Daniel Toohey, Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services

Tel & Email: 01277 312860 / daniel.toohey@brentwood.gov.uk

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 None

9. Appendices to this report

Appendix A – Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2015/16

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: John Chance, Finance Director
Telephone: 01277 312542
E-mail: john.chance@brentwood.gov.uk