

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Qualified conclusion on use of resources

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion published by the National Audit Office in November 2017, with the exception of the matters reported in the Basis for qualified conclusion on use of resources section of our report, we are satisfied that, in all significant respects, the Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2018.

Basis for qualified conclusion on use of resources

We have undertaken our review of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion, published by the National Audit Office in April 2017, as to whether in all significant respects, the Council had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

The National Audit Office has determined this criterion as that necessary for us to consider in satisfying ourselves whether the Council put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2018.

We have undertaken a review of the arrangements governing the procurement of goods and services at the Council. Our review confirmed that the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, which prescribe how officers should procure goods and services, were comprehensive and covered all aspects of the procurement process. However, departures from the Contract Procedure Rules were identified in the following areas:

- Failure to record awarded contracts on the Council's contract register
- Failure to apply EU procurement law to contracts with values that were, or were likely to be based on costs incurred on similar work to date, over the applicable threshold
- Failure to seek, obtain and document exemptions where Contract Procedure Rules could not be adhered to
- Failure to seek approval of the monitoring officer where contracts exceeded the four year limit specified in the Contract Procedure Rules
- Failure to maintain adequate documentation to support the process underlying procurement decisions
- Insufficient reporting to those charged with governance regarding waiver arrangements and other intended departures from Contract Procedure Rules.

This is evidence of weaknesses in proper arrangements regarding partnership working and informed decision making.

Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary. We believe that the evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our qualified conclusion.

Auditor's responsibilities in respect of the Council's use of resources

We are required under Section 20 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Code of Audit Practice requires us to report to you our conclusion relating to proper arrangements, having regard to relevant criterion specified by the National Audit Office.

We report if significant matters have come to our attention which prevent us from concluding that the Council has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered,

whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have completed the work necessary to conclude on matters brought to our attention by a local authority elector in respect of our audit of the financial statements for the years ended 31 March 2017 and 31 March 2018.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of Cambridgeshire County Council, as a body, in accordance with part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in the Responsibilities of the Audited Body and Responsibility of the Auditor within Chapter 2 of the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Council and the Council's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

DocuSigned by:

4F9B3581A02E48A...

Lisa Blake
For and on behalf of BDO LLP, Appointed Auditor
Ipswich, UK
16 December 2021

BDO LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales (with registered number OC305127).