ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Committee
DATE	26 June 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Audited Annual Accounts 2024/25
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/169
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Jonathan Belford
REPORT AUTHOR	Lesley Fullerton
TERMS OF REFERENCE	4.1 & 4.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Committee in respect of the Council's Audited Annual Accounts 2024/25 and the Registered Charities Audited Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee: -

2.1 approve the Council's audited Annual Accounts for the financial year 2024/25 as presented, subject to the final amendments being agreed between the external auditor and the Chief Officer – Finance as highlighted in the external auditor's report, following circulation of those final amendments to the Corporate Management Team and political group leaders; and

2.2 approve the audited Annual Accounts 2024/25 for those registered charities in respect of which the Council is the sole trustee, with the Chief Officer – Finance and the Convener of the Finance & Resources Committee to sign the accounts, subject to the final amendments being agreed in terms of the process as set out in recommendation 2.1.

2.3 Instruct Chief Finance Officer to review the 2025/26 Final Accounts timetable. This will include a review of critical path activities, the identification of opportunities and improvements to accelerate tasks for faster close-down, and propose a revised timetable for Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee approval by November 2025.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1.1 On 28 November 2024 the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee received and noted the contents of a report titled "Annual Accounts 2024/25 – Action Plan" which provided high level information and key dates in relation to the production of the 2024/25 Annual Accounts.

3.1.2 The key dates contained within the above report were: -

Date(s)	Description
31 March 2025	End of the financial year 2024/25
Jan – June 2025	Information from Group Entities (including ALEO's)
23 April 2025	Public Notice for the Public Inspection Period to be issued
07 May 2025	Signing of unaudited Annual Accounts by the Proper Officer
08 May 2025	Sign off by Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee Submission of the Annual Accounts to Auditors
13 May 2025 – 2 June 2025	Public Inspection Period for the unaudited Annual Accounts
26 June 2025	Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee to consider and aim to approve the audited Annual Accounts for signature
26 June 2025	Signing of the audited Annual Accounts by the Proper Officer, Chief Executive and Council Co-Leaders.
30 June 2025	Statutory deadline for the Proper Officer to sign the unaudited Annual Accounts, submit to the Auditor and publish on the website, along with the accounts of all subsidiary bodies
14 July 2025 (tbc)	Deadline for submission of the unaudited Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) to the Scottish Government
30 September 2025	Deadline for submission of the signed audited Annual Accounts to the Auditor
30 September 2025 (tbc)	Deadline for submission of the audited WGA to the Scottish Government
31 October 2025	Statutory deadline for the publication on the website of the signed Annual Accounts & Audit Certificate, related Auditor report and accounts of all subsidiary bodies
31 December 2025	Deadline for submission of the audited Charitable Trust Annual Accounts to OSCR

3.1.3 On 8 May 2025 this Committee considered the unaudited Annual Accounts, and they were signed by the Chief Officer - Finance (as Proper Officer).

3.1.4 The unaudited Annual Accounts were available for public inspection for the period 13 May – 2 June 2025. The public inspection period for the Aberdeen City Integration Joint Board is 20 June – 10 July 2025.

3.1.5 Having considered the report from the External Auditor and taken into account their audit opinion (in a previous report on the agenda) the Committee must now consider the audited Annual Accounts and approve them for signature.

3.1.6 The preparation of the Council's Annual Accounts is a major task which requires co-operation and input from a large number of people across all services of the Council. It is only with the commitment of all staff that these high standards and deadlines can be met.

3.2 Financial Performance and Review of the Accounts

3.2.1 It should be noted that the audited Annual Accounts are prepared according to the requirements of the International Financial Reporting Standards based Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting (the Code) and as a result are more complex and detailed than the information included in the monitoring reports provided to Committee throughout the year.

3.2.2 A report covering the detailed financial position of the Council was considered by the Finance and Resources Committee on 7 May 2025. That report covered the Council's revenue and capital accounts for General Fund, Housing Revenue and Common Good and the reserves and balances of the Council as at 31 March 2025.

3.2.3 Audit Scotland, the Council's external auditors, have now substantially completed their audit and the Committee will note the findings from their report, which was an earlier item on this Committee's agenda. The auditor has indicated that it will provide the Council with an unqualified audit opinion, and this will be incorporated into the Annual Accounts document, attached as Appendix A, before signing and publication on the Council website.

3.2.4 The statutory deadline for local authority financial statements to be audited and submitted to the appropriate committee is 30 September. It should be noted that the Council's Annual Accounts have now been audited almost three months ahead of the required deadline.

3.3 Registered Charities

3.3.1 This encompasses those charitable trusts, registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), for which the Council is the sole trustee. There are seven separately registered charities which for reporting purposes can be grouped together into a single Annual Report and Accounts.

3.3.2 These accounts are subject to the same audit process as the Council's accounts with the audited accounts and related auditor's report included with the aforementioned report from the external auditor.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications, not already referred to, arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There is a statutory requirement for the Council to produce both unaudited and audited Annual Accounts within certain timescales and to a high standard in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and generally accepted accounting practices.

5.2 In terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, there is a statutory requirement for the Council to produce the audited Annual Accounts for the Charitable Trusts.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	None	n/a	n/a	n/a
Compliance	Risk of legislation not being followed	Staff working with external audit to ensure compliance with legislation	L	Yes
Operational	There is the risk that technological issues may prevent the Council from preparing the annual accounts	Staff working with IT ensuring that correct processes are in place to prevent technological disruption	L	Yes
Financial	There is a risk that the external audit reveals errors &/or adjustments	Officers discuss with auditors throughout the external audit process	L	Yes
Reputational	Information contained in the Annual Accounts may cause damage to the Council's reputation	Independent examination by senior staff and external auditors	L	Yes

Environment / Climate	None	n/a	n/a	n/a

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2024-2025	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	The proposals within this report provide financial information which supports all services and programmes provided by the Council.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The annual accounts for 2024/25 have recognised the role of the Council in delivering specific projects that will deliver economic impacts in their own right; and the Council's corporate role in delivering wider 'business facing' activity in supporting the competitiveness of the business environment. The economy is exposed to external issues such as globalisation and higher prices, as well as macro-economic issues relating to energy prices that will have a proportionately higher direct impact on the local economy than elsewhere in Scotland and the United Kingdom.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The Accounts for 2024/25 provide details of income and expenditure incurred in the provision of services in Aberdeen City for the year.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The Annual Accounts report provides financial information to the people of Aberdeen regarding the services in their area. The narrative report contained within explains the governance of the Council, and projects that ACC has undertaken over the past year, along with future plans for Aberdeen City.
Regional and City Strategies	The Council's Annual Accounts provides financial information which supports these strategies.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	**Outcome**

Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Jonathan Belford, Chief Officer – Finance, on 10 June 2025.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	not required
Other	not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Delivering Good Governance in Local Government, Framework (2016 Edition) CIPFA & SOLACE, 2016;

10.2 Delivering Good Governance in Local Government, Guidance Note for Scottish Local Authorities (2016 Edition) CIPFA & SOLACE, 2016.

10.3 Unaudited Annual Accounts 2024/25

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A – Aberdeen City Council Audited Annual Accounts 2024/25

11.2 Appendix B - Aberdeen City Council Registered Charities Audited Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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