

Audit Committee – 22nd April 2010

6. Certification of Claims and Returns: Annual Report

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Purpose of the Report

This report introduces the annual report from the Audit Commission on their findings from signing off of claims and returns for 2008/09.

Recommendation

The Audit Committee is asked to note the contents of the Certification of Claims and Returns: Annual Report 2008/09.

Introduction

The Certification of Claims and Returns: Annual Report is included within the remit of the Audit Committee under its terms of reference as follows:

“To consider the effectiveness of SSDC’s risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and corruption arrangements and seek assurance from management that action has been taken”.

“To consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies and seek assurance from management that action has been taken”.

Grant Claims

The Audit Commission reviews three key claims/returns for SSDC. These are:

- Housing and Council Tax Benefit Scheme;
- Disabled Facilities grants;
- National Non-Domestic Rates Return.

The report from the Audit Commission is attached at the end of this agenda (Appendix A). As was the case in the previous year the Housing and Council Tax Benefit scheme was given a qualified opinion. This was because of errors found in claims once tested although as members can see from page 8 the values of the errors were low. On page 9 the Audit Commission also states ” To put this in context, this is a highly complex claim, and a large number of qualification letters are issued by auditors annually on the benefit claim”.

An action plan has been agreed to improve this position in future years and the plan is outlined on pages 11 and 12 of the Audit Commissions report. No errors were found within the two other claims.

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Financial Implications

None as a consequence of this report.

Background Papers *Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim*
Disabled Facilities Grants Claim
National Non-Domestic Rates Return
