

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has put in place revised regulations that came into force on 31 March 2021. The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2021 extend the statutory audit deadlines for 2020/21 and 2021/22 for all local authorities.

The publication date for audited accounts will move from 31 July to 30 September 2021 for all local authority bodies.

To give local authorities more flexibility, the requirement for the public inspection period to include the first 10 working days of June has been removed. Instead, local authorities must commence the public inspection period on or before the first working day of August 2021. This means that accounts that must be confirmed by the responsible finance officer (RFO) and be published by 31 July 2021 at the latest.

In accordance with the amended regulations:

Notice is hereby given under Regulation 15(2)(b) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 that from 28 July 2021 to 8 September 2021 between 9am and 4.30pm on weekdays any person may inspect, and make copies of the accounts and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other related documents of the Council for the year ended 31st March 2021, as stipulated in Section 25 and 26 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The accounts and other documents will be available for inspection at Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford by prior arrangement only. Please telephone the Head of Finance & IT on 01233 330547 to make an appointment.

The unaudited statement of accounts for 2020/21 will also be available at www.ashford.gov.uk. The accounts may be subject to change pending the outcome of review by the appointed auditor.

During this period, a local government elector for any area to which the accounts relate, or their representative, may question the auditor about the accounts, or make an objection to the accounts as set out in sections 26 and 27 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. Any objection, and the grounds on which it is made, must be sent to the auditor in writing, with a copy to the Head of Finance & IT, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford. Any objection must state the grounds on which the objection is being made and particulars of:

- i) any item of account which is alleged to be contrary to law; and

- ii) any matter in respect of which it is proposed that the auditor could make a public interest report under section 24 of, and paragraph 1 of Schedule 7 to, the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Objections should be addressed to the auditor Darren Wells, Grant Thornton UK LLP at 110 Bishopsgate, London EC2N 4AY

A guide to your rights can be found at <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/council-accounts-a-guide-to-your-rights/>

Date: 27 July 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B Lockwood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mr B Lockwood

Deputy Chief Executive

Civic Centre

Tannery Lane

Ashford

Kent

TN23 1PL