

Dear Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer,

We hope this email finds you well.

We are writing to introduce ourselves as Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA), the organisation responsible for appointing external auditors to eligible smaller authorities in England. Our current appointed external auditors include BDO, PKF Littlejohn, Moore and Forvis Mazars.

As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting smaller authorities, we are improving the way we communicate with councils and authorities. By ensuring we have accurate contact information, we'll be able to keep you informed about important developments, regulatory updates, training opportunities and key deadlines throughout the year.

We're also excited to let you know that SAAA will be introducing a new **Digital AGAR Portal**, designed to make the submission and management of Annual Governance and Accountability Returns (AGARs) simpler, more secure and more efficient. The portal is expected to be available for the **2027 AGAR submissions**.

The Digital AGAR Portal will be **voluntary for the 2027 AGAR submission**, giving authorities an opportunity to become familiar with the new process and benefit from the enhanced functionality. SAAA intends for the portal to become the primary submission route and, subject to final arrangements, its use is expected to become **mandatory for the 2029 AGAR submissions**.

To encourage early adoption, SAAA will also be introducing an **incentive scheme during 2027** for authorities that register for and use the Digital AGAR Portal. Further details of this scheme will be announced later this year.

To help us prepare for the portal launch, we'd like to make sure we have the correct contact details for your authority. Having up-to-date information will ensure that the right people receive important updates, training invitations and portal access information as soon as it becomes available.

What do we need you to do?

You will shortly receive a separate email from xxxxxxxxxxxxxx with instructions how to update your Authorities details. Please take a few minutes to log in to the Small Authority Portal and check that your authority's details are correct, including:

- Authority name

- Clerk details (where applicable)
- Responsible Financial Officer details (where applicable)
- Email addresses
- Telephone numbers
- Postal address
- Any other key contact information

You can also find out more about SAAA and our role in supporting the local audit regime for smaller authorities by visiting our website:

www.saaa.co.uk

We would be grateful if you could review and update your information within the next four weeks so that we can ensure everything is ready for future communications and portal access arrangements.

If you need any help accessing the Small Authority Portal, or if you have any questions, please get in touch with us at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx and we'll be happy to help.

Thank you for your assistance and for your continued support as we modernise the AGAR process for smaller authorities. We look forward to working with you and keeping you informed of developments over the coming months.

Kind regards,

Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA)