

The Audit Plan for Rossendale Borough Council

Year ended 31 March 2015

28 February 2015

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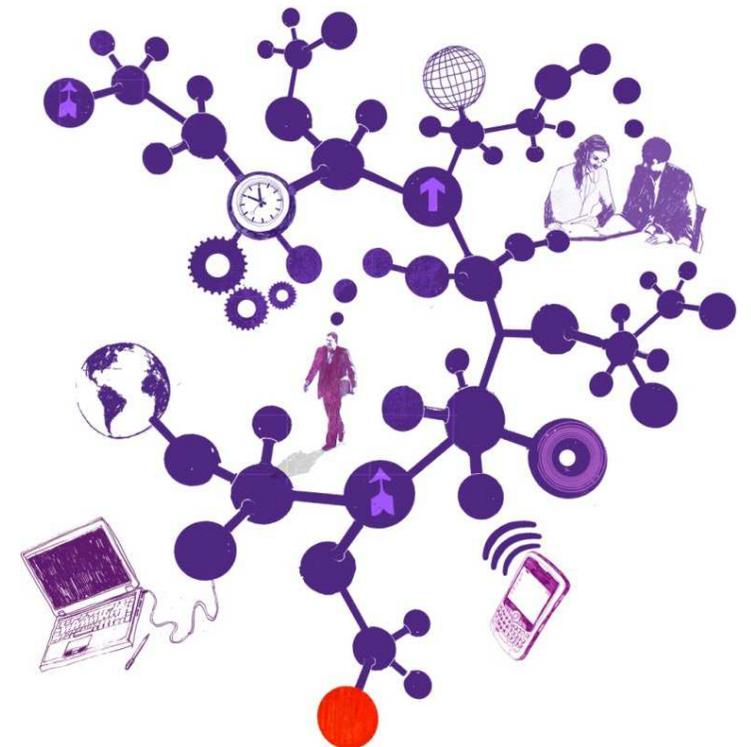
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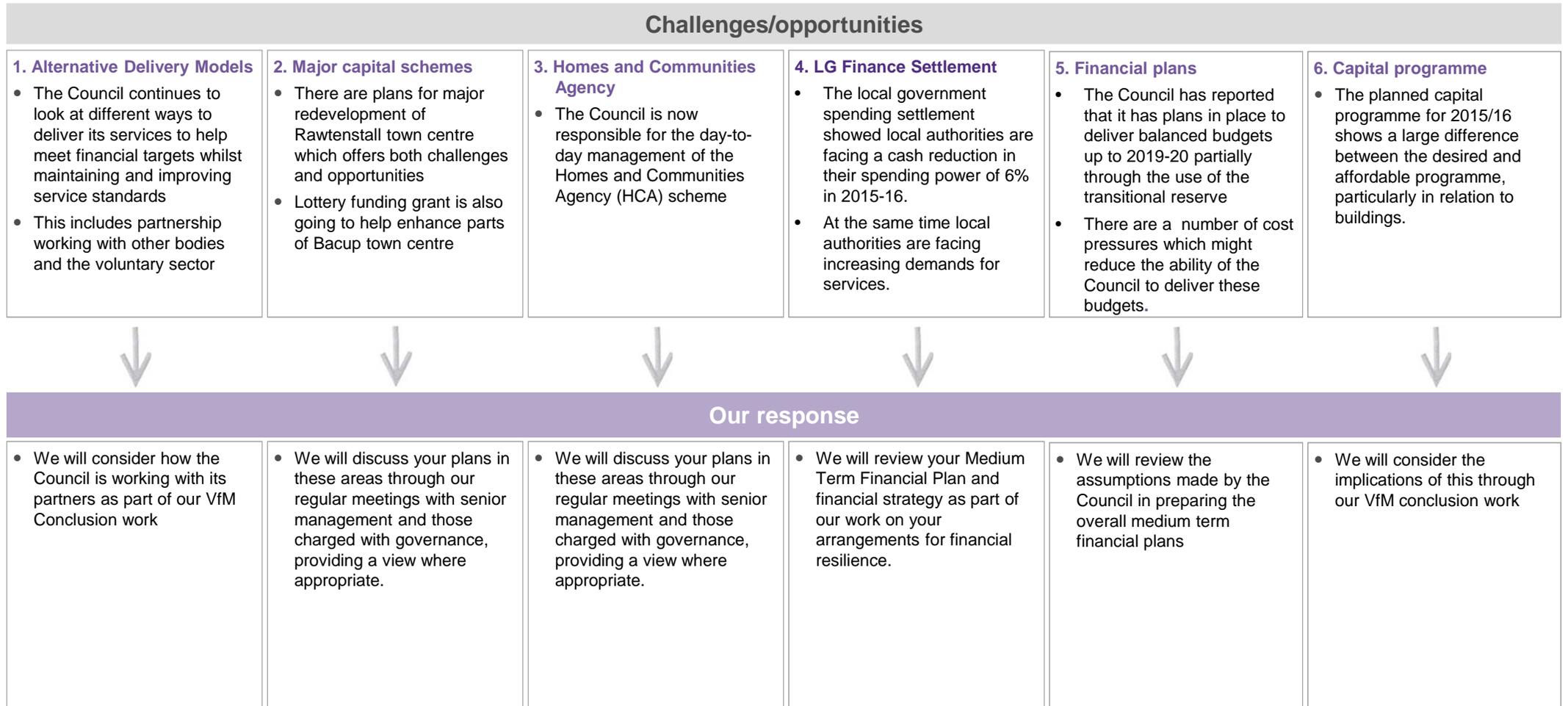
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Understanding your business

In planning our audit we need to understand the challenges and opportunities the Council is facing. We set out a summary of our understanding below.



Developments relevant to your business and the audit

In planning our audit we also consider the impact of key developments in the sector and take account of national audit requirements as set out in the Code of Audit Practice ('the code') and associated guidance.

Developments and other requirements

<p>1. Financial reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the CIPFA Code of Practice • Adoption of new group accounting standards (IFRS 10,11 and 12) 	<p>2. Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Finance settlement 	<p>3. Corporate governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Governance Statement (AGS) • Explanatory foreword 	<p>3. Previous year's developments</p> <p>The 2013/14 Code changes continue to provide challenges including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements around Property Plant and Equipment (PPE) valuations • NNDR accounting and provisions for business rate appeals 	<p>5. Financial Pressures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing service provision with less resource • Progress against savings plans 	<p>6. Other requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is required to submit a Whole of Government accounts pack on which are required to review • The Council completes grant claims and returns on which audit certification is required
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Our response

<p>We will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Council complies with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice through discussions with management and our substantive testing • the group boundary is recognised in accordance with the Code and joint arrangements are accounted for correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will discuss the impact of the legislative changes with the Council through our regular meetings with senior management and those charged with governance, providing a view where appropriate 	<p>We will review the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrangements the Council has in place for the production of the AGS • the AGS and the explanatory foreword to consider whether they are consistent with our knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to review the Council's response to these issues. 	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the Council's performance against the 2014/15 budget, including consideration of performance against the savings plan • undertake a review of Financial Resilience as part of our VfM conclusion 	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carry out work on the WGA pack in accordance with requirements • certify the housing benefit subsidy claim in accordance with the requirements specified by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd. This company will take over the Audit Commission's responsibilities for housing benefit grant certification from 1 April 2015.
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Our audit approach

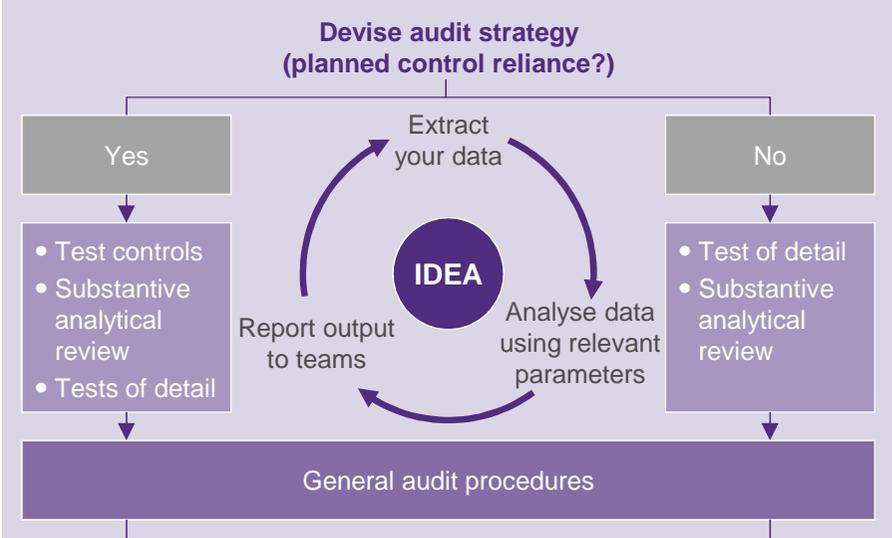
Global audit technology

Ensures compliance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs)

- * Understanding the environment and the entity
- * Understanding the business
- * Understanding management's focus
- * Evaluating the year's results

Inherent risks
Significant risks
Other risks
Material balances

Develop audit plan to obtain reasonable assurance that the Financial Statements as a whole are free from material misstatement and prepared in all material^a respects with the CIPFA Code of Practice framework using our global methodology and audit software



Note:
a. An item would be considered material to the financial statements if, through its omission or non-disclosure, the financial statements would no longer show a true and fair view.



Creates and tailors audit programs

Stores audit evidence

Documents processes and controls

Significant risks identified

'Significant risks often relate to significant non-routine transactions and judgmental matters. Non-routine transactions are transactions that are unusual, either due to size or nature, and that therefore occur infrequently. Judgmental matters may include the development of accounting estimates for which there is significant measurement uncertainty' (ISA 315).

In this section we outline the significant risks of material misstatement which we have identified. There are two presumed significant risks which are applicable to all audits under auditing standards (International Standards on Auditing – ISAs) which are listed below:

Significant risk	Description	Substantive audit procedures
The revenue cycle includes fraudulent transactions	<p>Under ISA 240 there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue.</p> <p>This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition.</p>	<p>We are considering the risk factors set out in ISA240 and the nature of the revenue streams at Rossendale Council and for the group. In considering these factors we are assessing whether we can rebut the presumed risk for the Council's own accounts, though still recognise that it remains a risk within the group accounts. We will update the Audit Committee once we have completed our assessment.</p>
Management over-ride of controls	<p>Under ISA 240 the presumption that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities.</p>	<p>Work completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of accounting estimates, judgments and decisions made by management • Testing of journal entries • Review of unusual significant transactions <p>Further work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of accounting estimates, judgments and decisions made by management • Testing of journal entries • Review of unusual significant transactions

Other risks identified

The auditor should evaluate the design and determine the implementation of the entity's controls, including relevant control activities, over those risks for which, in the auditor's judgment, it is not possible or practicable to reduce the risks of material misstatement at the assertion level to an acceptably low level with audit evidence obtained only from substantive procedures (ISA 315).

In this section we outline the other risks of material misstatement which we have identified as a result of our planning.

Other risks	Description	Audit Approach
Operating expenses	Creditors understated or not recorded in the correct period (Operating expenses understated)	Work completed to date: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documentation of processes and controls• Evaluation and walkthrough of controls• Sample testing of expenditure in the year to date Further work planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sample testing of operating expenses for the remaining period of the year• Detailed review and testing of year end accruals and creditor balances.
Employee remuneration	Employee remuneration accruals understated (Remuneration expenses not correct)	Work completed to date: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documentation of processes and controls• Evaluation and walkthrough of controls• Sample testing of employee remuneration in the year to date Further work planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sample testing of employee remuneration for the remaining period of the year• Agreement to accounts and supporting notes.

Prior year issues – Property Plant and Equipment

In last year's audit we identified several errors in the accounts relating to Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE) and overall capital accounting. We also made a recommendation concerning the valuation of PPE needing to adhere to the CIPFA Code. Due to: our findings; the overall complexity of capital accounting; and the development and delivery of schemes (e.g. HCA grants) we concluded that PPE issues should be highlighted separately in our plan. We will be following up on the issues raised last year and completing detailed testing of PPE and related accounting.

Other risks	Description	Audit Approach
Property Plant and Equipment and associated Capital Accounting transactions	A number of audit adjustments were made to the 2013/14 accounts in relation to capital accounting. Accounting for PPE related issues remains complex and therefore requires detailed testing.	Work planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will complete a review of the year end capital accounting transactions through our testing of Property, Plant and Equipment transactions.

Group audit scope and risk assessment

ISA 600 requires that as Group auditors we obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the components and the consolidation process to express an opinion on whether the group financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

Component	Significant?	Level of response required under ISA 600	Risks identified	Planned audit approach
Rosendale Transport Limited (RTL)	Yes	We currently plan a targeted approach	We are currently in the process of completing our risk assessment for the Group.	Procedures include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a desktop review to consider the component's financial statements and the consolidation process.• a review of correspondence• targeted enquiries as required with the auditor of the component at planning and final accounts audit time• other procedures to be targeted at specific risks identified.

Value for money

Value for money

The Code requires us to issue a conclusion on whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. This is known as the Value for Money (VfM) conclusion.

Our VfM conclusion is based on the following criteria specified by the Audit Commission:

VfM criteria	Focus of the criteria
The organisation has proper arrangements in place for securing financial resilience	The organisation has robust systems and processes to manage financial risks and opportunities effectively, and to secure a stable financial position that enables it to continue to operate for the foreseeable future
The organisation has proper arrangements for challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness	The organisation is prioritising its resources within tighter budgets, for example by achieving cost reductions and by improving efficiency and productivity

We are undertaking a risk assessment to identify areas of risk to our VfM conclusion. We will undertake work in the following areas to address the issues raised within the risk assessment:

- performance against financial targets
- adequacy of medium term financial planning
- engagement with stakeholders
- effectiveness of key services
- adequacy of financial reporting.

The results of our VfM audit work and the key messages arising will be reported in our Audit Findings Report and in the Annual Audit Letter.

Results of interim audit work

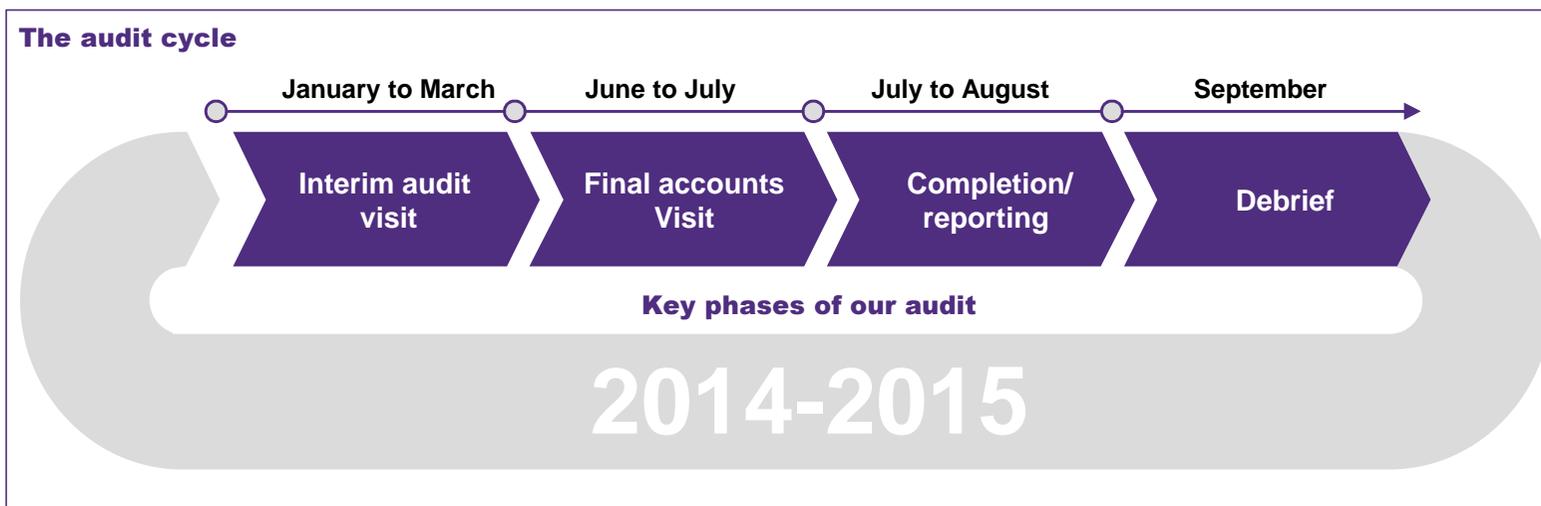
The findings of our interim audit work, and the impact of our findings on the accounts audit approach, are summarised in the table below:

	Work performed and findings	Conclusion
Internal audit	<p>We have completed a high level review of internal audit's overall arrangements.</p> <p>We also reviewed internal audit's work on the Council's key financial systems to date. We have not identified any significant weaknesses impacting on our responsibilities.</p>	<p>Overall, we have concluded that the internal audit service continues to provide an independent and satisfactory service to the Council. .</p> <p>Our review of internal audit work has not identified any weaknesses which impact on our audit approach.</p>
Walkthrough testing	<p>We have completed walkthrough tests of controls operating in areas where we consider that there is a risk of material misstatement to the financial statements.</p>	<p>Our work has not identified any weaknesses which impact on our audit approach.</p>
Entity level controls	<p>We have obtained an understanding of the overall control environment relevant to the preparation of the financial statements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication and enforcement of integrity and ethical values• Commitment to competence• Participation by those charged with governance• Management's philosophy and operating style• Organisational structure• Assignment of authority and responsibility• Human resource policies and practices	<p>Our work has identified no material weaknesses which are likely to adversely impact on the Council's financial statements</p>

Results of interim audit work cont'd

	Work performed	Conclusion
Review of information technology controls	Our information systems specialist are performing a high level review of the general IT control environment, as part of the overall review of the internal controls system. This is to provide assurance that IT controls have been implemented in accordance with our documented understanding.	We will report relevant findings when the review is complete.
Journal entry controls	<p>We have reviewed the Council's journal entry policies and procedures to help determine our testing strategy in this area.</p> <p>To date we have undertaken detailed testing on journal transactions recorded for the first nine months of the financial year, by extracting entries for further review.</p>	Our work to date has not identified any material weaknesses which are likely to adversely impact on the Council's control environment or financial statements. Further work on the remaining three months of the audit will be completed at post statements.
Early substantive testing	<p>We are in the process of finalising our initial testing of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• employee remuneration• operating expenses and• Income	We will report relevant findings when the review is complete.

Key dates



Date	Activity
January 2015	Planning
January to March	Interim site visit
17th March 2015	Presentation of audit plan to Audit Committee
29 June to 24 July 2015	Year end fieldwork
July 2015	Audit findings clearance meeting with the Head of Finance & Property Services and the Finance Manager
22nd September 2015	Report audit findings to those charged with governance (Audit Committee)
September 2015	Sign financial statements opinion

Fees and independence

Fees

	£
Council audit	61,061
Grant certification	10,670
Total fees (excluding VAT)	71,731

Our fee assumptions include:

- Supporting schedules to all figures in the accounts are supplied by the agreed dates and in accordance with the agreed upon information request list
- The scope of the audit, and the Council and its activities, have not changed significantly
- The Council will make available management and accounting staff to help us locate information and to provide explanations

Grant certification

- Our fees for grant certification cover only housing benefit subsidy certification, which falls under the remit of Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited, as the successor to the Audit Commission in this area.
- Fees in respect of other grant work, such as reasonable assurance reports, are shown under 'Fees for other services.'

Fees for other services

Service	Fees £
We have been undertaking some HCA compliance audit work. Once we have completed this audit we will charge a fee for the work. We will update the Audit Committee of these fees once finalised.	Nil

Fees for other services

Fees for other services reflect those agreed at the time of issuing our Audit Plan. Any changes will be reported in our Audit Findings Report and Annual Audit Letter.

Independence and ethics

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention. We have complied with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards and therefore we confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

Full details of all fees charged for audit and non-audit services will be included in our Audit Findings report at the conclusion of the audit.

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirement of the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards.

Communication of audit matters with those charged with governance

International Standards on Auditing (ISA) 260, as well as other ISAs, prescribe matters which we are required to communicate with those charged with governance, and which we set out in the table opposite.

This document, The Audit Plan, outlines our audit strategy and plan to deliver the audit, while The Audit Findings will be issued prior to approval of the financial statements and will present key issues and other matters arising from the audit, together with an explanation as to how these have been resolved.

We will communicate any adverse or unexpected findings affecting the audit on a timely basis, either informally or via a report to the Council.

Respective responsibilities

This plan has been prepared in the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission (www.audit-commission.gov.uk).

We have been appointed as the Council's independent external auditors by the Audit Commission, the body responsible for appointing external auditors to local public bodies in England. As external auditors, we have a broad remit covering finance and governance matters.

Our annual work programme is set in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice ('the Code') issued by the Audit Commission and includes nationally prescribed and locally determined work. Our work considers the Council's key risks when reaching our conclusions under the Code.

It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the conduct of its business, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. We have considered how the Council is fulfilling these responsibilities.

Our communication plan	Audit plan	Audit findings
Respective responsibilities of auditor and management/those charged with governance	✓	
Overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit. Form, timing and expected general content of communications	✓	
Views about the qualitative aspects of the entity's accounting and financial reporting practices, significant matters and issue arising during the audit and written representations that have been sought		✓
Confirmation of independence and objectivity	✓	✓
A statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, relationships and other matters which might be thought to bear on independence.	✓	✓
Details of non-audit work performed by Grant Thornton UK LLP and network firms, together with fees charged.		
Details of safeguards applied to threats to independence		
Material weaknesses in internal control identified during the audit		✓
Identification or suspicion of fraud involving management and/or others which results in material misstatement of the financial statements		✓
Non compliance with laws and regulations		✓
Expected modifications to the auditor's report, or emphasis of matter		✓
Uncorrected misstatements		✓
Significant matters arising in connection with related parties		✓
Significant matters in relation to going concern		✓



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